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**TOWN OF BELMONT
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

Minutes: Thursday, October 10, 2013, Town Hall Homer Building Gallery, 7:00PM
Present: Floyd Carman, Gloria Leipzig, Anne Marie Mahoney, Paul Solomon,
Margaret Velie
Absent: Joe DeStefano, Lisa Harrington, John Owens, Andres Rojas
Other: Michael Trainor

Paul Solomon called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

Introductory Remarks

Paul Solomon opened the meeting by providing a brief summary of the CPC's progress so far. Preliminary Applications have been voted on and the CPC is waiting for the Final Applications due November 1, 2013.

Final Application Process and Timeline

Floyd Carman reviewed the Final Application process and timeline, with added focus on the need for written support from outside entities whenever applicable and requirement for adequate research into any secondary effects projects will have on the Town's operating budget.

Projects Eligible for Final Applications

Below is the list of project proposals in the order they were presented at the Public Meeting.

- **Thomas Clark House Relocation and Restoration**
 - Presenter: Michael Smith (sponsor)
 - CPA Category: Historic Preservation
 - The Thomas Clark House dates back to 1760 and has maintained many of its original features. Both the interior and exterior of the building are considered to be "museum-quality." The original preliminary application proposed moving the building to the land abutting the Library parking lot, and as such the CPC accepted the preliminary application under the condition that the Library Board of Trustees provide written consent for use of this land. The Library Board of Trustees has since voted against relinquishing their land for this project. Michael Smith is therefore reaching out to the community to find an alternative location for this historic building.
 - Helen Bakeman asked whether any of the wooded area on Royal Road had been considered. Michael Smith noted that the residents of that neighborhood had expressed opposition to the use of this land.
- **Winn Brook Field Renovation**
 - Presenters: Peter Thomson & David Hamer (sponsors)
 - CPA Category: Recreational Land

- David Hamer reviewed the project proposal, which involves resurfacing the Winn Brook field in two phases and creating additional playing space by optimizing the existing field space. Phase 1 of the project is expected to begin in June 2014 and will focus on laying the irrigation, drainage, and well. Phase 2 of the project is expected to begin as early as August 2014 and will focus on extending the irrigation and drainage system to the remainder of the field. Peter Thomson noted that the renovation gives Belmont Second Soccer an opportunity to repay the Town for allowing their group, as well as many other Belmont sports teams, to use the field over the years.
- Vincent Stanton asked if this project would involve a community build like that utilized by Joey's Park. David Hamer said the work would require specialized machinery that should only be used by professionals. Vince Stanton asked what the life expectancy would be, to which Jim Fitzgerald (sponsor of the JV Field Renovation) stated that it is likely that the well would last forever and the field should last for decades if it is resodded every ten years.
- **JV Field Irrigation Upgrade**
 - Presenter: Jim Fitzgerald (sponsor)
 - CPA Category: Recreational Land
 - Upgrade of irrigation is the first step to initiating further improvements to the field. In order to maintain the field, sod will need to be installed on the JV Field. The use of sod will require higher quantities of water and a more efficient distribution system. The requested \$8,700 CPA grant would be used to relieve some of the cost of installation. The additional and ongoing costs are to be paid by the private Soccer and Lacrosse programs. Belmont Soccer Association completed a similar project last year at the Grove St soccer field. The project is scheduled to begin on June 23, 2014, with completion expected by June 27, 2014.
 - Vincent Stanton asked how much of the "wear and tear" on the field is caused from outside users. Jim Fitzgerald estimated that the high school uses the field 75-80% of the time. Other groups only use the field after school hours and on the weekends.
- **Environmental Land Inventory for the Town of Belmont**
 - Presenter: Margaret Velie (presenting on behalf of sponsor Mary Trudeau)
 - CPA Category: Open Space
 - The inventory will be used to inform future CPA projects. Other communities have used similar inventories when evaluating the criteria for Open Space.
 - Helen Bakeman asked who would be performing the work. Margaret Velie stated that no company had been selected at this point. Vincent Stanton asked if the inventory would be used to create new Open Space or to improve usability of current assets. Margaret Velie noted that it could be used to create new Open Space projects and preserve current Open Space. Current legislation prohibits the use of CPA funds for rehabilitating Open Space, but removing invasive species would qualify under preservation.

