

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

**March 23, 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:** Mr. Ray Yacoub (Chair), Mr. Steve Trimble (Clerk), Mr. William Alesbury, Mr. Dean Charter, Mr. Walter Foster, Ms. Carolyn Kilpatrick, Ms. Nancy Kolb, Ms. Alissa Nicol (Associate); Mr. Jim Colman Ms. Victoria Beyer

**Absent:** none

**Others Present:** Ms. Kristen Guichard, Mr. Joe Will, Ms. Clare Siska, Ms. Melissa Rier, Mr. David Martin, Mr. Tom Gillispie. Ms. Janet Adachi, Ms. Theresa O'Leary

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.

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**I. Regular Business**

**1. Citizens' Concerns (7:32 PM - 7:35 PM)**

Mr. Yacoub requested from Ms. Guichard if there were any attendees with citizens' concern. Ms. Guichard responded not at this time.

**2. Review Meeting Minutes (7:35 PM – 7:40 PM)**

- a. Mr. Yacoub requested a motion to approve the March 09, 2021 CPC Minutes.
- b. Ms. Beyer moved to approve the minutes for March 09, 2021 seconded by Ms. Kilpatrick.
- c. Committee Disposition: "Ayes" Ms. Kilpatrick, Mr. Alesbury, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Ms. Nicol, Mr. Foster, Ms. Beyer, Mr. Colman, Mr. Yacoub, Mr. Trimble.
- d. Motion approved unanimously to accept the March 09, 2021 Minutes as amended as final.

**3. Administrative Updates & Scheduling (10:03 PM – 10:14 PM); agenda item handled out of stated sequence**

- a. Ms. Guichard noted the Committee's revised spreadsheet would be out Thursday. It will assume historical are fully funded. Yacoub Next step is hard number input. We may just not fund projects. Each person fills out their revised recommendations. We send in to Kristen and she tabulates.
- b. Mr. Yacoub requested a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Foster seconded by Ms. Kolb.
- c. Committee Disposition: "Ayes" Ms. Kilpatrick, Mr. Alesbury, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Ms. Nicol, Mr. Foster, Ms. Beyer, Mr. Colman, Mr. Yacoub, Mr. Trimble.
- d. Motion to adjourn the March 23, 2021 meeting approved unanimously.

## II. New/Special Business

1. **Review and Approve Recapture Memo (7:40 PM – 7:54 PM)**
  - a. Mr. Yacoub requested Ms. Guichard present and review recaptures. \$242,792 was recaptured.
  - b. Mr. Alesbury noted the Skate Park project deliverable was modified and remaining funds returned for the sake of recordkeeping. He requested that this note be added.
  - c. Mr. Foster asked for the 2016 and 2018 year recaptures split out. Ms. Guichard will provide these numbers.
  - d. Mr. Yacoub asked about the Boxborough funding (\$20k). Mr. Foster noted that it was shared. None of that money came to this committee.
  - e. Mr. Yacoub requested a motion to approve. Motion to approve the Recapture Memo made by Ms. Nicol seconded by Ms. Beyer.
  - f. Committee Disposition: "Ayes" Ms. Kilpatrick, Mr. Alesbury, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Ms. Nicol, Mr. Foster, Ms. Beyer, Mr. Colman, Mr. Yacoub, Mr. Trimble.
  - g. Motion to approve the Recapture Memo approved unanimously.
2. **Review Committee Member's Input to CPC Worksheet (7:54 PM – 8:07 PM)**
  - a. Mr. Yacoub asked to identify the projects that have similar committee funding so that they be moved to the side and focus could be directed on the projects with discrepancies.
  - b. Consensus projects: Textiles & Clothing Collection, Regional Housing Services, CPA Program Support, Main Street Development, 53 River Street, Nara Sports allocated similarly by the committee. Mr. Foster noted the 10% threshold for historical projects, and it hasn't been met and it must be set-aside.
3. **Project Discussion and Deliberations (8:07 PM – 10:03 PM)**
  - a. **Main Street Development.** Mr. Alesbury allocated \$450k. He felt that the \$50k was not hugely impactful to the project. It was funded 100% last year and he recalled asking if lesser amount was offered what the impact it would be? He sees it as a marquee project. He is negotiable but was a balancing decision.
  - b. **Nara Sports Pavilion.** Mr. Colman was lower \$10k and Ms. Nicol \$15k. Ms. Nicol took out \$15k for a staircase she heard was going to be funded (It was noted it was no longer in the estimate and was donated by Ms. Rier). Mr. Yacoub asked about lowering to \$235k. Ms. Rier suggested costs change. Mr. Colman reduced funding down to \$240k and noted he was balancing his funding. Mr. Yacoub and Mr. Alesbury dropped to \$240k. Ms. Kilpatrick, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Mr. Trimble, and Mr. Foster will keep at 250 to get the project completed.
  - c. **Pencil Factory (H).** Ms. Kilpatrick did not want to fund it as it ranked as the least one needed this year. Mr. Yacoub stated not to feel pressured but noted it is predominantly historical. Ms. Beyer asked if it is 50/50 split? The committee can make the judgement call per Mr. Yacoub. We have had projects with split funding and recalls town counsel allows the committee to determine percent. He suggests we make it 100% Historical. It was also noted that even though we have a 10% requirement for Historical for this year's allocation it doesn't mean you need to spend it on a project felt not to be worthy. Ms. Kilpatrick is not opposed. Ms. Nicol, Mr. Colman, Ms. Kilpatrick decided to move to the full \$44k. Mr. Alesbury feels the contingency and rounding up should be removed. Mr. Yacoub was convinced so most of the committee moved to \$40k. Ms. Beyer is standing her ground. She also thinks it should have recreation. Ms. Beyer stays at \$44k.

