

Notes from Community Preservation Act (CPA) Committee Meeting –June 15, 2016 @ 6:00 P.M
Sullivan Chamber

CPA Committee Members Present:

Kevin Foster (Resident)
Thacher Tiffany (Planning Board)
Susan Schlesinger (Affordable Housing Trust)
Ellen Shachter (Resident)
Chandra Harrington (Historical Commission)
Albe Simenas (Conservation Commission)
Gerard Clark (Cambridge Housing Authority)
Lisa Peterson (Deputy City Manager/Chair CPAC)
Louis DePasquale (Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs)

Staff Attendees:

Angela Pierre (Senior Budget Analyst- Budget Office)
Karen Preval (Senior Management Analyst-City Managers' Office)
Taha Jennings (Assistant to the City Manager-City Manager's Office)
John Nardone (Deputy Commissioner for Operations- Department of Public Works)
Charles Sullivan (Executive Director-Historical Commission)
Chris Cotter (Director of Housing Division-CDD)
Cassie Arnaud (Housing Planner- CDD)
David Webster (Supervisor of Parks- Department of Public Works)

- The meeting convened at 6:04 p.m., Deputy City Manager (Committee Chair) Lisa Peterson gave an explanation of CPAC's interest in hearing about project proposals from the community and staff in the following categories: historic preservation, open space and affordable housing. 10% minimum allocation of CPA funds to each category was explained. She introduced CPAC members and stated that the projected FY17 CPA funding would be \$12.3M.
- Ms. Peterson mentioned that a handout was provided showing all projects appropriated from FY02-FY16 and there is an online project submission form that will remain available for people to submit project proposals through July 28, 2016

Public Comment

- Elaine DeRosa, Executive Director for Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee Inc. (CEOC), mentioned that the Fresh Pond Tenant Association requested to preserve the long term affordability of the Fresh Pond Apartments, an expiring use property, which will expire in 2020. A petition signed by 31 tenants was submitted. She also mentioned that the Housing Authority was doing renovations at Jefferson Park and may be in need of additional funding.
- Peter Daly with Homeowners Rehab mentioned that they acquired land in the Fresh Pond area to develop and are in need for additional funds which will allow for the construction of more units. He also asked for 80 % allocation of CPA funds. He thanked the City for all of the work that has been done.
- Cheryl -Ann Pizza-Zeoli is a resident of Cambridge and mentioned that the Cambridge Inclusionary Housing Study showed that there aren't any market rent 3 bedroom apartments in Cambridge that are affordable to a 4 person household with an income at or below 80% of area

median income. She would like to use CPA funds to preserve expiring- use housing and public housing. She also mentioned that there were 565 units of low and moderate income housing at Fresh Pond and the Cambridge Housing Authority will need \$240M in tax exempt bond financing to preserve 1,282 units. Currently, 38.8% of CHA tenant-based vouchers are households that live outside of Cambridge. There were 95 emergency applications of which 65 were approved and 63 received vouchers. Only 23 voucher holders were able to use them and 32 family vouchers expired.

- Hasson Rashid is a resident of Cambridge and proposed using CPA funds for creating a documentary film on fair housing. The documentary film is an amendment of the Fair Housing Act of 1968 and will talk about fair housing act and homelessness with a goal of being educational. The documentary will require \$10-15k to produce.
- Troy Ellerbee is a member of Pentecostal Tabernacle at 56 Magazine Street in Cambridge, which was formerly known as Grace Methodist Church. The church was purchased in 2013 and received past CPA funds to restore the stain glass windows and repairs to the roof and steeple. They were awarded a grant this year for the roof and are asking for funds to continue restorations of the stain glass windows.
- James Williamson is a Cambridge resident and would like CPA funding to be used to purchase the Vail Court building. He wasn't sure of legal process but said it warranted careful consideration and could be a model for affordable housing.

Staff proposed projects

- John Nardone, Deputy Commissioner for Operations for Department of Public Works represented recommendations from the Open Space Committee, which is made up of staff from several departments. There were five projects for consideration. Glacken Field is in the western part of the City and the project includes accessibility improvements, renovation of playground areas, water features, parking lot improvements, new play equipment and improvements to storm water runoff. The estimated cost is \$4.7M. Linear Park is a multi-use path that runs through Cambridge and Somerville. The project would include updated lighting systems, improved drainage, small play spaces areas, tree work and is estimated at \$3.45M. Graham and Parks School Playground will include accessibility improvements which are already funded and playground renovations which is estimated to cost and additional \$500k. The Fresh Pond Parkway Community Garden project will consider the relocation of the existing garden. The estimated cost is \$450k. There is \$200k available from past CPA funding for the community gardens. Sennott Park is located in the Port and would include playground renovations including: walkways; light fixtures and furniture. The field area is one of the heaviest used in the City. Funds would be phased over two years with an estimate of \$632.5K for the first year.
- Charlie Sullivan, Executive Director of the Historical Commission, was waiting to hear from City staff on proposed projects. One new project is to restore Bluestone first blocks where tree roots lift the sidewalk slabs. Some work was done a few years ago along the Longfellow house. Additional projects include: the City Clerk's vault which has allocated funds from previous years to fund the completion of this project; continuation of digitization of historic preservation projects; and allocations for preservation grants. Over 18 institutional grants have been provided this fiscal year with ten active church grants and half dozen of affordable housing grants. As of February 2016, all grant funds were used and will be waiting for a larger allocation of funds this fall to take care of the backlog. Mr. Sullivan stated that the DCR's Magazine Beach project is going well and Lowell Park construction is underway.
- Chris Cotter, Housing Director, mentioned the need for preserving expiring use units through the Affordable Housing Trust, including the Fresh Pond Apartments. They are looking at options while working with tenants and owners. They are also looking at new projects, although there are still challenges, recent acquisition of new sites for housing development will be discussed once

plans are developed. They are still looking at sites around the City, to purchase units in private buildings to add affordable units

- Mrs. Peterson asked if there were any questions
- Ellen, CPAC members asked what number of affordable units you would like to see and what is the city's goal.
- Chris Cotter stated the goal is to create 1000 affordable units. He said the most challenging aspects are resources and opportunities.
- Ms. Peterson read a proposal that was received from Rev. Kevin Manual from First United Presbyterian Church and who was looking to apply for historic preservation Grant.
- Ms. Peterson stated that the record would remain open until the next public meeting, scheduled for July 28, 2016. This hearing will be used for the public to comment on the percent allocations for funds to open space, historic preservation and affordable housing. She also mentioned that projects can still be submitted online, through e-mail and mail. And the last meeting will be held on September 13, 2016 for the CPAC to vote on projects and allocations.
- The meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM