



City of New Bedford
Community Preservation Committee
133 William Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740
Telephone: (508) 979.1488

JONATHAN F. MITCHELL
MAYOR

MINUTES
PUBLIC HEARING
January 30, 2018
CITY HALL, ROOM 314 -133 WILLIAM STREET

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Janine da Silva, Chair
Jessica Bailey, Clerk
Arthur Glassman

Sylvia Gomes
Ross Nunes
Elaine Safioleas

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

ABSENT:

Dennis Audette

Tim Walsh

STAFF:

Edward Bates, *Neighborhood Planner*
Anne Louro, *Preservation Planner*

Call to Order

Chair J. da Silva called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

Call the Roll. A formal roll call was conducted confirming members present and absent as stated above.

Brief Introduction to CPA and the CPC

A. Louro gave a brief presentation describing the Community Preservation Act, the FY18 application process and funds available.

Public Hearings

Project Presentations by City Department of Parks, Beaches and Recreation (PBR)

Mary Rapoza, Director of PBR, presented the applications for City park improvements, which was presented as a package and designed to be impactful in the City's first year of CPA funding. She stated that ten projects were being proposed and that they were geographically distributed throughout the City. At the CPC's request she has prioritized the projects, but stated that she and the Mayor's Office believed they were all valuable and important. Ms. Rapoza then presented the applications from highest to lowest priority.

Hazelwood Park

Ms. Rapoza described the 2016 Master Plan which was developed for the park and the Phase 1 improvements which were funded by a state grant. The CPA request would fund Phase 2 of the Master Plan improvements at Hazelwood Park to include improved lighting using the New Bedford style lamp post, new universally accessible pathways, increased size of picnic areas, development of a plaza between the existing historic buildings, relocation of the existing playground, rehabilitation of the bowling greens, and the construction of an amphitheatre.

In response to J. Bailey, Ms. Rapoza stated that the redeveloped path leading from West Rodney French Blvd into the park would be for bicycles and pedestrians, closed to vehicular traffic, and are universally accessible; complimenting the accessibility improvements recently made to the beach across the street. She also stated that there was the possibility that the restoration of the stone wall along West Rodney French Boulevard could be addressed at a later date.

In response to S. Gomes, Ms. Rapoza confirmed that Phase 1 was complete and that within the Phase 2 scope of work, the lighting and universal accessibility would be the priorities within the project.

In response to J. Bailey and A. Glassman, Ms. Rapoza confirmed that the CPA funding would complete all the work recommended within the park's Master Plan, which was less than half completed, and the park improvements would be fully completed in 2019.

Dias Field

Ms. Rapoza described the Dias Field project as the rehabilitation of the public baseball field to include grading lighting, fencing, bleachers, dug outs and a scoreboard. Ms. Rapoza stated the hope was to have the field available to permit for leagues in 2019.

In response to J. Bailey, Ms. Rapoza stated that the rest of the baseball fields at Dias Field are controlled, through a City agreement, by the Greater New Bedford Baseball League, and the subject field would be available to the public by permit.

In response to A. Glassman, Ms. Rapoza was uncertain if the contractor would be able to donate services to the City, as the contract is not within her department, but she could check on the matter.

In response to R. Nunes, Ms. Rapoza stated she did not know when the last time Dias Field received City improvements, noting that it predated her tenure with the City.

Buttonwood Diamond 1 Lighting

Ms. Rapoza stated that Diamond 1 at Buttonwood Park is the premier City diamond available for public access and the proposal is to replace the lighting at this field to include new light structures and associated electrical wiring.

West Beach Boathouse

Ms. Rapoza stated that due to the building's historic status, it will not be required to meet FEMA's flood plain regulations and be raised. The plan is to rehabilitate the building to support the use of non-motorized watercraft rentals within Clark's Cove. The CPA funding would be used to stabilize the roof, stating that the City would be seeking other sources of funding for interior improvements.

In response to S. Gomes, Ms. Rapoza stated that she did not have the interior restoration costs. She also stated that several watercraft rental companies have approached the City seeking a location that is move-in ready

condition. She also stated that a Request for Proposals would be issued for the lease of the building and those local businesses would have the opportunity to submit a proposal and would be a preference for consideration.

