

Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Public
Meeting and Hearing - May 12, 2015
City of Waltham, Massachusetts
CPC Office, 119 School Street, Waltham, MA 02451

Recorder: William W. Durkee Jr., CPA Program Manager,
Waltham Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

Note: This meeting was held in the City of Waltham, City
Hall, Council Chambers, 610 Main Street.

A. Call to Order at 7:00 PM

Called to order by Chair Diana Young. WCAC (Waltham Community
Access Channel) video recorded the Meeting.

B. Roll Call by Clerk Dan Melnechuk

Present: Chair Young, Vice-Chair Kevin Dwyer, Clerk Dan
Melnechuk, Mr. Justin Barrett, Mr. Jerry Dufromont, Mr. Bob
LeBlanc, Mr. Thomas Creonte, Mr. Randy LeBlanc, Mr. Sean
Wilson. Program Manager William Durkee present. A Quorum of 9
was declared present, and 5 needed to approve a Motion.

D. New Business

1. Presentation on use of CPA funds for Housing - Shelly
Goehring from Mass. Housing

A training session regarding the use of CPA funds for
Affordable Housing (AH) was presented by Shelly Goehring from
the MAHA (Mass AH Alliance). A presentation was shown on the
Chambers screen (slide copies attached). The federal and
Massachusetts Fair Housing laws vary in the classes of
protected persons so the funding source determines which
classes are protected. CPA "Support for Community Housing"
includes assistance up to 100% of AMI while other State and
federal programs can only allow subsidies up to 80% of AMI.
This portion of the meeting was ended and a recess declared.

2. Public Hearing - WATCH Tenant Based Rental Assistance
Application (TBRA). The audience was asked to sign the speakers

list (attached) and to note whether they were in favor, opposed, or just asking questions. Speakers were taken in order by the Chair. Thirteen speakers signed in to speak and all but one were in favor of the proposal.

Daria Gere, Executive Director, WATCH CDC, delayed her presentation to hear from the attendees. She noted that there were no changes to the original WATCH proposal but WATCH could change it after the hearing.

Waltham Hotels were in favor as they experience the need for more than 250 resident and outside Waltham workers with AH issues. A hotel worker resident and single mother with two disabled sons needed assistance with her \$2,000/month rent. Religious leaders from St Mary's, Christ Church and the Waltham Ministerial Association described the needs for AH including 50 St. Mary families. These leaders sought assistance for those who are otherwise forced to leave Waltham where they work or have children in school. The First Lutheran Church has 6 units of AH with rents as low as \$200/month at times based on income. The pastor heads the Waltham Family School serving preschool children and their immigrant mothers as they accompany their children through the educational process. The massive housing developments underway in the city do not include significant AH. Others described successful Waltham "bootstrap" success when AH was previously available, but lamented the absence of new or proportionate growth in Waltham of AH for many years, and the lack of successful CPC projects. Affordability of low income residents for citywide amenities were issues at the YMCA, and the Community Day Center serving 675 individuals during 2014. A realtor described the lack of enough AH even when Section 8 vouchers or homes for sale are available as rents and prices are just too high for low or moderate income persons in the City. A letter from the Boston College Legal Services Lab (attached) noted that available AH funds from the State and federal sources are inadequate and disproportionately fail to serve the elderly, disabled, families, veterans and homeless.

A homeless resident could not cope financially and described herself as "the new face of the homeless" without addiction, mental afflictions or crime problems. She worked continuously and simply could not find AH. She noted there are no AH programs for middle aged, single women without children. Her Waltham shelter experience was not good.

The sole undecided speaker noted the conflict with desirable open space versus AH, and suggested that the percent of AH units required when housing developments should be increased and that Habitat for Humanity AH projects would help.

Daria Gere, representing WATCH CDC as Executive Director provided answers to the questions previously requested by the CPC. She provided copies of the testimony heard earlier and additional endorsements (attached). In answer to the request to provide information regarding the present programs which are already in place in the City, she noted what the Waltham Housing Division of the Planning Department is doing rental assistance which parallels a portion of the WATCH proposal in some ways and provided a chart "First/last month's rents/security deposit support, Waltham Housing Division program and WATCH proposal 5/12/15" (attached). The highlights, differences and details were discussed.

At this point, the Chair requested that the Public Hearing be closed after the reading of a letter received for testimony. In the letter from Dee Kricker, she supported the proposal from WATCH and the MBHP (Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership).

A Motion was requested to continue the Public Hearing at the next CPC Meeting which passed after a brief discussion.

Now addressing the Applicant, the Chair noted there were outstanding questions both legally and otherwise where answers were needed. CPC members discussed whether the committee can be involved with changing an application or does the onus fall on the Applicant for changes. The Chair informed the committee that the committee has the power to help Applicants for the betterment of Waltham. CPC Members recognized the need but questioned whether the proposal as presented could pass. It was suggested it be pared down. If it succeeds as a "test" it could be continued or expanded.