- **Pedestrian/Bicycle Connection Between Belmont High School & Winn Brook**
 - Presenters: Jeff Roth (sponsor), Amy Dedeo and John Dieckmann (Community Path Advisory Committee)
 - CPA Category: Open Space/Recreational Land
 - Jeff Roth stated that the creation of a pedestrian path between Belmont High School and the Winn Brook neighborhoods would address safety concerns expressed by Belmont residents since the 1970's. The project proposal would determine the feasibility and impact of creating a rail crossing. The MBTA has given verbal approval for this type of project, as it would reduce the illegal trespassing and improve safety. Their written endorsement and approval will be provided as part of the Final Application.
 - Peter Thomson asked whether the project would also expand the commuter rail bike path. Jeff Roth acknowledged that there would be some indirect benefits to the bike path extension, though it is not the focus of the project. Vincent Stanton noted that federal and state funds may be available for the creation of a connecting path.

- **First Time Homebuyer Assistance**
 - Presenter: Judith Feins (Belmont Housing Trust, on behalf of sponsor Alisa Gardner-Todreas)
 - CPA Category: Community Housing
 - The project proposes adding \$375,000 to the pre-existing trust fund in order to give a maximum subsidy of \$150,000 to three qualified first time homebuyers. Applicants would be required to pass the first time homebuyer class and obtain their own mortgage. A deed restriction would be placed on the property to ensure that it maintains its status as an affording housing unit in perpetuity. This would enable the Town to include these properties as part of the inventory of affordable housing units in Belmont. The state requires municipalities to have 10% of properties listed as affordable housing units (currently 3.8% of Belmont properties are affordable housing units).
 - Vincent Stanton asked what the financial impact would be if a subsidy were granted to a house that was originally on the market for 700,000. Judith Feins explained that the first time homebuyer assistance program would not be available for a property of that value. The subsidy would be used for properties valued around \$350,000 or less, and although the deed restriction would mean a reduction to the property taxes the impact to the Town would be modest. Floyd Carman expressed concern that there would be no safety net put in place if homeowners using this program became delinquent with their property taxes, noting that the Housing Trust does not plan to manage these affordable housing units. Judith Feins acknowledged that overseeing of the homeowner's tax status would not be part of the focus of the project, but the income level qualifications required for pre-approval by the banks are designed to filter out candidates who are not financially stable enough to stay current with their housing expenses.

- **Belmont High School Athletic Complex Study**

- Presenter: Floyd Carman (on behalf of sponsors David Kale and Peter Castanino)
- CPA Category: Recreational Land
- Currently the sponsors are focusing much of their energy on the Underwood Pool project and further work is needed to effectively assemble a Final Application for the High School Athletic Complex Study. Additionally, the necessity for this project is in question because major athletic facilities, such as the skating rink and the football field, are not planned to be moved. Floyd Carman stated that he suspects this project may be tabled until a later date.

- **Underwood Pool**

- Presenter: Floyd Carman (on behalf of sponsors David Kale and Peter Castanino)
- CPA Category: Recreational Land
- Paul Solomon acknowledged that the sponsors were currently attending a meeting for the Underwood Pool project and that a debt exclusion would be used to cover much of the project's cost. Floyd Carman stated that CPA funds would only be granted if the voters passed a debt exclusion.
- Helen Bakeman asked if the article for the debt exclusion would be written for the reduced amount with the assumption that the CPA grant will be awarded. Floyd Carman confirmed that the article would not include funds expected to be received from the CPA. Judith Feins asked if the project could be phased. Floyd Carman stated that it could be, but that option has not yet been pursued by the sponsors or the CPC. Anne Marie Lambert asked if the debt exclusion was also dependent on the CPA grant, and Floyd Carman confirmed that it was. Expanding on the codependent relationship between the debt exclusion and the CPA grant, Joe White asked how long the debt exclusion would last if the debt exclusion were to pass but the CPA grant did not. Floyd Carman explained that the debt exclusion would remain active until it was de-authorized, but that the taxpayers would not see an increase on their real estate tax bill because of this project unless both the debt exclusion and the CPA grant are accepted by Town Meeting and the voters of Belmont. Mr. Carman also noted that the Underwood Pool Design Project passed at the Spring 2013 Town Meeting with no opposition, so it is likely that this project would also pass without significant opposition. John Dieckmann asked if the CPA grant would be issued in one installment or if bonding would be used for this project. Floyd Carman stated that the moratorium for CPA bonding in Belmont was still in effect. Anne Goldenberg asked whether the project qualified as Recreational Land or Historic Preservation. Floyd Carman stated that it could fall under both but it unquestionably fulfills the criteria for a CPA Recreational Land project.

