



Malden Community Preservation Committee  
Remote Public Hearing and Committee Meeting

April 7, 2021 6:00 p.m.

**Meeting Minutes**

Committee Members in Attendance: Lisa Sulda, chair, Inna Babitskaya, Monique Ching, Rachael Running, Cameron Layne, Frank Molis

Committee Members Absent: Khalil Kaba

Roberta Cameron, CPA Administrator

**Public Hearing Called to Order:** Sulda called the hearing to order at 6:01 p.m., and read the provisions to hold a remote meeting pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

**CPC Presentation on FY22 Application Process**

Sulda shared screen and provided a presentation. She introduced committee members. Then explained what is the Community Preservation Act and the Malden Community Preservation Committee. She showed the history of CPA revenues, totaling \$3.3 million over the first four years collected. She described the duties of the CPC. She showed the chart of allowable uses, then the amount of spending to date in each of the program areas and a summary of projects. Then Sulda explained criteria and priorities that the CPC is looking for in project applications and invited applicants to seek assistance from Roberta Cameron, the CPC's administrator if they have questions about how to complete the application. She provided an overview of the steps in the application process. She explained that the CPC does not initiate projects, hold committee meetings to gather support for projects, or act as a contractor to implement projects. Finally she provided information on how to contact the Committee.

**Public Comment and Q&A**

Three questions were asked by Jane Robie via the Zoom Q&A function:

My project is on City land. How is it determined which City department will be the Applicant?

Cameron responded: The Pre-application form requires a signature from the Mayor, who then assigns the project to a staff liaison in City Hall, who also signs the application. When obtaining these signatures you can request input from the Mayor and the Staff Liaison to determine which City department is most appropriate to be the applicant.

What is the exact procedure for obtaining the Mayor's approval on the Pre-Application?

Cameron responded: Contact the Mayor's office and let them know that you are looking to apply for a CPA project and ask them how they would like to go about providing the signature, and if you can have a conversation with them about the project.

Sulda followed that this has been a difficult process for the CPC to navigate because it has been a different situation with every project, and this system has been the most efficient way they have identified so far to make sure that all projects on City property are coordinated as they need to be.

Would you happen to know if costs for surveying a City property should be included in the application?

Cameron responded: The pre-application does not require any cost estimates. It is a simple form with a few questions and the Mayor's signature to enable the Committee to determine that the project is eligible. Estimates will be required for the full application. One of the changes to the CPC's process is that projects that require architectural, engineering, or design should have that completed in one phase and then come back in a later phase to ask for funding for construction, so that it is clear exactly what services are going to be needed at the time of the application. If surveying is needed, then yes, the estimate should include this. The City staff liaison can help to obtain estimates, as the City has procedures in place for procuring services, and they would have the resources to be able to obtain the estimates, where it is more difficult for private citizens to obtain estimates for City-owned property.

Mollis added that if the survey is to obtain boundaries on the City-owned property, the City may already have this information.

Cameron read a comment received via survey (author was not identified):

No more synthetic turf. Please only approve applications that are complete (including maintenance cost projections). Please consider a plan B for situations where applications are approved but information on the application is later determined to be misleading or incorrect.

Sulda responded: We are working on the process, coming up with new procedures which we hope will resolve these kinds of situations. We have discussed the turf issue and came to a consensus about prioritizing non-synthetic turf projects, which is reflected in our new plan update.

Lauren McGillicuddy asked:

What happens if a project falls into two categories? For example, Fellsmere Park is open space and also historic.

Sulda responded: The CPC encourages projects that entail more than one category. We decide as a group which category the funds should come from.

### **Project Hearing for Fellsmere Park Application**

Prisco Tammaro of the Friends of Fellsmere Heights gave a presentation about the proposed Fellsmere Park Master Plan project, summarizing the application.

Sulda pointed out that they are asking for a quick process so that they can apply for a PARC grant.

Mollis stated that this looks like a good project. Sulda agreed, and appreciated the amount of community involvement in the planning stage.

Ching asked whether there was a plan for multilingual participation?

Tammaro stated it hadn't been but that they can seek to use city resources to make that happen.

Babitskaya said that this is an important historical preservation project as an Olmstead-designed park and part of Boston's Emerald Necklace.

