

**RECEIVED***By Karen Wilber at 9:57 am, Jan 06, 2023*

# TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Community Preservation Committee

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**Community Preservation Committee  
Public Hearing For FY2024 CPC Applications  
December 1, 2022 Minutes  
Approved January 5, 2023**

**Members Present:** John Campbell, Chairman; Andy Clark, Sean Durkin, Jeff Leland; Todd Helwig; Leslie Harrison; Andy Dowd

**Members Absent:** Peter Martin, Millie Milton

**Others Present:** Norm Corbin; Mike Duchesneau; Ashley Davies; Amy Poretsky; Scott Charpentier, DPW Director; Laurie Connors, Planning Director; Brian Belfer; Greg Martineau, ARHS Superintendent of Schools; Becky Pellegrino, ARHS Director of Finance; Keith Lavoie, ARHS Assistant Superintendent of Operation; Scott Rogers; Julianne Hirsh

This meeting was held in-person in the Selectman's Meeting Room, Town Hall, 63 Main Street; broadcast live on television channels Verizon 30 and Charter 192; and broadcast with a Live Stream link on YouTube. The meeting opened promptly at 7pm with an introduction from the Chair.

Mr. Campbell asked Applicants to keep presentations to approximately 10 minutes and to allow several minutes for questions. He asked Applicants to emphasize the applicability of the program for CPA funds, level of community support and sense of urgency for this year's cycle.

**First Parish Church Steeple Repairs (\$200,000)**—Committee members discussed amongst themselves as the Applicant was not present. Mr. Campbell said the application had been reviewed by Town Counsel as there had been questions with previous CPA applications regarding religious institutions and their applicability to receive funding from a public grant. Town Counsel determined that the application and its purpose for preservation of the steeple can move forward.

Mr. Corbin had provided a ranking of projects to the CPC at the Historic District Commission's November meeting. Projects given top priority included the White Cliffs bond payment and the steeple repairs to the First Parish Church. Medium priority was given to the window restoration of the Historical Society Building. Lower priority was given to the Historic Reserves Account and the Library Historic Marker.

**Window Restoration and Preservation of Historical Society Building (\$71,300)**—Mike Duchesneau provided the scope for this project, restoration of 24 double-hung wooden windows, which received unanimous support from the Northborough Historic District Commission (NHDC). Photos were shared documenting the current state of the windows. Heartwood Window Restoration was the recommended window restorer. The project will only entail restoration of the windows; the stops and weatherstripping will be included but there is no contingency for any other repairs. That is anticipated for the next phase, but since the vendor does not offer those services, they may need to look into having carpentry work

done that would entail removing the trim and possibly repair the jams at a later date. Mr. Duchesneau wanted to keep the funding request reasonable.

Ms. Harrison asked if the project can be done over a multiple-year period and if there was consideration given to doing half the windows completely rather than just doing the restoration of all the windows now with finish carpentry done later. Mr. Duchesneau said that was a possibility. Other sources of funding are also being considered, particularly a grant from the Mass Historical Commission. Mr. Campbell asked Mr. Duchesneau to do more research and present that at the following CPC meeting.

**Funding the Historic Reserves Account (\$350,000)**—Mr. Corbin said the HDC finished its historic preservation plan two months prior and in doing so, realized there were several large projects coming in the next five years. Since there is no money currently in this account, the Commission felt it would be beneficial to have \$1M in three years for future historic preservation. He realized that there could be a challenge in requesting \$350,000 this year in light of the other historic funding requests. Projects they have been approached with for future consideration include: the Aqueduct walkway, an elevator for Trinity Church, and more renovations for the Historical Society Building; however, his primary concern is for White Cliffs. If there is any request for additional funding for the restoration of any part of White Cliffs, they will not have the money for that in this account.

Mr. Clark noted that Mr. Corbin was asking for half of all new revenue (\$770,000) to be placed into Historic Reserves. This Committee has traditionally funded this account well.

