

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
March 13, 2023

Location: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87089157482>  
Call-in: 1-929-205-6099 Meeting ID 87989157482

The Community Preservation Committee (the “CPC” or the “Committee”) convened a regular meeting, duly noticed, on Monday, March 13, 2023, at 7 p.m. via the videoconferencing platform Zoom. CPC members present were Steve Ober, Chair; Nathalie Thompson; Steve Wagner; Marcy Dorna; Neil Levitt; Barry Tubman, Nina Danforth; Leslie Glynn; and Glenn Butcher. Also in attendance were Finance Committee members Bharath Venkataraman and George Berbeco, Affordable Housing Trust Chair Sarah Rhatigan, Michael Harrity, Recreation Director Christopher Fitzgerald, Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee (“RMPSC”) Chair Melissa Crocker, RMPSC member Kelly Larocque, Patrick Maguire of Activitas Inc., Gary Jarobski, Barbra Fullerton, Alan Orth, Shirley Small Rougeau, Stephanie Keefe, Deborah Toppan, C. Davenport, Peter Hill, Ben Polimer, Weston Media Center Videographer Jim Tremble, and CPC Administrator Cheri Amour Mahan.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Steve Ober read a statement explaining the need for a meeting conducted by remote participation in light of the emergency orders issued by Governor Baker in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic, noted that the meeting was being recorded, and invited public comment.

**Public Comment**

None

**PRESENTATIONS BY PROJECT SPONSORS SEEKING FY24 CPA FUNDING**

• **Rhododendron Garden at the Case Estate**

Michael Harrity spoke on the behalf of the project and stated that the Tree Advisory Group (TAG”) is the sponsor for the rejuvenation of the Rhododendron Garden at Louisa’s Wall. The request is for \$20,000 for a feasibility analysis to determine the design and cost of rehabilitating the Rhododendron Garden at the Case Estates. Any CPA funding would be supplemented by \$5,000 from the Weston 300 Fund.

The portion of the Case Estates land that is the subject of the feasibility study is approximately 1.25 acres, and it is adjacent to the Legacy Trail, which is protected with a permanent conservation easement. Parts of the Rhododendron Garden were initially planted by the Case sisters in the early 1900s and then replanted and expanded in the 1980s by the Massachusetts Rhododendron Society and the Arnold Arboretum. The proposal calls for rehabilitating the garden for passive recreation and educational information on native woodland plants, allowing visual access to the historic Louisa’s Wall.

Steve Wagner indicated the Historical Commission’s full support of the project, although they did not specifically take a vote on it.

Leslie Glynn added that Rhododendron Garden would have more than just rhododendrons in the Garden. Ms. Glynn stated that there is a sequence of blooms through spring and summer. The group will contact the Pollinator Group to work on pollinator gardens for educational purposes.

Glenn Butcher asked about adding a performance space to draw in the crowds. Mr. Harrity explained that they could not move the soil around to create room for a large crowd amphitheater. Mr. Butcher stated that the Rhododendron Garden at the Case Estates is where the community could unite.

Mr. Ober asked Bharath Venkataraman if the Finance Committee had voted on this item. Mr. Venkataraman said the Finance Committee had not yet voted on any items. Mr. Venkataraman mentioned that the Finance Committee did not support the Rhododendron Garden, but they have not formally voted.

- **Support of Community Housing Staff Support (Regional Housing Services Office)**

Sarah Rhatigan, Weston Affordable Housing Trust (“AHT”) Chair, reminded the Committee that this was an annual request to fund support from the Regional Housing Services Office (“RHSO”) for all the Town’s affordable housing needs. Ms. Rhatigan noted that the Town has contracted with the RHSO to provide housing expertise since 2011. Ms. Rhatigan explained that the amount requested is \$42,000.

- **Pickleball, Tennis & Basketball Courts**

Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee Chair Melissa Crocker presented a PowerPoint slide deck for the combined pickleball, tennis, and basketball court request. Ms. Crocker described how they had used retained earnings from the Recreation Enterprise Fund for a design study for tennis and basketball courts, after having received design funding for pickleball courts at the Special Town Meeting in September. They have estimated that \$260,000 will be saved if all three projects are done simultaneously. The Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee has been advised by the Town Moderator and Town Counsel to go forward with one warrant article with three separate motions under that article. The Committee feels they have a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers of Weston to save money by doing all the projects simultaneously. The three motions would be as follows: Motion 1: move to request \$1.9 million of CPA funding to enable the construction of pickleball, tennis, and basketball courts at Burchard Park; Motion 2: move to request \$1.24 million to build pickleball courts at Burchard Park; Motion 3: move to request \$920,000 to build tennis and basketball courts at Burchard Park. Ms. Crocker’s understanding is that the Community Preservation Committee is required to vote on all three motions.

