

City of Newton



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**Community Preservation Committee**

**MINUTES**

March 10, 2020

The meeting was held on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 beginning at 7:30 pm in Room 205 of Newton City Hall. Community Preservation Committee (CPC) members present included Byron Dunker, Susan Lunin, Robert Maloney, Jennifer Molinsky, Peter Sargent and Martin Smargiassi. Members Mark Armstrong, Dan Brody, and Rick Kronish were absent. Planning and Development Director Barney Heath, Assistant City Solicitor Maura O'Keefe, and Community Preservation Program Manager Lara Kritzer were also present. Ms. Kritzer served as recorder.

Mr. Sargent agreed to act as Chair for this meeting and all member introduced themselves at this time.

[Blue, underlined phrases](#) below are links to additional information online.

**Proposals & Projects**

There were no new proposals or project updates at this time.

**Committee Business**

Review of results from 2019 CPA Program community survey – Ms. Kritzer presented a brief PowerPoint presentation with the results from the 2019 SurveyMonkey online survey. The survey received a total of 442 responses, with the majority of respondents identifying themselves as either not familiar with the CPA program (37%) or familiar with the program through articles (36%). Responses were received from every neighborhood in Newton, with West Newton, Newton Center and Auburndale having the highest number of responses.

Ms. Kritzer explained that the current presentation focused on the results of the multiple-choice questions. Two additional question involved written responses and would be analyzed and presented separately. The multiple-choice questions were designed to develop a better understanding of which categories of funding the public felt were most important to the community. The first question asked the respondent to rate the importance of the category to Newton as either “Most Important,” “More Important,” “Less Important,” or “Least Important.” Respondents ranked Recreation land the highest “Most Important” need for the community, followed by Affordable Housing, Open Space, and Historic Resources. Open Space ranked highest in “More Important,” with Recreation Land next and Affordable Housing and Historic Resources tied for third. Historic Resources ranked highest in the “Less Important” category as well as the “Least Important” categories. Despite ranking second for

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“Most Important,” Affordable Housing ranked second in both “Less Important” and “Least Important.” Ms. Kritzer noted that overall, Recreation was ranked as the highest need in the community, followed by Open Space, Affordable Housing, and lastly, Historic Resources.

The second question and graph presented asked the public how they would adjust the existing CPA funding targets by either increasing the targets by 5%, lowering them by 5%, or leaving them as currently proposed. Nearly 80% of the respondents thought that the “Improve Existing Open Space or Recreation Land” should be increased. Nearly 50% of respondents also wanted to see the “Acquiring/Protecting Open Space or Recreation Land” target increased as well. For “Affordable Housing,” the results were nearly equal between increasing, decreasing, and leaving the target as is. For “Historic Resources,” nearly 50% of respondents suggested that the number be decreased, while 40% wanted it to remain the same.

The last graphed question noted that the current CPA funding guidelines prioritized projects that had a broad public benefit, public access, and public ownership, and asked whether these guidelines were still “Always Important”, “Usually Important,” or “Depends on the Project.” By a wide margin, the majority of respondents thought that Broad Public Benefits, Public Access, and Public Ownership of Open Space and Recreation Land were always important, but that Public Ownership of Historic Resources depended on the project.

Following the review of the graphs, Ms. Kritzer presented a chart showing that there were spikes in responses in June and December. It was noted that these spikes corresponded to outreach conducted by the girls’ soccer teams. The responses supporting an increase in funding for Recreational Land also corresponded to those periods in time. Members discussed the results and it was noted that after adjusting for the spikes from the sport team supporters, the responses largely corresponded to the existing funding guidelines. Mr. Dunker noted that he was working to encourage the Parks and Recreation Department to apply for projects on existing recreational land, and that a future application was anticipated for Livingston Cove.

Ms. Molinsky stated that it was clear that more information needed to be provided to the public about the CPA program. Ms. Kritzer stated that increasing the visibility of the program was something that staff planned to work on over the next year and that funding had already been set aside to create flyers to be included in tax notices and that Alice Ingerson had already started researching the cost of new signage before her retirement.

Review of draft budget for FY21 – Ms. Kritzer passed around an updated draft budget and explained that the budget had been revised to correct the Webster Wood debt service numbers. The bond sale had been extremely successful allowing for a much lower interest rate and annual debt service amount than initially anticipated. The City had received a premium for the sale which brought down the bonded amount from \$15 million to \$14,363,000 at a true interest rate of 2.0327%. Ms. Kritzer explained that the actual debt service amount for FY21 would be \$697,699.08, which was over \$200,000 less than originally anticipated. This amount would be paid by the existing Open Space Reserve as well as an additional \$217,961.77 set aside specifically for the debt service.

Mr. Maloney moved to approve the draft FY21 CPA fund budget as submitted. Ms. Lunin seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Approval of minutes for February 11, 2020 – Members reviewed the draft minutes for the February 11 joint meeting between the CPC and the Planning Board and made corrections at this time. Ms. Molinsky moved to approve the February 11 minutes as revised. Mr. Smargiassi seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Executive Session

Mr. Sargent suggested that the Committee go into Executive Session for the purpose of a periodic review of draft executive session minutes. The following Roll Call vote was called to enter into Executive Session:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Byron Dunker	x	
Susan Lunin	x	
Robert Maloney	x	
Jennifer Molinsky	x	
Peter Sargent	x	
Martin Smargiassi	x	

The Committee entered into Executive Session at this time.

Following a second unanimous Roll Call vote, the Committee returned to its open meeting.

Mr. Sargent stated that he was planning to step down from the Committee after four-plus years. He stated that Newton had a wealth of residents with affordable housing expertise and that he had already reached out to a potential replacement with that experience. He had also reached out to the Mayor's office and would work with them to initiate the appointment process.

Mr. Maloney moved to adjourn the CPC meeting. Mr. Sargent seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M.