



City of Westfield

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2022

Members attending:
Members absent:

Staff attending:

Thomas Sharp
Richard Salois
Cynthia Gaylord
Daniel Kelly
Joe Muto
William Porter
Michael Tirrell

Jay Vinskey
Christine Fedora

1. Call to order. Chair Sharp called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. in Room 201, Municipal Building, 59 Court Street, Westfield MA. Members introduced themselves.
2. Public Participation & Annual Public Hearing to solicit the needs, possibilities and resources of the City regarding the Community Preservation Act.

Chair Sharp opened the annual public hearing and asked for public comment. None. Chair Sharp engaged audience members somewhat, though members primarily discussed amongst themselves. They expressed that they would like to see more open space and recreation projects, and to be more aggressive acquiring conservation land. The hearing portion of the meeting was closed at 6:47.

3. Review and Approval of 7-8-21 Minutes

Chair Sharp asked if members had an opportunity to review the minutes. Member Gaylord reported on page 3 regarding the Canal Signs a correction is needed, there are 2 canal signs installed, not 3. Member Gaylord MOTIONED, seconded by Member Salois to approve the 7-8-21 minutes as amended. All in favor.

4. Review of Current Funds & FY 23 Budget

Planner Vinskey gave a brief summary of the estimated funds for April 2022. For FY23: Undesignated/Rec.: \$320,000, Historic: \$35,000, Open Space: \$50,000, Housing: \$50,000. Balance (unspent from prior years): Undesignated/Rec.: \$440,000, Historic: \$528, Open Space: \$185,502, Housing: \$448,932. The was a total of about \$1.5M.

Chair Sharp asked to proceed with the project updates agenda item.

5. Review of open projects (active & inactive)

Planner Vinskey reviewed the open projects:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Appropriation Date</u>	<u>Original Amount</u>	<u>Balance</u>	<u>Disbursed</u>
<i>Private</i>				
Lambson Building	12/19/2019, 9/2/2021	\$350,000.00	\$27,331.00	92.2%
Womans Club	12/21/2017, 8/20/2020	\$235,000.00	\$11,750.00	95.0%
Pine Hill Cem Monuments	5/20/2021	\$39,500.00	\$26,670.00	32.5%
Old Town Hall	5/19/2016	\$163,000.00	\$163,000.00	0.0%
Yellow Stonehouse APR	5/20/2021	\$69,000.00	\$69,000.00	0.0%
Canal Study	9/2/2021	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	0.0%
<i>City</i>				
Wyben Schoolhouse	11/7/13, 6/1/2017	\$90,000.00	\$72,405.00	19.6%
Down Payment Program	6/7/2018	\$77,625.00	\$63,103.00	18.7%
City Monuments	5/20/2021	\$89,000.00	\$39,085.80	56.1%
Rail Trail Connector	8/20/2020	\$150,000.00	\$21,170.26	85.9%

Member Gaylord mentioned Anne Lentini may be coming in at the next meeting with a housing application.

Planner Vinskey reviewed the private projects first. He noted that Womans Club has since been completed. Old Town and Yellowstone House have not started. Member Gaylord stated that Old Town Hall is still trying to decide how to move forward with their project. A brief discussion as to how long a project can be held open. Planner Vinskey stated there is a 4 year time frame in the grant agreement.

Planner Vinskey reviewed the City Projects. Member Gaylord questioned the amount of the Schoolhouse balance; Planner Vinskey to investigate. Members expressed their satisfaction with the work that has been completed on the monuments and about the rail trail connector.

6. Review of New/Pending Applications

- Pine Hill Cemetery fence restoration (Historic) - \$112,442

Gail Dickson former superintendent of Pine Hill Cemetery, currently serving on the Board and Kali Fantakis were present at the meeting to present their application to the committee.

Ms. Dickson explained to the committee they tried to do this is house but it was very difficult as they only have 2 men that take care of the cemetery which doesn't allow a lot of time to get other things done. She further noted she received some quotes and GMH was the lowest bidder. It was stated to them that if this is approved by the Committee it would have to go to the next step which would be the Council.

Member Gaylord inquired about the work that is going to be done on the sidewalks on Court Street will this interfere with the fencing? The applicant informed the Committee they spoke to the Engineering

Department and were told the fence line does not have to be moved. Ms. Fantakis voiced concerns regarding the bid prices going up which was causing her concern about doing it now.

The Committee reviewed the quotes as submitted and felt the quotes justify the amount of request.