- **Electrical Upgrade**

- Presenters: Donna Hamilton (sponsor) and Chuck Laverty (Chairman of the Belmont Housing Authority)
- CPA Category: Community Housing
- Donna Hamilton explained that the project focuses on upgrading the circuits, electrical panels, and wiring for low income families. The low-income units have the original wiring from 1949. Chuck Laverty added that the Housing Authority has many potential projects to address each year and the Belmont Fire Department recommended prioritizing the electrical upgrade due to the potential fire hazard.
- Anne Marie Lambert acknowledged that determining the CPA eligibility for projects can be complicated and asked for how this project qualifies as an allowable CPA project. Paul Solomon explained that the Department of Housing and Community Development released a statement confirming the legitimacy of replacing wiring in order to preserve community housing as a CPA project. Chuck Laverty stated that Chief Frizzell should be able to speak to this point at Town Meeting. Gloria Leipzig concluded by remarking how the upgrade of the interior wiring would couple perfectly with the replacement of the underground wiring that was approved last year.
- **Daniel Butler School Playground Project (Phase II)**
 - Presenter: Kevin Sullivan (sponsor)
 - CPA Category: Recreational Land
 - The poor condition of the park caused it to be shut down for over a year. The initial phase of work has been completed and the park is again open to the public. The proposed project is for the second phase of work needed to complete the initial goal of creating a sustainable recreational facility. Specific work includes increasing security by installing solar-powered motion-sensor lights. The new estimated cost of the project is \$53,000, which will be reflected on the Final Application.
- **Green Enhancement to Belmont High School Parking Lot/Clay Pit Pond**
 - Presenters: Anne Marie Lambert (sponsor) and Fred Domenici (Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds for Belmont Schools)
 - CPA Category: Open Space
 - The project would install a new drainage system to filter out pollutants from storm water that drains into Clay Pit Pond from the High School Parking Lot. The proposal is similar to a project that was completed in Arlington. Sponsors are currently exploring the option of utilizing a community build as part of a public outreach effort to raise awareness of environmental issues. This project is independent from the High School Renovation Project, and because pollution at Clay Pit Pond is an ongoing problem the sponsors do not find any reason to delay work on the new drainage system.
 - Joe White asked for the specific location for where the drainage system would be installed. Anne Marie Lambert stated that work would be focused solely on the

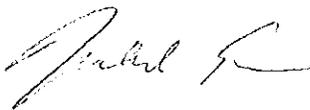
side of the parking lot closest to Clay Pit Pond. Joe white asked for more information on how the drainage system would manage the overflow. Anne Marie Lambert explained that the bioretention basins are capable of eliminating 90% of pollutants before draining into the pond. Anne Goldenberg asked whether other parking lots would be affected. Anne Marie Lambert stated that no other lots would be affected, but acknowledged Joe White's comment that expanding work to other areas may be worth consideration.

- **Belmont Community Moving Image**

- Presenters: Jeffrey Hansell (sponsor) and Paul Carey (Government & Community Producer, Belmont Media Center)
- CPA Category: Historic Preservation
- The National Archive office in Waltham initiated the project in a "call to action" to community media centers, charging them with fulfilling the role of historical repository for their respective communities. This project will focus on digitization and preservation of Belmont's records, using the CPA specifically to pay for equipment and project management. Jeffrey Hansell noted that the preservation would not be limited to the tapes and film already in storage at the Belmont Media Center, as he intends to invite the community to contribute documents to Belmont's Moving Image Archive.
- Anne Marie Lambert asked if this project was related to the Town Clerk's digitization and preservation CPA project that was approved last year. Jeffrey Hansel confirmed that this project was completely independent from the Town Clerk's CPA project.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Trainor