



TOWN OF ACTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE (CPC)

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 9, 2024

7:30 PM

Acton Memorial Library – Meeting Room, 486 Main Street and by ZOOM

Present: Tory Beyer, Peter Berry, Dean Charter (Chair), James Colman, Lori Cooney, Michelle Ellicks, Walter Foster (Vice Chair), Michaela Moran, Jaclyn Saltzman, Steve Trimble (Clerk)

Absent:

Others Present: Kaila Sauer (Assistant Planner II), Nancy Kolb (AHA), David Martin (53 River Street), Frank Harrigan (Theatre III), Kelley Cronin (AHA), Fran Arsenault, Ilana Liebert, Joe Will, Tom Wachtel (Theatre III), Peter Hocknell, Diane Zimmerman-Decker, Alison Walters-Sort, Erika Wilde, Henry Thomas, Linda Minkoff, Mike Gendron

Foster, acting as Chair, opened the meeting at 7:31 PM.

I Regular Business

1. **Residents' Concerns** – None raised.
2. **Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes** - The Committee reviewed the December 19, 2023, CPC minutes. Beyer moved to approve the minutes seconded by Ellicks. Trimble read the roll: Berry abstained, Moran no vote recorded, remaining voted aye.

II. New /Special Business

3. Application Presentations

- a. 7:35 PM Acton Housing Authority – McManus Village Window Replacement
 - Berry introduced Kelley Cronin and provided background on the AHA responsibility. Cronin reviewed the project.
 - Q&A: Tori commented that the pictures demonstrated the project need. Foster asked about leverage. AHA requests ~\$307k from the CPA funds. Cronin suggested they would look at leverage monies from the state. Colman asked if they might use leverage funds for the interior kitchens and baths. Berry noted the interior work is not CPA eligible. Colman asked if they received 50% of the request. Cronin responded they would prioritize the windows.

- b. 7:55 PM Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) – Community Housing
- Janet Adachi reviewed recent funding and expenses which included:
 - \$200k to McManus Manor
 - \$10k to the Habitat for Humanity project at 26 Carlisle Road for unanticipated water hookup cost.
 - \$100k to Tavernier Place to cover a funding gap.
 - Small grants for 1st time homebuyers.
 - Adachi indicated she does not know 2024 needs but noted 457 Mass. Ave will be underway and she anticipates requests from 1st time homebuyers.
 - Trimble asked for details in writing material from Janet on the flows of funding.
- c. 8:15 PM Town of Acton Conservation Dept. – 53 River Street Park Phase II Completion
- Mike Gendron presented the now increased ask of \$658,178. This could be split into phases with \$378,178 this year. Martin walked the Committee through the planned park. When town meeting authorized the land purchase it did not include a final vision. Gendron walked through budget ask. They are confident with the numbers taking an average estimate from five contractors.
 - Gendron noted it would be economical to keep the current contractor under contract extended past his scheduled end date in May with a change.
 - Q&A:
 - Berry asked about whether one on the map items was a bridge? There is no spanning bridge. There would be a sidewalk yes.
 - Byer asked if the Town Meeting was early enough to release the funding to the contractor? Tori: Sauer noted it was an early May event.
 - Colman asked what they would do with \$100k? They would search for more funding.
 - Saltzman inquired on the bid accuracy. Gendron noted the bids were completed in the spring of 2023. Most cost increase issues came from excavation but going forward all excavation impacts topsoil brought on site or existing materials.
 - Trimble questioned the introduction of another park on the current workload of town employees given the Town Manager's recent note that they were over capacity. Gendron responded that the town resources would focus on resident safety. Trimble asked if the East Acton Village (EAV) pocket park concept was explored as an alternative? Gendron responded and later

clarified that the icehouse restoration and EAV Green were two projects. The EAV Green was not bound by permitting the way that this project is. The dam on the site was determined to be hazardous by the State, meaning the Town was obligated to either restore it or remove it. Through public process it was determined the best approach was to remove it. To remove the dam, the Town needed several permits from local, state, and federal agencies. One of these critical permits is the Army Corps of Engineers Sec. 404 permit. As a condition of this permit, we need a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Army corps, MA Historical Commission and Acton Historical Commission. This MOA requires the creation of a historical park on site, including specific features such as the “echo walls.”

- Foster asked if they were funded one hundred percent could they guarantee they would not return for additional funding? Gendron did not feel comfortable that it would complete the entire project.

d. 8:35 PM Theatre III – Theatre III Restoration and Improvements

- Ask: The initial request noted earlier this fall was increased from \$190,781 to \$228,340 (this sum represents 46% of Phase 1 cost) covering a fire alarm notification system (\$37,559). Theatre III intends to request \$660k from the CPC for the next 5 years. Phase 1 will cost \$491,340 they are seeking \$200,000 (41%) from other cultural funding sources and allocating \$63k from donations.
- The building dates to 1868 and serves 1K-2K per year (10-20k in last 10 years). It is the only building owned by a non-profit and its location in the Historic District comes with additional costs. Refer to presentation for details “Systems Replacement Plan.”
- Q&A: Foster noted the CPC funded and restored many West Acton sites (library, fire station, playground). It is an area of town with historical feel and is a great cultural resource to the town
- How likely will they get money from the state? They recently created a system replacement plan to enable grant requests and Theatre III expects them to look favorably at the plan since it responds to the requirements.
- Colman asked why there was a long delay in asks from the CPC and why now? They noted the trigger was handicap accessibility. If granted they would start in the summer in the offseason.
- Berry asked if cultural not awarded can they get what they need with an alternate phase 1. In response it was noted it would not meet all needs as it would not have elevator or accessible bathroom.

- Dean asked if the lack of the fire alarm system is impacting any activities. They must have police and firefighter presence at events until it is addressed.

III. Administrative Updates and Scheduling

- Dean noted the sewer extension right of way was approved by the DOT for the Main Street Campus work.
- Sauer noted more background information would be coming for the Mark Starr veteran housing project request and noted the deed says it is for disabled veterans only.

6. Next Meeting Dates

- January 23 – presentations for projects 8 & 10
- February 13 – Presentations for 13, 15 & 17
- February 27 – presentation placeholder / start deliberations

7. 2024 Meeting Room – All upcoming meetings will be in Town Hall room 9.

Adjourn – motion to adjourn at 9:32 PM by Byer seconded by Foster. Trimble called the roll and the meeting adjourned by unanimous consent.

Documents and exhibits used during this meeting:

1. CPC agenda 2024-01-09.pdf
2. CPC minutes 12.19.23 draft.pdf
3. Project List and Project Hearing Date.docx
4. Theater III funding request.pdf.
5. 2024 Community Preservation Committee Applications

Additional materials: <https://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-17706>.

For more information about community Preservation Committee contact cpc@actonma.gov or 978-929-6631