



Town of Watertown Community Preservation Committee

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Elodia Thomas, Chair
Jonathan Bockian
Jason Cohen
Bob DiRico
Dennis J. Duff
Mark Kraczkiewicz
Allen Gallagher
Maria Rose
Susan Steele

Special Meeting: JM Goldson Kickoff

Minutes: Monday, November 4, 2019, Commander's Mansion, 7:00 pm

Committee Members Present: Elodia Thomas, Chair, Jonathan Bockian, Jason Cohen, Bob DiRico, Dennis Duff, Allen Gallagher, Maria Rose, Susan Steele. **Absent:** Mark Kraczkiewicz

Others Present: Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner, Lisa Feltner, Town Councilor, Nancy Hammett

1. Call to order

Elodia Thomas, Chair, called the special interim meeting of the Community Preservation Committee to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. JM Goldson Presentation & Discussion Jenn Goldson and Anna Callahan

Elodia Thomas reintroduced Jenn Goldson and Anna Callahan.

Jenn Goldson gave an overview of the team. Anna Callahan will be the project manager. Her duties will include writing, research, acting as the prime point of contact, and attending all meetings. Avery Wolfe will be working behind-the-scenes, helping with planning, admin, and with research. Barry Wolfe, a new hire, will attend the public forum.

Anna Callahan presented the JM Goldson agenda for the meeting, as noted on the agenda:

• Flow of project

Anna Callahan reviewed the graphics of project scope and schedule.

Jon Bockian asked if the three months between the second public meeting and end of plan date if they will still be continuing to gather information. Anna Callahan responded that the first public forum is kicking off project. The second public forum is about prioritizing information from first meeting, focus groups, and the community survey. Jon Bockian asked if there will be a meeting between the time the CPC receives the draft and the public hearing. Anna Callahan responded that sometimes it is helpful to do a final review after the public hearing. Maria Rose

asked if there are usually a lot of revisions. Jenn Goldson answered, no, that usually people appreciate the public outreach and the results are not a surprise to anyone. Jon Bockian expressed his concern about the appearance and substance of having a hearing where people comment, but then the CPC adopts the plan the same night. Jenn Goldson reassured the CPC that it is perfectly reasonable to adopt the plan at a subsequent meeting. Nancy Hammett commented on Jon Bockian's concern regarding public input. She stated that outreach in Watertown is an issue; people feel like they come out and are not heard. She asked the CPC to make sure that people hear how their comments are taken into account because the general feeling is of being asked for input that doesn't go anywhere. Anna Callahan reassured the CPC that Jon Bockian's concern is an easy fix.

- **Report on pre-Survey**

Anna Callahan reviewed the survey response themes.

Gideon Schreiber mentioned acquisition of new land as a priority. Elodia Thomas asked if the survey responses will be shared. Anna Callahan responded that they will be made available and will also be on Bang the Table.

- **Anna reviews the CPA and grid for eligible projects**

Dennis Duff asked who decides "fine line" issues? Jenn Goldson replied that would fall to the town attorney or DOR. Gideon Schreiber confirmed that the CPC can ask the town attorney. Lisa Feltner asked about accessibility, and Jenn Goldson answered that accessibility falls under rehab. Jon Bockian asked if objects other than property are covered. Jenn Goldson answered yes, town-owned artifacts would be eligible if they meet the requirements. Anna Callahan reviewed where CPA revenue comes from, along with minimum statutory requirements (i.e., distribution of funds). Jason Cohen inquired about the definition of "community housing," and how to explain it residents who do not want any of their money spent in that way. Jenn Goldson suggested that funds could be used for a first-time home buyer program, rental assistance (local version of section 8), rent-to-own, mortgage down payments, preserve existing housing, housing authority, and construction of new units on housing authority land. Dennis Duff asked if preference would be given to Watertown residents. Jenn Goldson said DHCD has to approve a local preference program and it depends on demographics. Elodia Thomas added that Watertown does not presently have community preference.

- **Facilitated engagement plan discussion**

Jenn Goldson presented the engagement plan and stated that she likes to work with clients to develop clear community engagement; her goal is to get the CPC focused. She added that it could be one goal or have multiple elements but should have a clear statement/outcome and clear committee consensus. Jon Bockian asked if the community engagement process is distinct from the plan. Jenn Goldson answered, yes, you will get a planning document, regardless of how good the process is, but now is the one time we get to think ahead about what we want for the engagement process. She asked who had ideas. Jon Bockian said he liked Jenn Goldson's comment about creating practical, doable proposals with the community. Allen Gallagher agreed that he would like viable proposals. Maria Rose said she would like to inform as many taxpayers as possible about "the people's purse," and specifically mentioned the Armenian

population. Susan Steele said she would like to see this become the glue that binds people together in a common, optimistic effort. Dennis Duff added that the CPA lost 60-40 percent, then passed 60-40 percent, so people are watching. Gideon Schreiber expressed the importance of getting people to understand what the funds are all about so they can start envisioning what they can do for proposals. Bob DiRico said we need to educate as many groups of people as possible. Jenn Goldson suggested that education will lead to a wide array of interesting project proposals. Jason Cohen liked the idea of the CPC and its projects bringing diverse groups together, working toward a common goal, and unity. Elodia Thomas suggested that the community needs more engaging events, like Faire on the Square, to bring people together to learn about the CPA. Opportunities. Jon Bockian said a broad base of participants would be an indicator of success. Elodia Thomas reiterated that outreach is critically important to get a balance and a wide array of projects. Jenn Goldson asked the CPC how they would know they were successful. Allen Gallagher answered, lots of applications for projects. Jason Cohen answered, a lot of variety in proposals. Maria Rose answered, a diverse group of proposals. Elodia Thomas said she would like to see projects come from all districts – A, B, C, and D. Susan Steele said she would like people to be so engaged that they stop CPC members on the street to converse about CPC.

