



# TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Community Preservation Committee

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## Community Preservation Committee

### Zoom Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2021

Approved January 27, 2022

**Members (Remotely):** John Campbell (Chairman), Millie Milton, Peter Martin, Andy Clark, Todd Helwig, Leslie Harrison, Andrew Dowd, Jeff Leland

**Members Absent:** None

**Others (Remotely):** Kathy Joubert (Town Planner), Jason Little (Finance Director), Norm Corbin

Chair John Campbell opened the remote meeting at 7:08 p.m. and made the announcement that the open meeting of the Northborough Community Preservation Committee is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of June 16, 2021, An Act Relative to Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency. All members of the CPC are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely. This Order allows the CPC to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along the deliberations of the meeting. The public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda unless the Chair notes otherwise. Members of the public who wish to view the live stream of this meeting can do so by going to Northborough remote meetings on YouTube via the link listed on the agenda. Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting will not feature public comment. The process was explained.

Jason Little, Finance Director RE: Funding Status – Mr. Little gave a presentation on the CPA Finance Update. He discussed the Revenue Budget which determined what the 10% thresholds were for the FY23 budget. The town received a 39.42% reimbursement on 11/16/21 which was significantly higher than what was projected for the budget. Mr. Little recommended a revenue budget of \$750K for FY23 that the Committee work with. He also discussed the balances in each of the Reserves; \$881,836 is the available amount to use for recommendations to town meeting. The fund balances plus the FY23 estimated revenue amounts to \$1.5 million to consider being available to spend on projects and annual obligations. At least 10% must be spent or reserved for Open Space, Historic Resources and Affordable Housing (\$75K) and not more than 5% for Administration (\$37,500). The debt service for White Cliffs is \$185,800.

Mr. Campbell asked if the Affordable Housing \$65,200 approved in FY22 was available in FY23; Mr. Little confirmed that amount is available for appropriation. Mr. Little also confirmed that the numbers in the Affordable Housing Corporation application are correct; the amount will be what is left in those articles. Mr. Little was thanked for his presentation.

**Review of FY2023 Applications:**

1. Brigham Street Burial Ground Beautification (\$137,500) – Ms. Harrison said the application is to remove dead trees, delineate the property with a fence along the front, and provide parking by the town; the budgeted amount was prepared by the DPW.
2. Howard Street Cemetery Signage for Kizer Section (\$5,124) – Ms. Harrison said the newer section is not very well marked. There will be a sign on the Whitney Street end and another on the farthest boundary entrance on Howard Street.
3. Historical Society Shutter Restoration (\$55,000) – No comments.
4. Assabet Park Fencing (\$20,000) – Mr. Campbell said the application is to replace and repair chain link fencing along the street on the Route 135 side. He will ask the applicant how this couldn't have been covered as part of the Assabet Park project that was approved by the Committee at town meeting for over \$500K. Members agreed to wait and see if there is money left over when the project is completed.
5. Design and Project Management for Dog Park (\$35,500) – The application is for the feasibility assessment for various sites.
6. Design of ADA Accessible Trail at Senior Center (\$28,500) – Mr. Campbell commented that it's a good project for a trail that's a short loop that begins and ends at the Senior Center
7. Preliminary Design for Pedestrian Access on Aqueduct Bridge (\$133,658) – The application is for the preliminary design detail and feasibility study for the first phase to open pedestrian access on the Aqueduct bridge to connect the Aqueduct the trails.
8. Conservation Fund (\$400,000) – The application is for additional funds for land acquisition and/or conservation restrictions.
9. Housing Authority Creation of Eight Senior Rental Units (\$1,440,000) – The application is linked to the Northborough Affordable Housing Corporation (\$603,178 transfer of existing funds to Housing Authority project) which is more of a recommendation to utilize existing funds that were awarded to the NAHC held by the town as well as the current Historic reserves amounts. The net need for the application is \$836,821. It includes \$1 million of state funding (a \$2.4 million project with \$1 million from the state and \$200K from Housing Authority reserves). Mr. Dowd said one of the biggest benefits is that it would give us more handicap accessible units, which there is a great need for, and hopes it will be given consideration this year.

Mr. Campbell gave data for the cumulative percentage that they and the town are approving for the three key categories: Historical, Open Space Rec, and Affordable Housing. Based on what was approved last year, we are close to \$5 million for Open Space Rec; \$4.5 million for Historical; and \$1.7 million in Affordable Housing. The Master Plan includes focus on affordable housing and senior housing, etc. The project has a lot of support and follows a lot of the plans that are in the Master Plan. Should the Committee consider approving it, it is a significant portion of what we have available.

White Cliffs along with the Administration will account for over \$220K in new revenues that they will be committed to, leaving approximately \$530K in new revenues plus, the potential \$784K reserves. Mr.

Helwig commented that White Cliffs is not done yet and maybe before we start another large project, we finish this project first. Mr. Clark asked if the White Cliffs Committee had any progress on the direction they want to go in. Mr. Helwig said there is no proposal yet; the last figure mentioned was over \$6 million to do something with it; the project remains, and something needs to happen with it. Mr. Campbell explained that when they judge projects, they look at suitability, community support, and urgency and timeliness. There is no current plan for what we need money for, and when we do know, how do we justify it as valid again for CPA. Without a plan, we are not being asked to consider anything other than the bond. Mr. Helwig said there should be money in the bank for when the time arises that we need it. Mr. Campbell said since we are not there yet, we don't have anything to strategize for. Mr. Dowd commented that it's been a year since the Committee met and doesn't see any real action between the time they have to make their decisions. He thought it's going to remain an unknown and the numbers mentioned were very conservative. Mr. Clark said we need to have money for the solution when the plan comes along.

Mr. Campbell asked if the Affordable Housing project could be broken into phases. Mr. Dowd said the state requires a full commitment before they would provide funding. Ms. Joubert said the Housing Authority project is something that has been actively in the works for over a year. Rick Leaf from the Affordable Housing Corporation and Lynn Marino have been working with the DCHD. Originally there wasn't any money coming from the state. Because it is a construction project and contingent that the state needs to see the funding, they want to see it all in place before they release their funding.

Ms. Joubert will check the availability for the upcoming meetings of January 6<sup>th</sup>, January 27<sup>th</sup> and tentatively February 3, 2022.

**Old/New Business:**

Consideration of Minutes (04.08.21) – Mr. Clark made a motion to accept the April 8, 2021 meeting minutes as submitted; Ms. Harrison seconded; roll call vote: Dowd-yes; Clark-yes; Helwig-yes; Milton-yes; Leland-yes; Harrison-yes; Martin-yes; Campbell-yes; motion approved.

Mr. Campbell announced that this is Ms. Joubert's last meeting; she is retiring as of December 31<sup>st</sup>. She said these have been her very favorite people on her very favorite board and it's been a joy to work on this Committee. It has been so pleasurable and fun; not like work at all. Mr. Campbell, as well as the rest of the members said it has been a pleasure working with her and she is irreplaceable.

Mr. Martin made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Milton seconded; roll call vote: Dowd-yes; Clark-yes; Helwig-yes; Milton-yes; Leland-yes; Harrison-yes; Martin-yes; Campbell-yes; motion approved.

The meeting ended at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Rich  
Recording Secretary