In response to J. Bailey, Ms. Rapoza stated that it was not the intent to return to the CPC for interior funding and that she was unsure of the interior's timeline for competition; as funding for that portion of work was being sought. She also stated that the roof was currently leaking, sustained structural damage and would be repaired by City workers in 2019; confirming the submitted budget as accurate.

HarborWalk/CoveWalk Entrances

Ms. Rapoza stated that the HarborWalk and CoveWalk had become popular destinations for residents and visitors and serve as connections to the water and to other peninsula amenities, as well as existing bike lanes. She explained that the entrance improvements would include colored pavement, landscaping, benches, trash barrels and signage.

In response to R. Nunes, Ms. Rapoza confirmed that initial funding which constructed the walkways was insufficient to complete the two proposed entrances. She also stated that during neighborhood public meetings, public support of the walkways and enhanced entrances has been discussed.

In response to J. Bailey, Ms. Rapoza confirmed that the entrance to the CoveWalk located along Cove Road had been funded, and that it did not receive landscaping due to the onset of cold weather, but would be landscaped this spring. Ms. Rapoza also confirmed that two of the entrances had already been funded and completed, and that the two proposed entrance projects would be executed in 2020.

Brooklawn Park Basketball Courts

Ms. Rapoza noted the proximity of the basketball courts location to the softball diamond and the conflicting uses. The proposal is to relocate the basketball courts to be adjacent to the tennis courts and skate park, also noting the great use of basketball courts citywide.

In response to J. Bailey, Ms. Rapoza stated that the many of the proposals are utilizing conceptual drawings, and final designs would not be completed until public engagement and input was secured for the projects.

In response to J. da Silva, Ms. Rapoza confirmed that the relocation of the basketball courts would include new lighting, which would have the added benefit of better illuminating the skate park.

Buttonwood Community Center Parking Lot

Ms. Rapoza stated that the water quality of Buttonwood Pond was called out within the Community Preservation Plan, and the City is exploring multiple options for water quality improvement with the redesign of the parking lot being one of the options, as the current parking lot surface runoff drains into the pond. The redesign would also address Community Center Senior's concerns related to surface water pooling and improved lighting. Ms. Rapoza noted the degree of runoff has resulted in erosion to the picnic area adjacent to the pond, and that DPI has had to provide pea stone fill on several occasions.

In response to A. Glassman, Ms. Rapoza confirmed the budget estimate and that it included a new drainage system.

In response to R. Nunes, Ms. Rapoza stated that the City was working with and finalizing an agreement with a Fairhaven company to provide recreation swan boats on the pond. She also stated that the company, which also operates the swan boats at Roger Williams Park, has committee to hiring a consultant to review and implement water quality initiatives.

In response to J. Bailey, Ms. Rapoza confirmed that the pond has become shallow over the years and that DPI is currently working on permitting for a project which would rebuild the Fuller Parkway dam and dredge the pond. Ms. Rapoza stated that the Friends of Buttonwood Park had seen the parking lot plan, but there had not yet been a community meeting regarding the project.

In response to R. Nunes, Ms. Rapoza stated the Senior Center operated until 3:00 PM.

Buttonwood Park- Brownell Avenue Walking Path Lighting

Ms. Rapoza noted that the Buttonwood Park walking paths are extremely popular and used year round at all hours of the day. There has been articulated concern relative to safety and lighting along a short stretch of pathway along Brownell Avenue which is dark due to the interior location of the path away from the roadway. The CPA funding would add lighting to this location. She noted that the New Bedford style street lamp exists within other areas of the Park, but was not sure that would be the chosen lamp type, as they were still analyzing the appropriate type of light style for that location.

In response to A. Glassman and J. Bailey, Ms. Rapoza confirmed that the lighting would not extend further than the designated location which would terminate at Pauline Street.

In response to R. Nunes, Ms. Rapoza stated that to her knowledge, there were no documented cases of assault in this area of the park. She also stated that they had not yet confirmed the type of lighting and will have to receive additional estimates once the lighting type has been determined. The cost estimate provided was based on the New Bedford style street lamp.