**Library Historic Marker (\$5,060)**—Mr. Corbin said the NHDC has a Historical Marker Program and has determined a number of markers to be placed over the next several years. The focus is on historical properties on Main Street, and specifically, the Gale Library.

**Aqueduct Multi Use Trail Feasibility Study (\$100,000)**—Ms. Davies said the Trails Committee was instrumental in having the MWRA allow access on the Aqueduct Trail, although use is limited and she wasn't sure the public was aware it was there. With the influx of ARPA funding and Complete Streets funding discussions, she felt it was time to formalize this trail to make it a real community asset. A feasibility study is needed to determine the cost of trail improvements, what is needed for safe and accessible road crossings and if any easements will be needed on private ways. The bridge project is gaining steam and having this feasibility study done will help when they go to the State for trail funding. Connectivity to regional trails was discussed, and Ms. Davies noted that the CMRPC has put this as a priority in one of their studies. The community listed it as top priority in the Master Plan and Complete Streets surveys; the Master Plan Implementation Committee voiced its support, as did Open Space.

Mr. Clark noted that the proposal from WDA did not include anticipated construction costs. Ms. Davies said they can provide estimates of construction costs after the study.

Mr. Durkin noted that the trail was earmarked for paving, and if that was for all 6.6 miles of the trail. Mr. Charpentier said yes; stone dust is problematic with regard to wheelchair access/stroller access. Mr. Helwig thought there were certain State requirements when working with paving, but wasn't certain. He

wondered if they were even allowed to change the surface. Ms. Davies said that had been addressed and was acceptable as long as the Town maintained it. Mr. Helwig asked if study will review the use of stone dust versus paving. Ms. Davies said that could be put in the RFP if that was the desired outcome.

Ms. Harrison asked about Mr. Corbin's assertion that the trail was 4 miles long, not 6.6. Ms. Davies said she would have to check, the CMRPC listed it at 6.6 miles. Mr. Corbin said GIS showed the trail is 4.4 miles. Ms. Davies could go back to WDA to see how that might affect the cost of the study.

Mr. Campbell said since their questions tended to be the area that the feasibility study would encompass, he would like them to define it more, perhaps use Westborough as a guide.

**Construction of ADA Accessible Trail at Senior Center (\$370,000)**—Mr. Charpentier and Brian Belfer presented. CPC approved funding of the design of the trail last year. Three different surfaces have been provided as a cost-saving measure: an asphalt loop; a route with stone dust; existing, wooded trails which provide connectivity to two existing trail heads. The goal is to provide an accessible trail network around the Senior Center for the entire community. Mr. Charpentier provided an update on the current design work being done and permits being pulled. Providing that funding is approved, the project will be bid out and construction started next year.

Mr. Belfer added that these projects have received strong, positive feedback from the community.

Mr. Campbell asked if it was anticipated that there would be any leftover funds from the money allocated for the design study. Mr. Charpentier said the scope of work provided by Weston and Sampson includes everything through development of construction documents but not construction administration services; that would be included in the next phase in the event this project is funded.

**Northborough Dog Park (\$347,500)**—Mr. Charpentier said \$35,500 in CPA funds were allocated last year for the siting and preliminary design of a dog park. Consultants from Weston and Sampson, along with staff and some citizen liaison, reviewed Town-owned parcels to identify viable locations using specific criteria and narrowed the search down to four sites. Schematics were done of those four sites and a public input session was held on October 11 with substantial outreach conducted prior to that. Mr. Charpentier said that although that meeting was held remotely, there was significant participation from the public and comments received in support of a Town-owned Dog Park as well as comments specific to the particular sites. The vast majority of comments were in support of the proposed Boundary Street location. The next step is to go before the BOS to present those four sites, the findings of their public input session, and the path they've taken; that Board will ultimately decide on the site as it is Town-owned property.

