COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

Minutes of Meeting
February 7, 2024

LOCATION: Hybrid Meeting, Highland Room, Needham Town Hall, 1471 Highland Avenue and via Zoom

PRESENT: Joe Barnes (Co-Chair), Laura Dorfman (Co-Chair), Reg Foster, Jeanne McKnight, Dave Herer, Jim Rosenbaum, Maureen Callahan, Paul Dawson, Keith LaFace

STAFF: Lauren Spinney

GUESTS: Stacey Mulroy and Jonathan Charwick

J. Barnes called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and completed a roll call for members of the Committee and staff, the results of which are noted above. J. Barnes reviewed the rules of the hybrid meeting and disclosed that it was being video recorded.

COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES

J. Barnes welcomed the two newest members of the Committee, Paul Dawson and Keith LaFace, and reported that he and L. Dorfman met with the Finance Committee to review the CPC's proposed operating budget for FY2025.

J. Barnes reminded members that the public hearing is scheduled for March 13, 2024 and suggested that project liaisons contact applicants to prepare for the hearing. R. Foster shared that as part of the Needham Housing Authority's (NHA) community outreach on the Linden Redevelopment project, it will be sending a postcard mailing to neighbors. He offered to include information about the CPC's upcoming public hearing. The postcards will be mailed on February 12.

FY2025-01: NHA LINDEN REDEVELOPMENT (CONSTRUCTION)

This is a request for $5,500,000 by the NHA for redevelopment and construction of public housing located at Linden Street (Phases 1A & 1B) under Community Housing.

J. Barnes shared Town Counsel's opinion that this project is eligible for CPA funds as creation public housing. The number of units referenced in Town Counsel's opinion was incorrect so R. Foster clarified that in Phases 1A & 1B, the NHA is preserving 72 existing units and creating 64 new units. A future Phase 2 of the project (Chambers Street) will replace 80 units with 109 units.

R. Foster stated the land will be restricted to affordable housing as the town defines it. The Planning Board and the Select Board have signed off on the language for the zoning and non-zoning warrant articles, although there has been discussion about whether this should be accomplished via an overlay district. No conclusion has been reached. There is also a question about whether to maintain the elderly and disabled restriction or to remove it and leave the affordable housing restriction only, which would provide future flexibility. The NHA's 11 acres are adjacent to the 50+ acres needed for the MBTA Communities Act, so removing the elderly and disabled restriction might provide some flexibility to resolve issues that may arise with MBTA Communities Act proposals at the Fall Town Meeting.

L. Dorfman shared that E. Achtenberg, the CPC's affordable housing and finance consultant, recommended a 60% AMI affordability deed restriction to be held in perpetuity, and asked who the ultimate decision maker is on this issue. Her concern is ensuring the work of the CPC will dovetail with the work of the Planning Board and Town Meeting.

J. McKnight stated that the Select Board is the decision maker for instruments recorded with the Registry of Deeds, but they need authorization from Town Meeting. The Planning Board has already sent zoning to the Select Board, and a public hearing has been scheduled. It will make its recommendation following the hearing.

R. Foster stated that there has been a convergence of various committees that are involved, town staff, and town counsel with respect to this issue. As he understands it, zoning restrictions belong to the Planning Board and that zoning will say you can only do affordable housing as already defined in the Needham Zoning Bylaws. The NHA considered other options with its zoning counsel, Robert Smart, and came to the conclusion that the best approach is to use the Town's definition of "affordable" so it will work consistently across the town.

J. McKnight pointed to Town Counsel's recommendation that the town should require as a condition of any grant award that it hold an affordable housing restriction on the new units, which is separate from zoning, as zoning can be amended by Town Meeting. An affordable housing restriction shouldn't create a problem with the zoning work going on.

R. Foster also shared the following:

1. The NHA met with T-CHOC on February 5, 2024 to discuss existing grants and major deliverables that have come in to date, as well as approval of disbursement requests.

2. The NHA will be transferring ownership of the Linden Street property to a private LLC that is 100% owned by NHA. This action will liberate an exception in procurement laws that reduces the cost of the project by about 30%. The NHA received approval for this from the EOHLC on Monday.

