



Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2020

A. Call to Order

Meeting called to order via Zoom at 1:00 p.m. by Chair M. Justin Barrett, Jr. The meeting was livestreamed on YouTube and recorded to be viewed on The Waltham Channel's website: wcac.org.

B. Roll Call

Present: Chair M. Justin Barrett, Jr., Vice Chair Erika Oliver Jerram, Clerk Dan Melnechuk, Bill Doyle, Bob LeBlanc, Loretta McClary, Amanda Thibodeau

Absent: Tom Creonte, Sean Wilson

C. New Business – Public Hearings

1. WATCH CDC Application: Daria Gere, Executive Director of WATCH CDC, requested \$100,000 of CPA funds to be added to the City of Waltham's Housing Division's account of \$150,000 for emergency rental assistance that was recently approved by City Council. Mr. Melnechuk read the 14 guidelines for structuring the program. He spoke with Ms. Gere prior to the meeting and she would like to amend the application to increase rental assistance from 1 month to 2 - 3 months. This would apply to residents who have a 50% AMI or lower. Mr. Barrett stated that a W-9 will be required from each landlord. Mr. Melnechuk noted that the W-9 does not indicate the name of the particular tenant. Mayor McCarthy stated that the funding would be administered by WATCH, not by the City of Waltham. Applications are only being accepted until April 30th for the \$150,000 that was approved by City Council. The \$100,000 requested by WATCH will not be added to the \$150,000. However, Ms. Gere noted that their application was to support the current funding. She asked to have the CPC consider the Mayor's proposal first and table WATCH CDC's application.

Motion made by Mr. Doyle to table the application, seconded by Ms. Oliver Jerram. All in favor.
Motion passed.

2. City of Waltham Application: Mayor Jeannette McCarthy stated that the City has received hundreds of applications requesting housing assistance, which is more than the \$150,000 can accommodate.

That money has a different guideline than the money she is requesting from CPC. Mayor McCarthy noted that she is the applicant on behalf of the City of Waltham and the co-applicant is the City's Housing Division. She read over the requirements for applying. She is requesting the money due to the global pandemic and feels the City has an obligation to help people so that they don't become displaced. The City's Housing Division would process all of the paperwork. Deb Flanagan, City of Waltham's Assistant Housing Supervisor, stated via YouTube's Chat, "We will work in cooperation with the CPC and the Mayor's office to provide clear guidelines and program procedures to all applicants and adhere to Fair Housing Law". She further went on to say, "We see in the majority of current applications we have received, that more than 70% of the applicants are very low-income renters". Mr. Barrett noted that the money will be used as allowable by law, be it Federal, State, Local and CPA guidelines. Mr. Melnechuk asked how many months of payments would be covered for applicants. Ms. Flanagan responded per chat that it would be a maximum of three months. Julie Toole, CPC Program Manager, read an e-mail from Fred Reynolds, 315 Lake Street, Waltham: "In his opinion, the CPC money should be used to prevent evictions of renters, but a first effort should target households at 50% AMI. These are the Waltham residents at most risk of eviction. This 50% AMI population consists of households with little to no savings to pay the rent". Mr. Melnechuk read a letter received from Kaytie Dowcett, Executive Director, Waltham Partnership for Youth.

Mayor McCarthy asked Ms. Flanagan how many applications have been received so far. Ms. Flanagan replied, "over 400". Mr. Barrett received a text during the meeting which asked if the funds can go towards increased staffing (they cannot). Mr. Melnechuk asked if Waltham Partnership for Youth or WATCH CDC staff can be hired to administer the applications. The Mayor replied that it cannot be done with CPA funds. She did request that it would be helpful if the other agencies can look over the applications of those they are referring to the City for help to ensure the applications are complete. Ms. Gere replied via chat that WATCH can help with the applications. Mayor McCarthy will have the City's Housing Division create a checklist. Mr. Barrett received another question via text asking if applicants' assets will be considered. Ms. Flanagan replied via chat, "Assets should be considered. In the past we used a model that if the applicant has a cash balance over \$3,500, they will have to use that first. We will allow them a balance of \$3,500. We do not feel that the income limit should be restricted". Mr. Melnechuk suggested amending the application that of the \$1M, a minimum of \$200,000 will be reserved for those with an AMI of 50% or below. The Housing Division feels this is acceptable. Mr. Barrett received a request that the application be made available in Haitian Creole (in

addition to English and Spanish). The Mayor agreed to that.

Ms. Toole read an e-mail received from resident Cesar Hernandez: "Is there any information on average of the requested amount by applicants to know how many households will benefit from the fund? And with the initial applications, what % of the total current fund will be exhausted? I am trying to understand how we get to \$1M and whether that's enough." Mayor McCarthy replied that 45 applications were processed this week for \$67,000 with more being processed next week. Mr. Barrett asked if she plans to request more CPA money if the City expends the \$1M and she said she will have to wait and see.

Motion made by Mr. Doyle to grant the Housing Division of the City of Waltham the sum of \$1,000,000 for the Emergency Assistance Housing Fund with the amendment that a minimum of \$200,000 be reserved for 50% AMI or less. Motion seconded by Ms. McClary. All in favor. Motion passed.

D. Committee Business

1. Motion made by Ms. Oliver Jerram to transfer \$251,109.45 from the CPA Undesignated Budget Reserve account to the CPA Housing Budget account. Motion seconded by Mr. Doyle. All in favor. Motion passed.

2. Motion made by Mr. Doyle to authorize the Chair or Vice Chair to close an account once a project is finished. Motion seconded by Mr. Melnechuk. All in favor. Motion passed.

3. Motion made by Mr. Doyle to take WATCH CDC's application off the table. Motion seconded by Ms. Oliver Jerram. All in favor. Motion passed. Ms. Gere stated that WATCH CDC is satisfied with the Mayor's proposal and that it meets the needs of the community, therefore she respectfully withdrew their proposal. WATCH CDC will help applicants fill out applications. Motion made by Mr. Doyle to accept WATCH CDC's withdrawal of their application for \$100,000. Motion seconded by Ms. Oliver Jerram. All in favor. Motion passed.

E. Adjourn

Motion made by Mr. Doyle to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Oliver Jerram. All in favor. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.