Ms. Crocker mentioned that the numerous tennis and basketball court cracks have become too wide and deep to resurface at Burchard Park. Ms. Crocker indicated that the benefits of doing basketball and tennis courts while on-site to build pickleball courts would save the Town money, reduce disruption to the area, and ease lining up a contractor for one big project rather than two smaller ones. The planned use of post-tensioned concrete to replace the basketball and

tennis courts will provide a longer life span and require less maintenance. The Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee is asking for \$1.9 million.

Mr. Ober asked about the key factors that have increased costs by about \$400,000 as compared to earlier cost estimates. Patrick Maguire of Activitas Inc explained that it is entirely a market fluctuation. Gary Jarowski stated that he is comfortable with the estimates and numbers.

Ms. Glynn would like to see the trees saved if they can, and hopes that landscaping does not have to be cut due to increased costs for other aspects of the project. Mr. Maguire stated that the trees are part of the construction project and will not be cut. Nina Danforth asked why there is no roofing for the pickleball courts. Ms. Crocker replied that they are not planning on adding roofing for the pickleball courts due to cost factors.

### **CPA Fund Financial Information:**

Mr. Ober presented slides showing the following: 1) estimated CPA Fund balance of \$6.336 million at the end of FY23; 2) \$3.4 million in expected CPA Fund revenue for FY24; 3) new project costs of \$1.962 million for the three projects under consideration at tonight's meeting; and 4) an estimated CPA Fund balance of \$5.893 million at the end of FY24. Proposed FY24 CPA Fund allocations are as follows: Open Space/Recreation - \$866,000; Historic Resources - \$876,000; Community Housing - \$364,000; and Administrative Allowance - \$169,000.

### **Committee Business**

#### **FY24 Allocations and Administrative Allowance**

- 1) ***VOTE: Mr. Ober entertained a motion to approve the CPA Fund Allocations for FY24. The motion was made by Mr. Butcher and seconded by Ms. Danforth. It was approved unanimously by roll call vote.***

#### **Projects Recommended for 2023 Annual Town Meeting (for FY24)**

The Committee voted on pending applications to be placed on the warrant for the May Town Meeting as follows:

- 2) ***VOTE: Mr. Ober entertained a motion to support the appropriation of \$42,000 for Community Housing RHSO Staff Support Funds. The motion was made by Neil Levitt and seconded by Barry Tubman. It was approved unanimously by roll call vote.***
- 3) ***VOTE: Mr. Ober entertained a motion to support the appropriation of \$20,000 for a feasibility study relating to the Rhododendron Garden at the Case Estates.***

*Mr. Levitt made the motion, seconded by Marcy Dorna. The motion was approved by a 6-1 vote with two abstentions.*

4) **VOTE:** *Mr. Ober entertained a motion to approve the appropriation of up to \$1.9 million for pickleball, tennis, and basketball courts. Mr. Butcher made the motion, seconded by Mr. Wagner. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.*

### **Tentative CPC Fall 2023 Meeting Schedule/Application Deadline**

- Tuesday, September 12, 2023 (Application Deadline)
- Monday, September 18, 2023
- Monday, October 2, 2023
- Monday, October 16, 2023
- Monday, October 23, 2023 (Public Hearing)

### **Minutes of the February 27, 2023, Meeting**

5) **VOTE:** *Mr. Ober entertained a motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 27, 2023. Mr. Levitt made the motion, seconded by Mr. Butcher. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote, subject to some minor edits.*

### **Next Meeting**

The CPC tentatively scheduled its next meeting for Monday, April 24, 2023, via Zoom to discuss the CPC transition plans (including the replacement for Mr. Ober as the Chair of the CPC) and any updates there might be around the bids received with respect to the project proposal for the pickleball/tennis/basketball courts .

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheri Amour Mahan,  
CPC Administrator

**Appendix A**  
**CPC Meeting**  
**March 13, 2023**  
**Document List**

- 1) CPA Applications for May 2023 Annual Town Meeting:
  - a. Rhododendron Garden at the Case Estates
  - b. Affordable housing staff support (RHSO)
  - c. Pickleball, tennis and basketball courts
  
- 2) CPA Fund Financial Information:
  - a. CPA Fund Projections
  
- 3) Tentative CPC Fall 2023 Meeting Schedule/Application Deadline
  
- 4) Minutes of February 27, 2023, CPC Meeting (votes anticipated)