The CPC questioned aspects of the tenants first, last and security deposit payments. WATCH does not have sufficient support for unexpected financial emergencies but it is not clear that CPA funds can be used for that purpose. Additional research is required.

WATCH had not determined the number of landlords willing to accept TBRA. Daria met with the Waltham Chapter of the Rental Housing Association. The Section 8 program which requires the

tenant to pay 30% of the rent and HUD to sign the lease to pay for the balance is a preferred program for landlords. A longer voucher period to cover two or three years was said to be more appealing to the landlords. The three year residence requirement in the WATCH proposal will need to be changed to fit within Fair Housing guidelines. A lottery with preference to certain classes of people such as residents or workers in Waltham is possible according to Fair Housing of Boston. They would be willing to return to assist in structuring a system which would favor Waltham residents. The CPC did not believe there is sufficient AH available to support the current proposal. WATCH estimated a 6 - 12 month period would be sufficient to judge the success or weakness of the aspects of a trial program. The success of the emergency fund would be known within three months, while the rental vouchers followed by a lottery would take longer as both qualified applicants and landlords would need to be matched. Administration oversight will likely require a RFP (Request for Proposal).

Mr. John Gollinger, the Assistant Director of the Waltham Housing Authority (WHA), was invited to address the CPC regarding the WATCH proposal. The WHA is exceptionally aware of the need for AH as they serve over 800 AH units. The WHA has 450 Section 8 vouchers, and about 20 MBHP vouchers. Of the 450 authorized vouchers the WHA can only afford to use about 420 currently in order to remain within their budget. Of those, about 100 are outside of Waltham. The WHA waiting lists are years long for entry into WHA units. The proposal appeared to be a wonderful idea, but the details would define its success. Director Walter McGuire and Mr. Gollinger met with Daria Gere the previous day. Mr. Gollinger agreed with the CPC idea of a scaled down version to start with a review to make adjustments as needed. The proposed program may afford relief beyond that which Section 8 vouchers allow. The WHA is willing to explore collaboration with WATCH. The WHA does have a Waltham resident preference.

The CPC proposed that a sub-Committee of the WHA, WATCH and four Members of the CPC could work out details for a revised proposal. The CPC limit is four in order to maintain less than the majority of five needed for deliberation. The City Council will also need a period of time to process any CPC Recommendation.

The Motion was made to create the AH Sub-Committee to meet with the WHA, WATCH and four Members of the CPC (Justin Barrett, Bob

LeBlanc, Diana Young and Randy LeBlanc). The Motion passed on a voice vote with 8 in favor, one absent without further discussion.

D. New Business

D1. FY2016 Budget/Finances - Chair Young. The Council Long Term Debt Committee (LTDC) approved the full amount of the CPC Budget request on May 5.

D2. Conservation Restrictions - CPC Vice Chair Kevin Dwyer. The Vice-Chair spoke with the Purchasing Director regarding the reply received from the Waltham Land Trust (WLT) on May 13. This did not require recusals by the Chair or Clerk. The WLT proposal should be completed in April.

D3 & D4. Quarterly Reports and Status of Appropriated CPC Projects - Program Manager. The list of active appropriated projects is down to about three: Arrigo Farm and Bright School (2) are awaiting action or closeout.

F. Announcements/Correspondence - Chair Young. In the category of proposed CPC Projects not yet Applications, the Chair noted (1) Councillor Romard would like to apply for a picnic area in Prospect Hill Park.

(2) The Salvation Army is preparing its Application.

(3) Fernald Demolitions. The Mayor will likely wait until the fall. The Chair sent copies of the City/Mass Historical/DCAMM (Division of Capital Assets Management and Maintenance) Agreement to the Members via email (attached). Three categories of structures are listed: some as "contributing" to the historic status of the site and which are buildings that should be preserved, other buildings that appear to be damaged beyond repair, and those that do not contribute to the historic nature of the campus.

(4) Councillor Logan - The Crescent Street appraisal request is expected.

(5) Planning Department - A Design Proposal for the Waltham portion of the Rail Trail is expected.

(6) Progress on the Arrigo Farm appropriation is unknown.

C. Minutes - Clerk.

C1. Minutes of the April 14, 2015 CPC Meeting. A Motion was made to amend the Minutes to change the title of the Chair of the sub-Committee working on the Conservation Restrictions to that of the Vice-Chair of the CPC. The Motion

was seconded, and passed unanimously.

G. Good of the Committee.

1. The next regularly scheduled CPC Meeting/Hearing is Tuesday, June 9

H. ADJOURN. The Motion to adjourn was made, seconded and passed on voice vote without discussion.