Mr. Charpentier said they worked with their design consultant to come up with the costs associated with a conceptual design. They are not asking for full funding of a dog park as they are expecting to receive grant funding from the Stanton Foundation. After the BOS selects the site, the engineer will proceed with the preliminary design and prepare permit-level drawings.

Mr. Dowd, a member of the Housing Authority, noted concerns have been raised relating to the properties owned and/or managed by the Housing Authority. It was his understanding that those properties utilize well water. They are waiting to get an opinion from DHCD to see if a dog park is allowed to be located next to one of these properties. Mr. Charpentier said if the Boundary Street location was to be selected and the abutting properties have wells, they would confirm that the design is outside of the code of effluence in accordance with the BOH's regulations.

Mr. Durkin asked Ms. Connors what would happen in the event CPA funds are approved for this project but not approved by the Stanton Foundation.

Ms. Connors said the Foundation's website indicates that they fund 10 dog parks per year and if construction grant applications are submitted early in the year, it's more likely to receive funding for that round. The maximum funding for a design grant is \$22,500 and the maximum funding for a construction grant is \$225,000; they are interested in applying for the maximum on each. A 10% match is required during the application process. Mr. Charpentier said that in that case, the Town Warrant Article would have to indicate that the CPA funds would be awarded contingent upon receiving funding from the foundation. Ms. Connors said another solution would be to scale back the size to bring down costs.

Mr. Durkin asked why synthetic turf was being proposed and if it was required. Mr. Charpentier said it was for maintenance purposes. Ms. Connors said that the area of 'high-intensity play' essentially becomes a mud pit where grass is unable to grow.

Mr. Helwig asked Mr. Campbell if the Open Space and Recreation Committees had any recommendations for the order of priority, similar to what the Historic District Commission had provided, noting that the projects before them were requesting more funds than were available. Mr. Campbell said that Open Space did not have a specific discussion about priorities, however they did support both of the applications for the Dog Park and the Senior Center trail, he can speak for the committee that it infers its support for those phase two projects being priority. Ms. Harrison agreed.

Mr. Charpentier added that a dog park was identified as a top priority of the Master Plan under Open Space & Recreation. Ms. Connors noted it has been a goal of the Town's for at least eighteen years.

**ARHS Athletic Complex Project (\$1,575,145)**—Keith Lavoie and Becky Pellegrino were present to lead the discussion. Mr. Campbell said this is a very large request, and somewhat unexpected by the committee.

Mr. Lavoie said the project was long overdue for the district. He planned to address the current conditions as well as the master plan they are proposing and how that ties into the financials. With the help of an engineer, they are at a 90% cost estimate with full schematics. It is a joint venture between both Northborough and Southborough.

Mr. Lavoie said the goal is to create an environment for students and staff to learn and compete, as well as additional recreation opportunities for the community. These improvements would benefit recreation

programs, as there is a high demand for usage from youth sports. They've had to turn away a lot of users as they need to rest their fields.

Proposal includes-replacement of the track; replacement of the stadium field with a synthetic turf surface; replacement of the grand stand to make it ADA compliant; replacement of the stadium lights with LED lighting; replacement of the JV field to a turf field that would then become a multi-purpose field. They would also like to bring the infrastructure for lighting to that space, where it does not now currently exist. There is hope at some point to light an additional field which would really expand functionality. Tennis courts will retain their footprint with 9 courts, but 2 would be lined for pickleball.

Ms. Pellegrino said the cost is approximately \$7.5M. They've had conversations with the CPC at the State level and been advised as to what is eligible and what is not. As part of the regional agreement between both towns, both communities would be responsible for a portion of the project based on enrollments over the previous four years; Northborough's is 62.33% and Southborough's would be 37.67%.

Ms. Pellegrino said at this time, based on internal conversations, they are requesting funding for the portion of the Tennis Courts, which is different than what was submitted, the request is for \$352,701.56.