- d. **Preliminary Archeological and Historical Review.** Mr. Colman cut slightly as they indicated they would likely not use it all this year. Mr. Yacoub thought that as a new endeavor we do not know the real cost. Mr. Alesbury thinking like Mr. Colman. Should we fund a nominal amount and revisit next year with better information?
- e. **Community Housing.** Ms. Nicol looked to split each category 33%. She thinks there are significant funds now and nothing pressing this year so thinking forward to next year. Mr. Yacoub addressed Ms. Nicol's 33% spread per category noting it was never a guardrail for committee decisions. We focus on the 10% statutory. We do not try to provide equal split. Ms. Beyer agreed with Mr. Yacoub and she noted that a few years ago this was looked at and it was roughly 33% even without any design. Mr. Foster supported this position. Ms. Nicol noted she did not do 33% regardless. Biggest reason for \$0 was that they have sufficient funding. Ms. Nicol fine going with committee direction. Mr. Charter cut it as they had funding and trying to balance numbers; he is fine moving to \$50k.
- f. **Open Space:** Ms. Kilpatrick could not take money from the others. Mr. Trimble lowered for Historical 10% requirement. Mr. Charter always advocates for Open Space as we have it forever. Recreation projects last ~25 years as way of comparison. Mr. Alesbury asked from a process standpoint can we overfund a request? Mr. Yacoub responded yes. Ms. Kilpatrick moved up to \$400k.
- g. **53 River Street:** Ms. Beyer at \$90k Mr. Colman at \$84k. Ms. Beyer thought the presenters started at \$100k and came down to \$90k. Mr. Alesbury stated \$100k. There is an April 15th date for a grant decision that may take this off the table. Mr. Charter note he town manager allocated \$250k for next year. Ms. Beyer restored funding to \$100k. Mr. Colman will also move up. Thought there was some flexibility. Ms. Nicol put \$0. She was thinking like Mr. Trimble that a dam removal should not be considered recreation. She will leave at \$0 until 4/15.
- h. **Elm Street –** Mr. Trimble asked if we could allocate \$10k for repairs to defer the larger effort for 3-5 years. Mr. Charter thought not and noted he is at \$0. Ms. Kolb said they are used and will continue to use it even with no repairs this year. Mr. Foster noted they are used non-stop. Mr. Foster thinks it could be moved out but will align with what the committee decides to do. Ms. Kilpatrick funded and will align with the committee. Mr. Colman likes it as a one and done project but is okay to defer a year. Mr. Yacoub mentioned to Mr. Charter that the town should spend some money to repair. This project moves to the consensus efforts with a request to the BoS and Town Manager to repair out of operating budget. Ms. Nicol asked why Elm Street for clarification on when a project is considered extraordinary reconstruction or maintenance, but playgrounds are not considered maintenance. Mr. Yacoub noted it was not maintenance.
- i. **Jones.** Ms. Kilpatrick thought this project could get along with current surface and could wait a year. Ms. Nicol also thinks the same for the wood chip portion. She heard at last meeting we could fund this, and project is complete. It was noted that there are other planned phases to use this large former baseball field effectively and it was planned in phases. Mr. Foster had most difficulty. Jones needs to be finished. Finishes the playground part of the project He will focus funding either here or Gardner. Thinks they are both great projects. Mr. Trimble outlined the Recreation priority: Nara, Elm Street, Gardner and finally Jones. He noted he flipped Jones and Gardner to complete the Jones phase. He noted that tree placement was planned for Arbor day. Regarding Gardner he noted that earlier that day he walked by and it was being used. He felt along with prior comments from Mr. Alesbury that the financials would benefit from more refinement. Mr. Alesbury does not see that the membrane gets the project close to finish. He prefers to get the ballpark areas completed. He noted this