3. Emily Achtenberg asked for information regarding the NHA's belief that there could be a $6.8M equity take-out from the Seabeds Cook repositioning. He will provide a detailed explanation for Emily. Essentially, the repositioning will free up 60 Faircloth units for Linden Chambers and about $1M additional cash flow per year, some of which will be used for modernization and preservation of Seabeds Cook, some of which will be used to loan $6.8M to Linden Chambers.

In preparation for upcoming consultations with the Finance Committee and Select Board, J. Barnes asked for a sense of the committee with respect to this application. The sense of the committee is to support/recommend funding.

L. Spinney reminded the Committee that E. Achtenberg will attend the next meeting to present and answer questions. In addition to the affordability restriction, E. Achtenberg suggested additional conditions that the Committee might consider making part of its award, including a suggestion that the Committee consider awarding funds as a loan versus a grant. CPC co-chairs met with D. Davison and the sense is that he was not in favor of structuring this award as a loan for various reasons. E. Achtenberg's proposed special conditions can be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

<u>FY2025-02: NEEDHAM HIGH SCHOOL TENNIS COURTS (CONSTRUCTION)</u>

This is a request by the Needham Park and Recreation Department (Park & Rec) for improvements to the Needham High School (NHS) tennis courts under Recreation. The request for CPA funding was originally $2,600,000 but has been reduced to $1,440,000.

Stacey Mulroy from Park & Rec and Jonathan Charwick of Activitas were present.

J. Barnes noted that although the construction costs of asphalt courts is less expensive than post-tension concrete, the cost savings of post-tension concrete over time given its lifespan and maintenance costs makes it preferable.

D. Herer commented that he would have liked to see a net present value calculation. Since that was not provided be created his own model and determined that the cost for the post-tension concrete over time is only about $100,000 different from the asphalt option on a net present value basis. The important issue becomes maintenance and post-tension concrete is easier to maintain.

S. Mulroy stated that the Park and Recreation Commission voted unanimously to support the post-tension concrete.

R. Foster and D. Herer asked that Park & Rec revise its application to reflect the new amount requested and its decision to construct eight courts with post-tension concrete.

The sense of the Committee is to support/recommend funding.

S. Mulroy and J. Charwick exited the meeting.

<u>FY2025-03: DEFAZIO FENCING IMPROVEMENTS</u>

This is a request for $417,000 made jointly by the Needham Department of Public Works and the Needham Park and Recreation Department for replacement of fencing around the DeFazio Complex under Recreation.

J. McKnight reviewed/discussed the site plan provided by E. Olsen. She wanted to ensure that the School Committee, which appears to have custodial ownership of a portion of the site, is in support of the project. In that regard, E. Olsen provided a letter of support from the Director of Athletics. Additionally, she had asked for a sketch plan outlining the areas with fencing to be replaced, but that was not provided. However, the Committee felt that the updated proposal from Argus Construction provided sufficient detail to move forward.

The sense of the Committee is to support/recommend funding.

MEETING MINUTES

J. McKnight made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 10, 2024 and January 24, 2024 with one revision. The motion was seconded by D. Herer. The vote was as follows: **J. Rosenbaum** (aye); **J. McKnight** (aye); **D. Herer** (aye); **M. Callahan** (aye); **R. Foster** (aye); **J. Barnes** (aye); **L. Dorfman** (aye); **P. Dawson** (aye); **K. LaFace** (aye). Motion carries 9-0.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Upcoming meetings will be February 21, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. and March 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

MATTERS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE

None.

ADJOURNMENT

R. Foster moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m. The motion was seconded by L. Dorfman. The vote was as follows: **J. Rosenbaum** (aye); **J. McKnight** (aye); **D. Herer** (aye); **M. Callahan** (aye); **R. Foster** (aye); **J. Barnes** (aye); **L. Dorfman** (aye); **P. Dawson** (aye); **K. LaFace** (aye). Motion carries 9-0.

For more information, the meeting materials are available at:

https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx?ADID=12314

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Spinney
Administrative Coordinator