

**TOWN OF ACTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE (CPC) VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

**January 26, 2021**

**7:30 PM**

**MEETING HELD BY ZOOM TELECONFERENCE AND AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC**

**Note:** The Town of Acton in response to the COVID-19 (Corona Virus) is currently following the guidance from the Acton Board of Health, Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the CDC regarding the virus and steps communities can take to prevent the spread. The Town Hall is closed to the public.

**Present:** Ray Yacoub (Chair), Nancy Kolb, William Alesbury, Dean Charter, Alissa Nicol (Associate), Carolyn Kilpatrick, Steve Trimble (Clerk), Victoria Beyer, Walter Foster

**Absent:** none

**Others Present:** Ms. Kristen Guichard, Ms. Melissa Rier, Mr. Joe Will, Ms. Claudia Hardy, Ms. Donna Miller, Ms. Jennifer Brooke, Mr. Paul Swyden, Ms. Annie Hammill, Mr. Jim Coleman, Ms. Kara Lafferty, Mr. Nate Ogdahl

Mr. Yacoub (Chair) opened the meeting at 7:30 PM. The Chair read the notice regarding virtual meetings and how the public could access and participate in the meeting. All votes will be by roll call.

**MEETING HELD BY ZOOM TELECONFERENCE AND AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC**

**I. Regular Business**

Meeting start Committee disposition: "Ayes" Ms. Kilpatrick, Mr. Alesbury, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Ms. Nicol, Mr. Foster, Mr. Trimble, Ms. Beyer, Mr. Yacoub.

**1. Citizens' Concerns (7:34 PM - 7:35 PM)**

- a. Mr. Yacoub requested from Ms. Guichard if there were any attendees with citizens' concerns outside of the planned project overviews. Ms. Guichard responded no.

**2. Review Meeting Minutes (7:35 PM – 7:43 PM)**

- a. Mr. Yacoub requested a motion to approve the January 12, 2021 CPC Minutes.
- b. Mr. Alesbury moved to approve the minutes for January 12, 2021 seconded by Ms. Kolb.
- c. Updates were made to text in the Community Housing Program Fund on comments read by Ms. Kolb that were sent to her from Ms. Janet Adachi.
- d. Committee Disposition: "Ayes" Ms. Kilpatrick, Mr. Alesbury, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Ms. Nicol, Mr. Foster, Mr. Trimble, Ms. Beyer, Mr. Yacoub.
- e. Motion approved unanimously to accept the January 12, 2021 Minutes as written as final.

**3. Administrative Updates & Scheduling (agenda item handled out of stated sequence; (8:58 PM – 9:36 PM)**

- a. Mr. Yacoub noted an earlier note by Mr. Alesbury on something noted in the plan in the town report regarding "leverage funds" as it pertains to the CPA. There appears to be a provision stating that any raised funds must be spent first prior to the allotted CPA funding when town owned land is involved. Case in point, Gardner field should not have spent any CPA money as it raised approximately \$30K. Mr. Alesbury suggested we fully discuss and provide clear guidance going forward. Ms. Beyer wondered if this was stated in the award letter. This is not specific to Gardner but would apply to Jones Field Playground as well.
- b. The next Committee meeting is February 9, 2021.

- c. At Mr. Yacoub's request, Mr. Trimble moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Kohl.
- d. Committee Disposition: "Ayes" Mr. Yacoub, Ms. Kilpatrick, Ms. Beyer, Mr. Alesbury, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Ms. Nicol, Mr. Foster, Mr. Trimble.
- e. Motion to adjourn the January 26, 2021 meeting approved unanimously.

## II. New/Special Business

### Project Hearings

1. **7:40PM – Gardner Playground and Parking Construction: Phase 2 (7:37 PM – 8:30; presented by Ms. Rier and Mr. Swyden)**
  - a. Ms. Rier introduced the project. Gardner is centrally located in West Acton and was last updated 25 years ago. Playgrounds typically last twenty years. The playground is overdue for updates to meet current safety and accessibility standards. Refer to the presentation for more details. Note that the funding request presentation was modified in the last day. If funded work would begin this coming season in three phases.
  - b. Mr. Swyden proceeded to review the planned layout and revised 2 year planned request. Mr. Yacoub noted the revised amount of 2021 for \$350k and noted that no vote will be taken. Ms. Rier of the expected \$420k Phase 1 cost \$30k was raised and more will be raised to meet the \$420k. Mr. Yacoub inquired if the group got \$300k? Ms. Rier said playgrounds are projects that can modify the approach or save to later phase like to the Jones Playground work.
  - c. Ms. Nicol thanked the nearly 40 people here supporting the project and asked about an earmark. Mr. Swyden noted the earmark request to the state was turned down. Ms. Nicol noted the parking lot and design keeping a large tree. She noted concern about one-third of the parking lot covered by the tree canopy. Mr. Yacoub requested design questions be deferred to planning and not be discussed at this session.
  - d. Mr. Charter asked BoS to prioritize Recreation Department which he noted was completed.
  - e. Ms. Kilpatrick inquired if anything was cut. Mr. Swyden noted that the proposal contained approximately the same funding over 2 years. He noted these are estimates only based on consulting estimates from Ms. Brooke.
  - f. Mr. Trimble asked for planned parking use. Mr. Swyden noted the Farmers Market was looking to use in addition to access for private events and the October Fest. Mr. Trimble noted concern with several expensive items (e.g. fencing) that seemed unnecessary.
  - g. Mr. Foster asked about private monies raised and was reminded of the \$30k raised and planned \$40k anticipated mentioned earlier in the presentation by Ms. Rier. He appreciated the Farmer's Market understanding as that was not clearly identified in the presentation.
  - h. Ms. Kolb's noted her questions were answered. Ms. Beyer favors the funding between the 2 years. Ms. Beyer noted to research public transportation options.
  - i. Mr. Alesbury asked what role the master plan played into the plan, especially parking. He was hoping for traffic flows, current and future usage models. He noted it was helpful to hear the Farmer's Market is in its goal. He thought part of the Master Plan would address things like basketball and swings which are not in the planned playground. What role did it have? He asked where the estimates came from since Lemon Brook did not qualify the cost and who authored them. Who is going to be the project manager for decisions in the field and budget adherence? Ms. Rier noted she would be the PM. The Master Plan was provided by Ms. Brooke from Lemon Brooke. Ms. Brooke noted Ms. Lafferty and Mr. Swyden came last year with data and provided

