



KATJANA BALLANTYNE  
MAYOR

## CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE



### MINUTES

APRIL 26, 2023

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) virtually held its monthly meeting at 6:30 pm on the GoToMeeting platform in compliance with Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022 regarding the Open Meeting Law during the COVID-19 crisis.

#### MEMBERS

Heather Heimarck, Chair  
Rose White, Vice Chair  
Laura Beretsky  
Jon Bronenkant  
Jahan Habib  
Ryan Kiracofe  
Eric Parkes  
David Turin  
James Zamer

#### STAFF

Roberta Cameron

**Members Present** Heather Heimarck, Jahan Habib, David Turin, Laura Beretsky, Jon Bronenkant, Eric Parkes, Ryan Kiracofe

**Members Absent** Rose White

**Staff Present** Roberta Cameron, Alan Inacio, Paul Goldstein

**Others Present** Karl Alexander, Mystic River Watershed Association

#### Roll Call

Chair Heather Heimarck opened the meeting at 6:35. She reminded everyone that the meeting was being held virtually and being recorded in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023. Cameron introduced new members of the committee joining for the first time and called the roll.

#### Agenda Item 1: Affordable Housing Trust Presentation of Draft Annual Report

Paul Goldstein, Housing Programs Coordinator and staff Liaison to the Affordable Housing Trust, introduced himself and provided an overview of the draft Annual Report of the Affordable Housing Trust. He reviewed the revenues from FY22 and FY23, noting that the Trust received some large one-time payments in addition to the usual CPA and other sources of revenue, totaling \$19.6 million in FY23 alone. He showed that the Trust has committed \$5,183,372 in CPA funds for housing development over the past year, including bonding for Clarendon Hill and a project by SCC at 184 Broadway, as well as \$390,000 toward housing stability programs. He also mentioned that the Trust is in the final stages of a strategic planning process and the final product of that effort will be shared when it is available. They are also drafting new application materials with the help of the strategic planning consultant.

Heimarck asked whether Tenancy Stabilization and Home Pass are new initiatives. Goldstein replied that these are ongoing programs that are being continued or expanded with additional funding. These programs have been in high demand, providing startup costs or curing rental arrears to stabilize housing.

Heimarck asked for more details about the strategic plan process. Goldstein replied that the final report is anticipated in May, 2023.

Heimarck asked for a description of the AHT's application cycle. Goldstein explained that for development projects they have a rolling application cycle. For programs they typically had an RFP process in the fall to

invite applications, but in 2022 they altered the process to account for unspent funds from FY21, where a larger amount had been given out due to Covid and had not yet been spent down by some of the grantees. Instead they did a limited process only for new agencies or to extend programs that had already spent down the FY21 allocation. Going forward they hope to return to a regular fall cycle, but for now they continue to make adjustments to meet demand.

Member Habib asked what was the proportion of loan repayments versus bank interest under the Sources of Revenue table of the report, to which Goldstein estimated 60% is bank interest.

Habib then asked whether there are time constraints or other parameters relating to the large one-time transfers. Goldstein replied that there are no time constraints but they have established guidelines and an application process for the early action acquisition fund and they have a goal to issue loans to providers to get the funds circulating as quickly as possible. The municipal voucher program will target Somerville residents who are most vulnerable to being displaced from the city. It will initially be funded by ARPA, and then matched by City funds through the Trust. One time rehab funding will come from unused Covid Stabilization funds which will pay for urgent repairs to residences owned by SCC which will then be subsidized as project-based units under the municipal voucher program.

## **Agenda Item 2: Project Updates**

Cameron explained that annual report forms for all of the projects that are ongoing or recently completed were included in the meeting packet. Three of the projects identify a need for action by the CPC.

- Cameron introduced Karl Alexander from the Mystic River Watershed Association to present a request for a contract extension for the Blessing of the Bay Park Phase 2 project, which is funding the installation of a meadow. A previous contract extension was set to expire in May of 2023, but germination was delayed due to the drought last year and they need an extra year to ensure that the plantings are established.

Member Turin moved to recommend extending the term of the Blessing of the Bay Phase 2 (FY18) Grant Agreement from its FY18 grant until May, 2025, seconded by Beretsky. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

- Cameron noted that the Vida Real Church intended to ask for additional funds to complete their FY21 project to restore the Broadway Winter Hill Congregational Church Bell Tower, but that no one from the organization was in attendance. Heimarck preferred to wait until representatives from the organization are present to discuss the request.
- Member Bronenkant explained the request for a scope change for the Junction Park project. PSUF was able to use CDBG funding for the park's design, so they requested to shift the \$100,000 CPA grant to

Member Beretsky moved to approve a change in scope so that the FY22 Junction Park grant for design may be used instead for construction, seconded by Habib. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Cameron gave an overview of the remaining project updates that were distributed to members in the meeting packet. Reports were received for almost all of the ongoing or recently completed projects.

Cameron invited committee members to identify any projects for they would like to invite grantees to come to a future meeting to answer questions. Beretsky asked why the Kennedy School project is stalled. Cameron pointed out that, as described in the report, the Kennedy School project is in queue behind other school playground projects. Turin asked whether there was a limitation on how long grants would be held for. Cameron replied that grant agreements for non-City project are limited to 3 years after which they must have an extension approved by City Council (as was recommended for MyWRA this evening). For City projects there is no expiration. It was noted that the conditions in the CPC's latest round of recommendations include a provision that would allow the CPC to rescind funding for projects that don't move forward after 3 years. Cameron posited that it would be within the CPC's right to recommend that funding be pulled from projects that don't get going in the future. Heimarck expressed concern that the funding will not be sufficient by the time the project gets going. It was suggested that this project be brought up for discussion on a future agenda, inviting PSUF to come in to discuss next steps.

