

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES
February 9, 2021

A regular meeting of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) was held on Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 6:00 pm via remote participation through Zoom. Present were Chair Bart Hoskins, Vice Chair Carole Hamilton, Ed Moriarty, Deborah Greel, Mark Pattison, Bob Callahan and John Boris. Also present was Jane Guy of the City of Salem Department of Planning & Community Development.

Public Comment

Kerry Murphy stated that she was present representing the request for the Mack Park Food Farm.

Margaret Wood, Project Manager, stated that she was present to support Patricia O'Brien and represent the request for Forest River Park for Jenna Ide who could not be present.

Update on Available CPA Funds

Ms. Guy stated that the balance of available CPA funds remains at \$190,147.98. In March or April, when the State releases the match percentage and the Assessor's Office provides the estimate of surcharge revenues, she will provide a draft budget for the upcoming funding round. To it will be added \$75,000 for Footprint and deducted \$100,000 for Bertram Field bond.

Review and Vote on Revised Funding Request – Forest River Outdoor Recreation and Nature Center, Forest River Park

Ms. Guy stated that Deborah Greel's husband is the engineer of record for the project. Ms. Greel left the meeting.

Ms. Guy stated that Ms. Hamilton has filed a Disclosure with the Mayor's Office that her daughter is employed with the City's Engineering Department, who may be Clerk of the Works for the Forest River project. She may participate in the discussion and vote.

Jenna Ide, Director of Capital Projects & Municipal Operations, submitted an application for \$175,000 to go toward the pool and bathhouse in order for the city to proceed with contracts so that they facilities can be opened by fall. A Powerpoint presentation was shared.

Ms. O'Brien stated that the City is reapplying and changed it from an annual ask to a one-time ask. She stated it is an expensive project and they are applying for various grants. The entire project is \$13m and they are asking for \$175,000 from CPA. They are hoping to open potentially this summer, so this is the last opportunity to request from the CPA. The bathhouse will have a small function room that can be used for community functions and educational opportunities. They partner with the YMCA for programming and free swim lessons.

Mr. Hoskins asked about the timing and purpose of applying ahead of the normal funding round.

Ms. O'Brien stated that based on the last application, the CPC indicated that they would have the opportunity to come. With funding available now, it would provide the opportunity to keep the project on schedule.

Ms. Wood stated that construction has started with an opening date for early fall. The Mayor has asked for the schedule to be accelerated so that the pool can be open this summer. The current plan is to open in July, barring potential bumps. The contractor is on the site and working, doing excavation and utility work.

Ms. O'Brien stated that the bathhouse needs to be open in the same timeline as the pool. The splash pad and finishing touches may not be until the fall.

Mr. Moriarty stated that timing is always important in projects. He stated that this is an important project and that he is very impressed by all the criteria it meets in terms of historic, recreational, community and multiple uses. He stated that if funds could be provided now, knowing that there will be additional funds later, he was supportive of a fair and measured response. He stated that there is an urgency to bridge a gap for funding to get the pool and bathhouse ready for summer. He suggested a \$130,000 funding recommendation from the CPC, which would be a very solid commitment for a very important community asset that can be utilized for future generations.

Mr. Callahan stated that he was 100% in support of the project, noting that it has been in planning for a number of years. He stated that CPA funding would be put to good use in this project and that it benefits the entire community and the surrounding communities. He stated that Forest River is a beautiful park that gets unbelievable use, that he would support \$175,000, noting it is a wise investment. He stated that he felt it would probably affect more people in Salem than any other project.

Mr. Hoskins stated that for the size of the project and the original ask, this is a modest ask. He stated that he shared the views on the importance of the project.

VOTE: Mr. Callahan made a motion to recommend the project for an award of \$175,000 under Recreation: Rehabilitation/Restoration. Mr. Boris seconded the motion. Mr. Hoskins, Ms. Hamilton, Mr. Pattison, Mr. Callahan and Mr. Boris voted in favor. Mr. Moriarty voted in opposition. The motion so carried.

Ms. O'Brien thanked the CPC for their support, noting it is an amazing project and the funding will allow them to stay on schedule.

Review and Vote on Request for Funding Increase – City of Salem Health Department – Mack Park Food Farm

Ms. Greel returned to the meeting.

The CPC was provided with a letter from Kerry Murphy of the Salem Board of Health, requesting an additional \$15,000 to purchase and construct a hoop house and walk-in cooler at the Mack Park Food Farm site, so that they are ready for April 1.

Ms. Murphy stated that the Mack Park Food Farm has become a very widely supported community project, and that approximately 80 volunteers have harvested, planted and distributed over \$7000 lbs of food free to the community through free farmer's markets and the Salem Food Pantry. She stated that the hoop house will help double that amount, by extending the growing season by about 12 weeks. It will also help save funds on plants by starting the

seeds on site and be a source of revenue by growing and selling the seedlings on site, making the project more sustainable. The food forest will be planted this spring and will be open to the public. Refrigeration will be a tremendous help when they start the growing season. The cooler would go inside the hoop house. Eventually there will be a storage shed built, and the cooler will be moved there.

Mr. Callahan stated that the project came before Park and Recreation, because it is on park property. He noted that some on the Commission were a little skeptical at first and that he questioned if they would be able to do it. He stated that, not only did they do it, but it is phenomenal. He stated that to be able to expand the season and preserve the food longer makes it more beneficial and valuable to the city. He noted that everyone in Salem gets to use it and that he is in full support of the full amount.

Mr. Moriarty stated that he felt it inappropriate to have zero funds going forward, in hopes to have increased future revenue. He did not feel it good business to use every dollar available. He stated that it is a great project, but it should be balanced against sound fiscal management, so as not to leave no remaining funds. He stated that he felt \$10,000 would be a fair recommendation, without depleted all the remaining funds.

Ms. Hamilton was in disagreement. She stated that the CPC knows there will be funds coming in the spring and the CPC is fortunate to have funding available now. She noted that the CPC has frequently committed all of its funds during the funding round and saw no harm in fully funding a project that has this much benefit to the community. She added that food has been an issue for people locally and nationally through the pandemic and that this will allow them to produce twice as much food in the next season.

Ms. Greel agreed with Ms. Hamilton. She noted that a food forest will be added, as well, which will exponentially increase what they are producing and that they bring the community together. She stated that she felt they deserve the full support right now and that the budget is extremely small for what they are able to do.

VOTE: Ms. Hamilton made a motion to recommend funding of an additional \$15,000. Mr. Greel seconded the motion. Mr. Hoskins, Ms. Hamilton, Ms. Greel, Mr. Pattison, Mr. Callahan and Mr. Boris voted in favor. Mr. Moriarty, voted in opposition. The motion so carried.

Other Business

Approval of Minutes – 1/12/21

MOTION/VOTE: Ms. Greel made a motion to approve the minutes of 1/12/21. Mr. Boris seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion so carried.

Conflict of Interest

Ms. Guy stated that last Thursday, she emailed a communication from the City Clerk's Office regarding a State mandatory requirement for members regarding Conflict of Interest. Members have until the end of next week to sign and return the acknowledgement form, as well as take the on-line ethics training and send a copy of the certificate to her.

Next Meeting(s):

Ms. Guy stated that the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 9, 2021, which will tentatively be to review any additional Step 1 eligibility applications received and/or to approve the budget if the State match is announced.

There being no further business, Ms. Greel made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Moriarty seconded the motion; all were in favor, and the motion so carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane A. Guy
Administrator