

03-08-23 Minutes

Meeting (virtual) of the Deerfield Community Preservation Committee
March 8, 2023

Members present: Lili Dwight, Alan Swedlund(Chair), Frank Leone (Vice-Chair), Kathy Sylvester, Sean Libbey, David Lawless, Ben Bensen (Clerk)

Guests present: Annalee Wulfkuhle

Minutes: Kathy moved, Frank seconded approval; all agreed to accept the minutes from the last meeting.

Letter of support from FRCOG: A large document; the State coordinator was very positive. Few corrections. Very positive response. Lili moved that the report be sent to; Kathy seconded that we send our letter of support to Melissa Cryan at the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Senior Housing: Analee to lead discussion. The Planning Board is very supportive. Initial request for \$86,000 for Berkshire Design Group, but additional property may become available (details to follow). Timing is important, and an additional \$420,000 requested. Need to move ahead and not wait a whole year. "If we don't need money, we're not going to use it. \$500,000 was set aside with Town Meeting approval in 2021."

Kathy asked about the money involved; it was set aside as "Senior Housing," not just housing. I made a note to check "Question #6" referring to seniors as an "underserved resource" of the community.

David appreciated the comprehensive nature of the original application's request for \$86,000; noting that the additional request for \$420,000 was relatively unspecific by comparison.

Lili noted that each step would be followed, and no money would be drawn if things didn't add up according to specific guidelines. The challenge is the CPC's schedule makes it important to do this now. There are contemplated negotiations. The money is allocated for Senior Housing.

Alan agreed that the basic proposal is very good, as are the numbers. He wants to avoid/prevent glitches and make sure that the committee presents it well to Town Meeting, which may mean clarifying the application. The Selectboard must be fully on board. We have time, and should be able to work this all out. Suggests coordinating with the Selectboard.

Lili wondered about rewording the application to include the additional amount, specified for "purchase of property or commitment to a site in the campus" to make this possible. May require environmentally sensitive deconstruction of the Town Hall.

Lili will amend the application as needed. Alan noted that this was appropriate.

Analee noted that Warrant Articles should be submitted by March 20. She felt that the suggestions make a lot more sense and "brings it all together."

Thus, Lili suggests that the final ask will be slightly more than the original \$500,000 ask.

Alan said that the application is provisionally on track, and that we can soon expect to vote to recommend.

The 1888 Building Proposal to be discussed next week, when Tim Hilchey of the Selectboard can be present. The subcommittee of the CCI has been working on this. Originally the plan was to restore the former school (1888 Building) with access to the third floor. Prices have exploded, so the original goals are unlikely to be funded. Simple restoration will exceed \$2,000,000. Repurposing the building to be useful will require much more, and making use of the third floor will require several million more. Trying to design and coordinate with the Library's expansion means a greater sense of "the campus." At the same time, it should be noted that CPA funds are down 34% for 2023 from 2022. The Selectboard would like to gather all the various monies and be able to borrow against these funds; it looks like the future loan payments would come out of CPA funds. It's pretty complicated. Bonding is common in Massachusetts, but this is big. There may be a Fall Town Meeting; we also don't know what funds will come to the town from the State.

Alan noted that there's a fair amount of money in CPA funds to be used, but the town can't bond against many projected revenues, just some.

Need to find all supporting documents for this project; the current application is for "Phase II," but we need to see what was requested earlier. Not all of the money authorized has been spent yet. We have to advise applicants how to properly prepare their applications in order to secure funding. There's limited time. Can we give feedback to Tim Hilchey to clarify their proposal. Unsure whether two separate proposals can be presented as choices. The 1888 Request is for a lot of money, not all of it in our hands.

Questions for Stuart Saginor, including the scope of "Historic" funds' designation. Alan noted the helpful notes in the Commonwealth's CPC website. Sean asked about how much of CPC funds could be reserved for certain projects if the Town plans to bond against this income. The state match was good, but is not guaranteed.

Lili moved, Kathy seconded that we adjourn. All approved. Meeting adjourned at: 7:34pm

Next meeting on March 15, 2023 at 6:15pm