

Meeting of the Deerfield Community Preservation Committee - March 15, 2023 - [Held virtually via Zoom]

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

Guests: Tim Hilchey (Selectboard), Emily Johnson (Applicant)

Meeting called to order 6:19pm

Minutes reviewed. Lili moved, Kathy seconded that they be approved as amended. All in favor.

2023 Applications under review. Tim apologized for not attending last week. He also apologized for some "digital misdirection." Supporting documents include one of 91 pages and another of 43, which are necessary to secure funding from Federal government. Documents must be made available to Senators Markey and Warren, and Representative McGovern. The Selectboard is the sponsoring body, and proposes \$3.342 million to repair and rebuild the 1888 building (with a completed third floor). Will need to borrow against anticipated CPA receipts. Our ability to apply for these loans is not lining up with the March CPC schedule. If we could get the \$2 or \$3 or \$4 million earmark requested we could have clearer answers for Town Meeting. There is a design-build contract from Boston covering these three options; ideally we could do a full design with a more local architect. In all cases, delay will surely mean a higher final cost. There's a lot to explain; it's complicated.

Alan noted that this proposal will come before Town Meeting in the Fall, and that we're being encouraged to support the most complete proposal. Bonding will be calculated by the Town's Treasurer and Accountant, funded by CPA receipts and anticipated receipts.

What has been done so far? \$325,000 remains, and ours have been spent on construction plans. Plans were stopped, awaiting decision of the plan to be approved.

Are we time-limited? If so, will this create issues. There are a lot of "ifs," and we could table the proposal if need be. Tim suggested that the CPC should determine when to go ahead. The best project (option #1) has the most variables, and will involve significantly more borrowing. Meanwhile, the smallest project would be easiest to fund. The proposal could be amended later.

Kathy asked if the water damage has been dealt with. Tim understands that the remediation involves dehumidifiers and a pump; the rest of the building is OK; some rain damage to the bricks has been mitigated. The slate roof should be used if possible for long-term value, and historical value. The chimney is not sound and needs to be reinforced. These proposals require adherence to Massachusetts air circulation standards. The exterior should be preserved in its historic form.

Alan asked about the funding mechanism. CPC receipts should be increasing. So how many years would those funds be unavailable for other projects. A 40 year USDA loan with no prepayment penalty could be repaid within 12 ½ years if just CPC funds were used (against tax receipts, not anticipated matching funds from the State). The Selectboard needs to consider other sources and means. Alan is concerned about presentation of the concept to voters. Will need fine tuning. Lili anticipated an annual process of fine-tuning the decision.

Tim suggested that we may not have complete answers by August, and the CPC could then decide which project to come to. The 10% historic preservation requirement would be tied up until the project is completed.

Despite the problems of delay, mitigation can't proceed now because it was previously and specifically committed, but Alan urged that we do in order to protect the envelope. Tim will check on possibilities of rebudgeting.

Lili moved that we table recommendation on this project until it's ready for review. Frank seconded. All approved.

Joint proposal to the Deerfield and Greenfield CPA committees for a feasibility to provide an enhanced and safer route for bicycles. Greenfield is asking for \$20,000; Deerfield is seeking \$30,000. Emily has applied as an individual, but the Open Space Committee anticipated to be the sponsor. The area at Cheapside is not safe for bicycling. Not all supporting documentation was available at this meeting. Some of the plan may involve State land, which could slow things down. No decision required tonight.

Library proposal info came in today; Alan has a paper copy. CPA money has been used to digitize documents which will be stored at PVMA/Historic Deerfield. \$700; a reasonable request, and one we've made in past years.

Next meeting March 29 at 6:15pm. Because it will be after the Town Warrant deadline, "placeholders" could be requested from Town Administrator.

Ben moved, Lili seconded; all approved adjourning at 7:38.