Heimarck asked whether the construction documents for the excavation/landscape improvements to create the accessible entrance to Grace Baptist Church (Somerville Hispanic Association for Community Development) had been approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. Member Parkes observed that the HPC has not yet reviewed these plans. Cameron offered to share the plans with planning staff to ensure they align with historic preservation requirements.

Cameron also suggested that she may also put on the agenda to discuss the LHD Small Grant program with Planning staff over the summer.

Cameron asked committee members how they would like to have this project update information presented to them in the future. It was suggested that a spreadsheet include a column with a brief summary along with the original funding and % completed. The applicants are asked to give updates once per year and whenever requesting disbursement of funds (for non-City projects).

### **Agenda Item 3: Adams Magoun House Review of Final Conditions**

Cameron reported that she has had discussions with the legal department over the past several weeks draft the memorandum of agreement, covenant, and model preservation restriction that the applicant must agree to before sending the recommendation to City Council. They are not finished yet, but it appears that they will align with the funding conditions that the CPC recommended, so there will not be any need for the CPC to amend its recommendation.

### **Agenda Item 4: FY24 Application Materials**

Cameron explained that she incorporated the changes that were discussed at the previous meeting into the application instructions and aligned the online application forms with the updated instructions. She had previously asked for the committee's input on changing the procedures to try to simplify the process, but decided against a change for this funding round. Member Kiracofe asked for clarification about the purpose of the Intent Forms. Cameron explained that they help to ensure early communication so that she can collaborate with colleagues on City staff to provide support that applicants need. Committee members discussed several amendments to correct minor typographical errors and to clarify language in the instructions.

Member Bronenkant moved to approve the FY24 Application Materials as amended, seconded by Turin. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Member Turin moved to apply the following conditions to the recommendation for the preservation of the Adams Magoun House, seconded by Habib. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

1. The property will be placed under a covenant that requires the funds to be repaid to the City upon sale of the property within 50 years.
2. The City will have the right of first refusal to acquire the property at the time of sale.
3. The Grantee agrees to execute and record a perpetual preservation restriction on the property, governing exterior and interior alterations. The restriction will include a provision that the house remain visible from the street and will not be obscured by vegetation or the erection of a fence or other structure between Broadway and the existing fence at the rear of the house.
4. A permanent sign with interpretive information will be installed at the front of the property, visible from the sidewalk.
5. Upon commencement of the Project the Grantee agrees to post a sign stating that the Project was funded through the City of Somerville's Community Preservation Act program.
6. The CPA-funded portion of the project must be initiated within three years unless extension is granted by the CPC.
7. CPA funds will be used only for CPA eligible expenses.

#### **Agenda Item 5: 2023 Annual Review Public Engagement Report**

Cameron presented a report on public and stakeholder engagement over the past year. The report is to be included as an appendix to the annual CPP update. Engagement activities included the annual public hearing, interviews with stakeholders, surveys available online and on paper, a Somervision site, and tabling events in the summer/fall and March. Cameron encouraged committee members to take into consideration the representation of people who participated in the stakeholder outreach, and limitations of their knowledge about the types of projects the CPC typically receives for each of the program areas.

Cameron invited committee members to consider the goals and priorities and funding allocation levels in the May meeting. Member Kiracofe suggested that it would be helpful to have some background about what the number/quantity of applications for each program area has been in the past. Cameron summarized the deliberation process for the applications received in the FY23 funding cycle.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Other Business**

Cameron invited committee members to provide input on upcoming agendas, referring to the agenda calendar in the meeting packet.

Cameron announced that she would be away when the next meeting is scheduled and asked committee members whether they would prefer to meet on 5/17 instead, or have Alan Inacio substitute for her on 5/24.

Cameron reminded committee members to submit the Code of Conduct agreement form that the Mayor's administration requested. Cameron explained that there is not a hard deadline for members to sign the form, and that members are encouraged to send questions if they have to.

#### **Adjournment**

Beretsky moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Bronenkant. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

## **Documents and Exhibits**

1. Agenda
2. Affordable Housing Trust Draft Annual Report Spring 2023
3. Annual Reports for projects in progress or recently completed
  - a. Blessing of the Bay FY18 Grant
    - i. Memorandum requesting contract extension
  - b. Broadway House
  - c. Broadway Winter Hill Church Bell Tower
    - i. Memorandum requesting off-cycle funds for budget increase
  - d. Brown School WSNS
  - e. Central Hill Playground
  - f. Dilboy Auxiliary Fields Design
  - g. Elizabeth Peabody House
  - h. Glen Park Community Garden
  - i. Grace Baptist Church (SHA4CD)
  - j. Healey Schoolyard
  - k. Healey Tot Lot
  - l. Henry Hansen Park
  - m. Junction Park
    - i. Memorandum requesting change in project scope
  - n. Kennedy Schoolyard
  - o. LHD Small Grant Program
  - p. Morse Kelley Butterfly Garden
  - q. Somerville Museum
4. Adams-Magoun House Final Recommendation Letter (no amendments needed)
5. FY24 Application Packet
6. Annual Review Outreach Report FY24
7. CPP Goals Summary
8. CPC FY23 Calendar
9. Draft Minutes 3-22-23