several examples.

- j. Mr. Yacouby noted that we were moving too far into design. He noted the Committee is keenly aware of its fiduciary responsibility representing taxpayers in Acton.
- k. Ms. Nicol asked Mr. Yacouby if the CPA required a contingency. Mr. Yacouby stated no.
- l. Ms. Lafferty, Nashoba Road, spoke to parking. Planning suggested the 14 spots do not abut Mass Ave. Large events required police and Gates administration to address traffic needs.

2. **8:30 PM – Jones Playground Surfacing Expansion (8:28 PM – 8:57 PM; presented by Ms. Rier)**

- a. Ms. Rier provided status of Jones. Refer to the presentation for more details.
- b. Ms. Rier noted discussions are underway on plantings and trees. She would like to resurvey the town for Phase II confirmation. The request seeks \$120k for surfacing for fully accessible playground. The project is shovel ready and they would start the work as soon as the funding was approved. The work is fully priced and is easy to manage.
- c. Ms. Rier went over pros and cons of specialty mulch versus proposed surfacing (e.g. ongoing mulch purchase & labor every 2 years. The O'Brien and Sons quote includes removal of chips. The quote is for \$114k but she did ask for \$120k. She would like to install in July and have an official Jones Field Playground Grand Opening Ceremony in August 2021. Mr. Yacouby asked if wood chips estimates were material only. The answer is yes. He noted approximately \$80k in materials only versus \$120k.
- d. Mr. Alesbury noted Gardner showed 22 trees. Each tree was \$1900 per and Jones needs a lot of landscaping. When could phase II be addressed and the books closed? Ms. Rier said Phase I will complete in 2021 and may deliver pickle ball courts (working with private donor). She would like to come back for Phase II. He compared to Gardner – benches, trees, lighting, etc. Ms. Rier noted there was a modest maintenance budget for trees and such as well as some funding left from fundraising. The Jones playground provided a learning experience.
- e. Mr. Charter feels there should be as much accessibility as possible.
- f. Mr. Foster asked if the surfacing was working. Ms. Rier noted the mulch is really the problem as it lands up on the surfacing. He does not have clarity on when this project will complete. He discouraged surveying the town even though it has been 6 years. He is concerned the town might look to the CPC for serial funding of lingering projects that do not conclude. Ms. Rier noted she is fine not resurveying. This committee looks to each group to annually review needs each year.
- g. Mr. Yacouby noted the theme contrasting to Gardner and would like Ms. Rier to tie these together for holistic review.
- h. Ms. Nicol noted the walkway and the trees. Are they planned? Ms. Rier noted the walkway is in planning with public works as their planned walkway might incorporate the Jones field need. She noted brick donation work but that the walkway needs to go first. She is hoping to move forward this spring with the walkway and brickwork.
- i. Ms. Beyer disappointed with where the BoS put it on priority list as it completes the surface and is shovel ready. It should be done as its simple and clean. She felt the town should be on the hook for benches and trees.
- j. Ms. Kilpatrick supports the rubber surfacing. Thank you to Melissa for being so central in the recreation efforts.

Next Scheduled Meeting(s):

2/9/2021	7:40	NARA Sports Pavilion	\$250,000 - R
2/9/2021	8:00	Elm Street Courts Resurfacing	\$240,000 - R
2/9/2021	8:20	Dog Park	\$91,000 - R
2/23/2021	7:40	53 River Street Historic Park	\$100,000 – HR, R
2/23/2021	8:00	Open Space Acquisition/Protection Set-Aside Funds	\$400,000 - OS
2/23/2021	8:20	5% Administrative Support	\$66,478.88

Items used at the meeting:

1. Gardner Playground and Parking Construction: Phase 2 support letter, presentation & application
2. Jones Playground Surfacing Expansion presentation & application
3. CPC Agenda 2021-01-26.pdf
4. Draft CPC Minutes 01 12 21.pdf

Additional materials can be found here: <http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-13028>.

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