



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Community Preservation Committee

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Approved 4/4/13

Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes February 25, 2013

Members in attendance: John Campbell, Chairman; Todd Helwig; Chris Kellogg; Peter Martin; Sean Durkin; Andy Clark; Debra Comeau

Members excused: Kathleen Polanowicz, Michelle Gillespie

Others in attendance: Elaine Rowe, Board Secretary; Jim Forbush, Northborough Baseball Association; Dan Nason, DPW Director

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:08PM.

Public Hearing to Consider FY2014 CPA Applications

- **Open Space/Recreation Category**
 - **Memorial Field Viewing Deck Renovation (\$37,415)**
 - **Assabet Park Shading Project (\$57,345)**

Chairman Campbell summarized briefly. He noted that, after the application was submitted and hearings were held and voted on, it came to his attention that Town Administrator John Coderre had some concerns about the two projects. Specifically, there were concerns about the applications and the fact that the project did not comply with Massachusetts General Laws with regards to prevailing wage requirements. In addition, there was some question about whether there was appropriate support for it. Given the situation, Chairman Campbell attended a meeting of the Recreation Commission at which the DPW Director and the Northborough Baseball Association were also present. After much discussion, it was agreed that both the Recreation Commission and the Baseball Association could support an appropriately drafted application.

Chairman Campbell explained that he had convened this additional meeting of the CPC to reconsider the vote taken on the original applications. Mr. Kellogg noted that the new recommendation is to request \$15,000 for the design and quotation phase of the Memorial Field project. He questioned what the estimated construction costs would be at the prevailing wage rate. Mr. Durkin noted that, in the past, many of the recreation projects have been completed through sweat equity and a willingness of vendors to negotiate. He voiced his understanding that \$15,000 will be used for engineering specifications, after which the project will go out for sealed bids at prevailing wage.

Mr. Kellogg commented that it appears that it will now take 2 years to get this type of project through the process, since CPC funding will be needed in order to obtain an estimate. Mr. Durkin agreed. Mr. Kellogg suggested that, if the CPC can get some understanding about what the construction costs might be, they could approve funding for it in its entirety with the understanding that any excess would come back to the CPC. Mr. Durkin noted that trying to rush the process could open the town up to a lawsuit.

Mr. Kellogg questioned whether the Committee could vote to approve what it believes to be more than enough to fund both the design work and construction, but there was concern that this might create undo scrutiny at Town Meeting and result in the warrant article being voted down.

Ms. Comeau asked if \$15,000 is needed for each of the two projects. Chairman Campbell explained that the Committee is discussing only the Memorial Field project. Dan Nason explained that, by law, the town cannot issue a contract on a project without funds already being allocated for it. Mr. Kellogg reiterated his desire for the Committee to have a process to enable them to expedite these types of projects.

Mr. Helwig voiced concern that the town might not get the vote at next year's Town Meeting, which would result in money being wasted on the design phase for a project that doesn't come to fruition. Chairman Campbell agreed.

John Coderre questioned how the Committee would be able to arrive at a legitimate estimate for a project without going through the design phase, and suggested that this would be the inappropriate process for a warrant article.

Chairman Campbell suggested that the Committee consider moving up their application deadline considerably, to afford sufficient time to vet out those that are not properly prepared and enable applicants to make any necessary modifications for consideration. Mr. Kellogg agreed that this would be beneficial, but would still not resolve the issue of it being a two year process to get through construction.

Mr. Durkin commented that the same situation will pertain to the Splash Pad project. He noted that a local builder had done the specification for what appears to be a fairly simple structure, but having to comply with prevailing wage laws will likely add about \$25,000 to the cost of the project.

Chairman Campbell commented that the Committee has no way of knowing whether the \$57,345 approved for the Splash Pad project will be sufficient. Mr. Durkin stated that the prevailing wage requirement becomes a real concern for all projects going forward. Mr. Helwig questioned what type of projects will require a 2 year CPC cycle and which will not.

Mr. Kellogg reiterated that the CPC needs to enforce an earlier deadline for submission of applications. Chairman Campbell asked if town staff has the resources to do some of the estimating work that is needed, and voiced his opinion that we seem to be spending too much money for consulting and estimating. Mr. Nason indicated that the town would not have the resources for this type of thing, but noted that there are some engineering firms that are well acquainted with the public bidding process. He commented that it would be better to spend the money up front to get a good set of plans and specifications in order to avoid change orders in the midst of construction.

Chairman Campbell suggested that the CPC could opt to use money from their administration fund to go out and get a bid done, which would enable an applicant to have a proper specification when applying for funding.

Mr. Clark stated that it could easily take 2 months to get a bid. Mr. Kellogg commented that it seems unlikely that the Memorial Field project could get through both the design and bid phases this year. Chairman Campbell noted that the Recreation Commission and the Baseball Association have both voiced support for this project, with the new application reflecting the compromised position. Mr.

Nason stated that the process will take the project through the actual bidding, which will enable us to go to Town Meeting with a viable estimate. Mr. Durkin indicated that it will be difficult to gauge potential price increases in construction over a two year period.

Mr. Kellogg asked how the CPC should proceed with these two projects now, given the change in process. He agreed that moving the application deadline up would be beneficial, but also commented that using the administrative fund to cover the design process would be preferable if it would enable the CPC to get the process back to a one year cycle. He suggested that the CPC further explore how we can minimize the timeline. Mr. Helwig suggested researching how other towns are handling these types of projects. Mr. Campbell noted that the Committee has the authority to put a maximum of 5% into the administrative fund, which can then be used at the Committee's discretion.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to rescind the Committee's approval of \$37,415 in funding for the Memorial Field Viewing Deck Renovation. Todd Helwig seconded, vote unanimous.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to rescind the Committee's approval of \$57,345 in funding for the Assabet Park Shading Project. Todd Helwig seconded, vote unanimous.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to approve funding in the amount of \$15,000 for the preparation of an engineering specification for the Memorial Field Viewing Deck Renovation. Todd Helwig seconded, vote unanimous.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to approve funding in the amount of \$15,000 for the design work for the Assabet Park Shading Project. Andy Clark seconded, vote unanimous.

Next meeting will be held April 4, 2013.

Minutes of the Meeting of January 10, 2013 – Peter Martin made a motion to accept the Minutes of the Meeting of January 10, 2013 as submitted. Sean Durkin seconded, vote unanimous

Todd Helwig made a motion to close both hearings. Peter Martin seconded, vote unanimous.

Chairman Campbell stated that the CPC application needs to clearly detail the criteria.

Adjourned at 8:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Rowe
Board Secretary