Monte's Park

Ms. Rapoza stated that the park requires improvements and reconsideration of the park design and targeted age group. The proposal would include a new splash pad, new backboards, seating, and replacement of the tot lot with a 5-12 year old playground.

In response to J. Bailey, Ms. Rapoza stated that there had been a community meeting regarding Monte's park, which identified concerns and needs, but did not include specific design features. She anticipated that a future public process would take place prior to final design. She also stated that the budget was a round estimated figure, based on the replacement of the splash pad and the new playground and other associated amenities. She also confirmed the 2021 start date which would allow for public input.

River's End Park

Ms. Rapoza stated that the park provided unique access to the Acushnet River and the diversity of wildlife which exists in this location. Ms. Rapoza described the unique natural style playground which was recently installed at the park. Lack of funding did not allow the installation of plant material or a water play feature within the park, which is being proposed.

In response to J. Bailey, Ms. Rapoza confirmed that the CPA funding would be used to complete the River's End Park project and stated that although the projected start date for this project is 2021, the relatively small scale of the work would most likely allow it to be completed sooner. She also confirmed that the funding would also provide for picnic tables and a shade structure on the existing plaza. Water and electrical service currently exists within the site.

In response to R. Nunes, Ms. Rapoza stated that the Jireh Swift School has expressed interest in utilizing the park for environmental education.

In response to J. Bailey, Ms. Rapoza stated that there was a 10% contingency fee figured into the project estimates, as the proposed 2018 bonding and project timelines stretch for the duration of several years. She also noted that all City park improvements are grant funded and are not part of her department's general budget. Ms. Rapoza stated that she was not in a position to guarantee that all the proposed projects would be executed, however she noted that they were a priority for herself and the Administration. She also stated that, with speaking with CFO Ari Sky, it was her understanding that if a project was not executed the CPA funding could not be reallocated to another project.

MOTION to open the public hearing.

Moved by A. Glassman and seconded by E. Safioleas

Motion carried

Public Comment

Scott Lima, Ward 5 City Councilor, commented on the Hazelwood Park amphitheatre and questioned its origin, popularity, and location; suggesting that it may be better situated at Fort Taber Park.

In response, Ms. Rapoza stated that the idea for an amphitheatre originated from public meetings and that it would not have a roof covering. She referenced the granite seating amphitheatre which exists at the Acushnet River Saw Mill site as the design inspiration for the proposed Hazelwood Park amphitheatre facing West Beach.

Carlos Felix addressed the CPC and asked whether the meeting had been publicly advertized, noting the low turnout of attendees.

In response, A. Louro stated that the meeting had been legally noticed within the New Bedford Standard Times, that flyers had been distributed, and noted the weather conditions which included snow throughout the day and early evening. She added that the previously held CPA public meetings and technical workshop attracted in excess of 75 attendees to each.

S. Gomes added to the response, also noting the weather conditions and the use of Cable Access filming of each meeting to allow for wider public engagement. She encouraged viewers to contact the CPC with questions or concerns related to the projects.

MOTION to close the public hearing.

Moved by A. Glassman and seconded by J. Bailey

Motion carried.

The meeting recessed at 7:25 p.m. and reconvened at 7:30 p.m.

WORK SESSION

Old Business

- **Annual Election of Officers**

After brief discussion the slate of officers was determined.

MOTION to retain J. da Silva as Chair and nominate R. Nunes as Vice Chair.

Moved by A. Glassman and seconded by J. Bailey

Motion carried.

Other Business

Members briefly discussed the need to prioritize the projects due to the funding deficit and conceded that the scoring would provide guidance in that matter.

Staff and the CPC reviewed the format, timing and presentation types that will be used in the upcoming public hearings for the community projects.

Staff indicated that they would utilize social media and the existing email distribution lists to promote the upcoming public hearings.

Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, February 7, 2018.

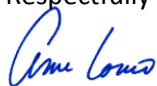
Adjourn

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by J. Bailey and seconded by A. Glassman. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Documents and Exhibits

- Agenda
- Application Presentations

Respectfully submitted,



Anne Louro
DPHCD Staff

Approved: 04.10.18