was started in 2019 and is surprised there is not more uproar. Mr. Yacouby appreciated Mr. Alesbury sentiments. It's now moved from ballparks to a functioning field. He sees Jones as a strategic plan, and we should help usher it through to completion. He agrees with Mr. Foster and Mr. Trimble that either Jones or Garner get funding this year but not both. He wants the momentum to continue. Gardner is functioning and Jones was not. Ms. Charter feels the Jones work is a great project and put at \$115k to balance his allocations but is interested in moving back to \$120k. Ms. Kilpatrick wants to go back to \$120k. Ms. Nicol not ready to go to \$120k. Wants to hear from Gardner first. Mr. Colman also supports the \$120k amount.

j. **Gardner:** Five members provided no funding. Mr. Alesbury noted the project's aspirational assumption. It was big and expensive. Cost estimates don't stand up to his inspection. How and why costs changed were not answered to his satisfaction. Lighting and splashpad not rationalized across all Acton parks. He voted some money for some rationalization. How do we address this well-deserved project? Ms. Beyer funded lower but wanted to start with some funding. Mr. Yacouby asked if a revised plan is fair to the other projects? Mr. Charter noted we don't have enough money and we need to defer. A gesture might be town money to advance the design but he's thinking \$50k for design. He agrees it is not ready for prime time. Mr. Colman is there a time limit to spend? It was noted there are 3 years to start the spend but it literally requires 10 cents to qualify. Mr. Colman suggested \$175k. Could it be withheld and turned over with next year's funding? Mr. Foster stated it could be accommodated in our own set-aside by keeping it in general fund and ear mark it for later. It would send a positive message as we have invested in it. He feels it is better than doing \$0. Ms. Nicol is not comfortable that it is complete enough to send out to bid. Mr. Charter thinking of the mechanics and the project funds must be spent in accordance with town. The award letter could state not to spend this year. Mr. Yacouby observation is he wants to keep it at \$0 but thought we had good conversation. Mr. Alesbury shared concerns on spending money. He likes the vote of confidence with clear need and multiple years. There are diseconomies with piecemeal construction as noted with Nara. We would not release until funding is adequate to complete a deliverable. There must be on a \$705k project since we can't fund in one swing. Mr. Colman indicated something must give on the projects and he thought with this one as it is not ready to go.

k. **Dog Park** Trimble presented points supporting the effort but lowered his amount to \$55k. Mr. Alesbury met with committee and he supports at \$25k noting one half supported by BoS so \$25k is what is needed. He noted its low impact and a good use of barren landscape. Mr. Foster same thoughts as \$0 with significant issues and parking and he feels Morrison and South Acton is already here. For him, every other project is more desirable and thought it can put in the town budget. He would like to give all possible funding to open space. The neighbors do not feel they were engaged. Mr. Charter recommended budget \$35k to dog park. He noted the BoS was invested and in charge of work on these properties as they are municipal land. He supports the project. Taxpayers paid a premium for this parcel and to not use it as a courtesy for a few neighbors is not appropriate. We need to put it into use. We have not spent money for the adult population. Ms. Kolb clarifying BoS notes on 25k to dog park to leverage the funds for the grant. The budget – capital plan- is balanced and it will support the grant and construction. Ms. Nicol noted \$21k plus \$4k from increased doc licensing fee. She set allocation at \$40k – removed the \$26k contingency. She noted the Dog Park Committee reviewed 13 locations. Mr. Trimble's citation of 4 were what he thought were the finalist locations. It was noted that the former Main Street Committee was trying to get back some benefit from the \$1.8MM purchase price and had a dog park option all along. This need is that the dog park supports puppies,

disabled, and elderly dogs that cannot use the trails and park. It is an amenity that the town does not have. People leave Acton to go to other towns with parks. Mr. Yacoub and Mr. Trimble feel it is well vetted. Never get around concerns regardless of location. Feels it should be discussed and welcomes a discussion at town meeting. Town meeting will weigh in and does not shy from objections.

- I. Mr. Yacoub requested spreadsheet be updated and sent out with a row for set asides.

**Next Scheduled Meeting(s):**

1. April 7, 2021

**Items used at the meeting:**

1. 2021 Recapture Memo
2. CPC Agenda 2021-03-23.pdf
3. Draft CPC Minutes 03 09 21.pdf

Additional materials can be found here: <http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-13335>.

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