Mr. Clark asked if it would then go for debt inclusion at Town Meeting if not approved by the CPC. Ms. Pellegrino said two warrant articles are being prepared; one for the full project and one that would be contingent on whether this project was approved by the CPC. This has been presented to Southborough. Mr. Helwig asked if Southborough confirmed they can spend CPC money in Northborough. It was not voted on but their Counsel approved it was possible.

Mr. Durkin asked if there would be fees attached to rental of the facilities by youth sports organizations. Mr. Lavoie indicated there will be a facility rental agreement in place, comparable to what there is now. Mr. Durkin said that basically the same funding group will be charged for the use; funding comes from the parents of children using those facilities. Parents are paying for the facility and then having to pay to use the facility. Ms. Pellegrino answered that fees collected would be used to pay for the upkeep of the facility. Mr. Durkin suspected that fees could be increased; Mr. Lavoie said they may but they are not at that point.

Mr. Martineau added that there are reduced fees in place that are more favorable for Town programs than for private organizations. He believed this would allow them to generate a lot more revenue from private organizations that they aren't able to access now due to the condition of their facilities.

Mr. Durkin asked if they have equally revised their request for Southborough to just include the Tennis courts; Mr. Lavoie said not formally but they believed that is their intention.

When asked by Mr. Campbell how they arrived at their plan to request only for the tennis courts, Mr. Martineau said they were told by Southborough that they did not have the capacity to fund their anticipated portion. Additionally, they want to be aligned with what the CPC has capacity for. Furthermore, the tennis courts are probably the part of the facility that gets the most community use. Those courts are open to the public, after hours and on weekends, and are heavily used.

Mr. Campbell said it was unusual to request CPA funding for this project and perhaps they were trying to offset what the total would be to make it more amenable at Town Meeting in both towns. Northborough has supported the school quite well over the years. Mr. Helwig said it is not unlike what they have approved in the past but Ms. Harrison thought those projects were not specifically for the school but for Recreation Department programs. Mr. Campbell said he didn't remember youth sports having much access allowed on a regular basis at the high school. Mr. Lavoie thought that was accurate, these improvements will provide expanded opportunities for Recreation in both towns.

Mr. Campbell said unfortunately, CPA funds can't be used for turf, a precedent that goes back 10 or more years. Discussion followed. A revised application will be submitted for consideration. He couldn't imagine going to Town Meeting to borrow \$1.7M for this against CPA when normally the Town would be asked to borrow/fund it, so they would be looking to see if there was any way to include this request in their current revenue and reserves. Admittedly, it will be a challenge.

Mr. Martineau said they were doing their due diligence to make sure they are going through all the proper channels. He respected the position the committee was in and appreciated consideration.

**Conservation Fund (\$77,000)**—Mr. Campbell, as Chair of the Open Space Committee, said they wanted to submit a request since they feel funding the Conservation Fund on a continuous basis is a priority. Funds have been used productively in many cases for acquiring and preserving parcels of land; recognizing the challenges that this committee will have, they still wanted to have it included.

**Affordable Housing Development Reserve Fund (\$0; request for extension of funds approved in prior years for NAHC).** Mr. Campbell said there was no application but a request from Rick Leif of the Housing Authority to contribute at least the minimum to the Affordable Housing Reserve, which they are obligated to, and ask that the committee is reauthorizing unspent funds previously approved at Town Meeting, which they have considered each year. Mr. Leif will be present at the January meeting by prior agreement.

**Old/New Business:**

Consideration of Minutes from 11.3.22—Mr. Leland made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Helwig seconded. Five members were in favor, Ms. Harrison and Mr. Dowd abstained as they were not present

Next Meeting Dates—The next CPC meeting is scheduled for January 5. Mr. Campbell said that if it were the desire of this committee to close this meeting but continue this public hearing to that date, that such a motion be made; Ms. Harrison: so moved, Mr. Leland seconded. All were in favor.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:07pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Cilley  
Recording Secretary