Member Salois asked what would happen to the old fence? Ms. Fantakis said if the city wanted the old fence they would have no problem giving it to the city. Member Salois felt it might be a good idea to speak to Scott Hathaway at DPW. Member Gaylord stated that an ironsmith had looked at the fence and it would be too expensive to try to salvage.

Chair Sharp asked if it would be possible to scale back the project by \$25,000.00 to reduce the cost tonight? Ms. Dickson said they had not thought about it and were told they had to replace the entire fence. Chair Sharp further asked if they don't get the funding where would they get the money? Ms. Dickson replied they are selling lots and getting endowments, it's hard to get corporate money.

Member Porter asked if the Friends Group could possibly help out? Ms. Dickson replied it's pretty well tapped out. Joan Correl noted when the Friends Group started that is when COVID struck and it pretty much died out.

Member Salois inquired about the aesthetics of the new fence? Ms. Dickson informed him it would be similar to the current fenced with the 3-rail design. Member Porter inquired about the types of material and asked if the quotes include the gates? Ms. Dickinson informed him they currently have 1 gate they will need 3 which still need to be purchased this does not include those. Material is steel vs. wrought iron.

Member Tirrell inquired as to how other cemeteries fund their capital projects? Ms. Dickson informed him they are generally church or city related, it's always a struggle trying to raise funds.

Member Tirrell further inquired about the precedent of using CPA funds for a private cemetery? Ms. Dickson noted the funding they previously received was for the windows on the mausoleum which was considered historical. Planner Vinsky showed the statewide CPA database which showed several cemetery projects funded.

Member Gaylord also noted that Pine Hill Cemetery is also known as the garden cemetery which is a tourist attraction and a prime example of a New England Garden Cemetery. Historical Commission has already deemed historically significant and reviewed the proposed fence. Ms. Correll also added that people still walk through there.

Also discussed was purchasing the fencing now and waiting until after the completion of the sidewalk, if that were to happen where would it be stored? Member Porter asked if anyone knew the timeline of Court Street. Member Muto felt it was late 2023.

Looking at the calculations on the application, Chair Sharp suggested they could amend their ask to \$110,000.

Member Porter MOTIONED, seconded by Member Gaylord to approve the \$110,000.00 for Pine Hill Cemetery fence restoration. Member Tirrell felt they submitted a nice packet and this will be visible

from various streets. Chair Sharp asked if there were additional comments? Member Salois felt his is a good project, it's in the center of the city, and it is very well cared for.

By Roll call vote:

Richard Salois	-	yes
William Porter	-	yes
Joe Muto	-	yes
Tom Sharp	-	yes
Dan Kelly	-	yes
Cindy Gaylord	-	yes
Mike Tirrell	-	yes

Planner Vinsky confirmed the Committee wanted to spend down the current FY22 historic to zero and take the remainder from FY22 undesignated. He further asked if there were going to be any protections/restrictions? The committee agreed to a 30- year commitment to maintain, and changes subject to Historical Commission review and approval. This to be a condition of the grant agreement.

Planner Vinsky informed the applicant the funds will not be available until the Council has voted for it, which would be by June 30.

Planner Vinsky quickly revisited the 'Review of Current Funds & FY 23 Budget' item to present the FY23 proposed CPC budget. Basically, it is the same as last year. The committee took no exception.

7. Potential projects
 - Skate Park Renovations

Member Tirrell informed the Committee that Jeff Burke has been a frequent attendee at the Park & Recreation meetings. He is trying to renovate the Skate Park or to move it to other potential sites. He is currently working with designers on a full blown design that he is hoping will be ready in July for a design funding request. Mr. Tirrell added once he has quotes he will be asking for additional funding for the construction. The Committee expressed no objections to participating in funding with CPA.

- 1237 Russell Road land

Planner Vinsky informed the Board the state owns some land on Russell Road and there are about 15 acres adjacent to state owned land. He approached the owner and she is amenable to a possible sale. He further noted that the Conservation Commission has agreed and he is looking at a LAND grant which state could reimburse up to 70%. The Committee was generally amenable to participating in funding with CPA.

- 146 Main Street land

Planner Vinsky informed the Committee this is another riverfront property. the City Engineer is pursuing a grant which has a 25% match. He understood a sources of local funds was identified but wanted the CPC to be aware in case their assistance is needed. The Committee was generally amenable to supplementing with CPA funds if needed.

With no other business, Member Kelly MOTIONED, seconded by Member Muto to adjourn at 8:10. All in favor.