

TOWN OF SHREWSBURY
Richard D. Carney Municipal Office Building
100 Maple Avenue
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545-5398

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

May 1, 2023

LOCATION: Police Station Training Room, 106 Maple Avenue

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jason Molina, Chair
Debra Mooney, Vice Chair
Melanie Magee, Clerk
Gail Aslanian, Historical Commission Representative
Martha Gach, Conservation Commission Representative
Kathleen McSweeney, Housing Authority Representative
Purna Rao, Planning Board Representative

MEMBERS ABSENT:

James LeMay, Parks & Cemetery Commission Representative
Rajesh Velagapudi, At Large Member

STAFF PRESENT:

Christopher McGoldrick, Town Planner

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jason Molina at 6:02 pm. The minutes of the meeting of April 25, 2023 were approved unanimously.

The main business of the meeting was to review any possible changes to the grant application process for the next cycle. Chris McGoldrick went over the CPC memo that will go to Town Meeting members for the Annual Town Meeting. This text describes what CPC is, what are our goals and responsibilities, principles and priorities. It gives specific goals for 2023 for the four areas of CPC concern: Open Space, Recreation, Historic Preservation, and Community Housing. It then lists the Articles 35 through 44 as follows:

Article 35 Budget

Article 36 1830 Brick Schoolhouse

Article 37 No. 5 Schoolhouse

Article 38 Prospect Park Pergola

Article 39 Mt. View Cemetery Gravestone Study

Article 40 Arrowwood Park

Article 41 Townwide Playground Assessment

Article 42 Dean Park Basketball Courts

Article 43 Camp Wunnegan Parking Lot

Article 44 Open Space Land Acquisition

Appendix A Financial Summary

Appendix B Locations that will benefit, with map

Each article will have a brief description. This material will go out to the 240 town meeting members. There is also a video with some of the same information. It was noted that the Finance Committee had reviewed these articles and their questions were addressed.

Next the committee discussed possible changes to the application process and related forms. Jason noted that we had based much of our text on Watertown's, and we did not need to follow their style. The same process was presented in three different forms. After debate, it was decided to eliminate the first version, and keep the second (a graphic presentation) and the third (a narrative with valuable details and links).

The committee next considered the application forms. The committee agreed to "strongly recommend" that applicant fill out the eligibility form before going forward. It is now called the Eligibility Check Form.

Text concerning the timing of applications will allow rolling applications throughout the year, but they must be submitted at least 90 days before a scheduled town meeting. Applications that come in less than 90 days before the town meeting may be held for the next town meeting. Under certain circumstances applications considered "urgent" may be considered inside the 90 day window.

The committee continued to edit the phrasing of forms, drawing on the opinions of Chris, as Planner, and Purna, as a member of the Planning Board, in particular as regards the amount of

detail required in budgets. Broad categories of expenses should be sufficient for most circumstances.

Then the next steps to be considered at the next meeting were noted. This would cover the editing of the Community Preservation Plan and the “heat map” that illustrates the goals and the relative amounts of support they have in the community. Various town committees have still to report back: Conservation Commission, Council on Aging, Select Board, Commission on Disabilities, and Library trustees. Jason said that although some of these groups have no legal responsibility here, he would like to reach out to them to get the most comprehensive input possible. The upcoming Affordable Housing trust roundtable discussions were mentioned, with several CPC members participating.

A further discussion involved the possibilities for encouraging applicants to look for additional sources of funding. After considering the changeable nature of many grant opportunities, it was decided that we could not direct searches for additional funding but we would certainly mention any that were known to us. We could stress the amount we might have available to give out each year, which might not totally cover the needs of the applicant. Chris said we could tell applicants that we recommend that they consider looking at other funding opportunities and could contact the Planning Department for possible additional funding sources. Debra suggested that we could describe our funding as a catalyst for further projects.

Final discussion covered the upcoming Town Meeting and the availability of committee members to possibly answer questions. Chris said that he and staff members of the Planning Department could answer most questions. Applicants should be there as well.

The committee adjourned at 8:15 pm.