Jenn Goldson asked about the stakeholder team – who is on it and who would you want on it? She suggested finding liaisons to bring people onto team. CPC members made a variety of suggestions: Allen Gallagher (town council), Maria Rose (historic, planning, parks, religious organizations), Dennis Duff (Boys and Girls Club), Nancy Hammett (senior citizens, kitchen table conversation group), Gideon Schreiber (Council on Aging), Jon Bockian (parents of school-aged children, small businesses), Jason Cohen (Education/Community Foundation).

Jenn Goldson asked about ways to reach out. Maria Rose volunteered to reach out to the Armenian community. Gideon Schreiber suggested Peter Centola, Direction of Recreation, because he has a list-serve and holds public forums. Jon Bockian suggested the MLK, Jr., breakfast. Lisa Feltner suggested having something at the inauguration in January. Elodia Thomas suggested Friday night football games. Jenn Goldson suggested forming a subcommittee to work on outreach; two or three people from the committee to discuss the process. Lanae Handy offered to be involved, once she becomes official as did Jon Bockian and Maria Rose.

- **Phase II add-on discussion and outreach strategy**

Anna presented the current engagement plan. Nancy Hammett asked how focus groups were being put together. Anna Callahan said it should be a list of stakeholders, of differing opinions, with different objectives, and she would like the CPC to help put that list together. Anna Callahan presented a listed of possible add-ons to be funded, to tie in with the existing engagement plan. She said they mention these now, at the beginning of the process, to start thinking about where they might fit in, thinking about the project holistically. Jon Bockian asked about translation services. Anna Callahan responded that Bang the Table has an automated language tool. Jenn Goldson suggested putting a question on Bang the Table, right up front, about whether the community wants translation services. Elodia Thomas voiced concern about

community response and said she considers the library to be the best “crossroads” of the town. Gideon Schreiber suggested involving Project Literacy at the library. Lisa Feltner suggested the foreign language departments at the public schools as a good resource.

- **Public forum outreach**

Anna Callahan segued to the outreach checklist. Elodia Thomas noted that the checklist had been shared with the committee. Anna Callahan reviewed the checklist, noting which tasks being handled by JM Goldson, and asked that each CPC member invite 10 people by phone/in person, post flyers at one location, attend/volunteer at actual event (first public forum, 12/4/19). Elodia stated that she had reserved Tufts Health Plan for the public meeting. Anna Callahan asked for an estimate of the number of attendees. Gideon Schreiber estimated 40-60 people because of the time of year and conflicts. Anna Callahan asked for volunteers to distribute flyers. Lisa Feltner suggested posting a flyer to WCATV. Elodia said she would email the flyer and post it to social media once it is available.

- **Overview of Bang the Table**

Anna Callahan presented an example of an existing Bang the Table website. Elodia Thomas suggested Watertown Community Preservation as her choice for the website address. Anna Callahan explained that, in order to access/use the site, users must register. Nancy Hammett added that a good question to include is, how long have you lived in Watertown. Anna Callahan also offered the possibility of paper copies of surveys for people who are not tech users or tech savvy. The survey will launch at the first public forum, scheduled for Wednesday, December 4, 2019. JM Goldson will take survey comments from CPC, as well as comments on draft resource profiles, until Monday, December 11, 2019, at 5:00 p.m. At the following CPC meeting, scheduled for Thursday, December 12, 2019, there will be a debrief of the first community forum, finalization of focus group initiations, and a review of the resource profile.

Jenn Goldson asked if anyone had any questions. Susan Steele asked about being able to answer difficult questions. Jenn Goldson suggested doing some research, homework, read project spotlights. She also invited Lanae Handy to come to the JM Goldson office to have lunch and talk informally about CPA. Maria Rose said she has a fear of CPC members giving different answers to the public’s questions. Jon Bockian cautioned CPC members to refrain from giving definitive answers until there is a written proposal.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

Dennis Duff made a motion to delete the word “she” on page two, fifth paragraph of the October 7, 2019 minutes. Maria Rose pointed to page three, section five, slightly more than halfway down, of the special interim meeting minutes, where she clarified her answer. Dennis Duff noted that on the first page of the October 17, 2019 minutes, under approval of minutes, it should note that Dennis Duff and Susan Steele voted present during the acceptance of the minutes, since they were not at that particular meeting. Jon Bockian requested to strike the last sentence on page two of the October 17, 2019 minutes and replace with statement that the CPC vote to adopt the plan will not necessarily take place on May 20, 2020. Jon Bockian made a motion to accept the minutes. Dennis Duff seconded the motion. All CPC members present voted in favor.

4. New Business

Meetings: Susan Steele suggested the CPC meet on November 21, 2019. Jon Bockian asked if the flyers would be ready by then. Elodia Thomas asked if the agenda should be about community outreach or something more general. Jon Bockian suggested continuing the discussion of community engagement in preparation of the first public forum on December 4, 2019. Elodia Thomas asked the CPC if they still wanted to meet on December 19, 2019. Maria Rose answered, no. All CPC members present voted for no meeting on December 19, 2019. Other scheduled dates were discussed; focus groups scheduled for January 2020, regularly scheduled CPC meetings on January 15, 2020 and February 20, 2020, and second public forum on February 27, 2020.

Logo contest: Elodia Thomas met with Marcia Ciro for help with the logo contest, and she is still trying to contact Dan Dressler of Watertown High School.

- Jason Cohen made a motion to approve the proposal of the student logo contest. Dennis Duff seconds the motion. All CPC members unanimously approve the motion present.

5. Adjournment

Dennis Duff made a motion to adjourn. Bob DiRico seconded the motion. All CPC members who were present voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 p.m.