Cameron read a comment received via survey (author was not identified):

Why is Friends of Fellsmere Heights submitting an application for Fellsmere pond? That group has too many private discussions and should not be in charge of overseeing an application for the pond because their final decision on the design may be influenced by trade-offs on the hospital site made without the public's awareness. If anyone is going to oversee the rehabilitation of Fellsmere Pond, it should be an entity with no ulterior motives. Also, one design posted with the Fellsmere Park application indicates the addition of a playground in an area where Asian residents would commonly gather to exercise in the morning for tai chi, etc. 1) The importance of un-developed land is underestimated. 2) The design phase should utilize multi-lingual outreach to engage all users. 2) That area is a poor location for a playground because it is surrounded by so many rocks, playground building materials have chemicals that might run off into the pond, and hopefully no trees are cleared for unnecessary construction. I wish the best of luck to the Friends of Fellsmere Heights in its efforts to resolve the gridlock with the Malden Hospital site, and I wish them the best of luck in helping to conserve the city's resources so that their ultimate goal can be more easily afforded. As FOFH knows, residents citywide responded overwhelmingly in a non-binding question to pursue acquisition of the Malden hospital site. Because so much construction and demolition will be required at the Malden hospital site, it would only make sense to treat Fellsmere pond with a nature-oriented and minimalist approach.

Sulda noted that we did not request contact information in the survey that was conducted prior to the hearing. She acknowledged that the Friends of Fellsmere Heights mobilized to submit this application so that the project could be initiated. She invited anyone who has an interest in the project to contact FOFH to collaborate on the project.

Tammaro said that FOFH's goal is to increase open space in Malden. He described the history of the park. One of the original designs for the park showed a playground in a section of the park where residents currently do Tai Chi. The purpose of posting the historic designs was to inspire discussion. Decisions about uses at the park will emerge from the public process.

Sulda repeated that the Committee would like to see an effort to reach out to the City's Asian and Spanish-speaking population. Tammaro stated that they are looking at ways to reach out to these groups, as well as seniors.

Councilor Spadafora commented in support of the application. He recalled the prior application which never got off the ground. He and FOFH have been in discussion about how to move forward on this site, together with the Malden Redevelopment Authority, the Department of Conservation Resources, and other City Councilors. Cleaning the water is a high priority, along with handicapped accessibility. They would like to apply for an additional grant that applies specifically to Olmstead-designed parks which have high historic preservation requirements, which may limit the design options for the improvements they plan. It is possible that the project will require more than three public meetings, and that some of the implementation elements will be very expensive.

Cameron read a comment letter that was received before the meeting from Frank Russel.

Carol Melle commented: She is in full support of this project. Oak Grove Improvement Association used to hold an annual festival at the park which brought thousands of people. It is a beautiful park. She wishes that there was more parking.

*It was moved by Molis, seconded by Running, and voted 6-0 to recommend the project to City Council for funding.*

### **Close Public Hearing**

*It was moved by Running, seconded by Molis, and voted 6-0 to close the Public Hearing.*

### **Approval of March Meeting Minutes**

*It was moved by Layne, seconded by Molis, and voted 6-0 to approve the minutes from the March 17, 2021 meeting.*

### **Review Applications Received / Set date for Public Hearing**

Sulda explained that there was April 1 deadline for resubmission of projects that had previously applied.

- **Update on Oak Grove Community Center Application:** Sulda noted that she and Cameron had a meeting with the Oak Grove Improvement Association together with City staff. Because first submission was planning and construction all in one application, we determined it would be best for them to resubmit with just a planning phase. They are working on submitting a re-application in the near future. There is an application in the packet right now, but we will wait to discuss it until the new one is submitted.

Molis asked that they be fast-tracked when their new application is received. Sulda agreed that that is the intent.

- **Patchell Park:** Sulda noted that the applicants have been in touch to request guidance on completing the application, and will be submitting an application very soon. They will be breaking up theirs into just a planning phase. They will resubmit for a master plan. Hopefully we will have this at our next meeting to review.
- **Wallace Park Wall:** Sulda explained that the Historical Commission with support of the City Planner had submitted an application in 2019, but it never went to a hearing. At this time a full application has been submitted and is complete. Sulda asked if committee members have questions about this application that the applicants can be prepared to address at their May public hearing.

Molis offered a question. He noted that on Pleasant street side fence gate post looks different from Elm Street side. He wondered if this is how it always was or if the ones in back were added/replaced at a different time.

Sulda said that she is happy to see additional elements of the scope that are improvements over the project that was described in 2019 application, including drainage improvements, a safer cleaning solvent, and salvaged granite.

Sulda stated that the plan for tonight should be to set up a May hearing for the Wallace Park Wall project, holding another combination hearing/meeting. The date for this will be May 19, at 6:00 PM.

Sulda reminded everyone that there is an evaluation sheet in the folder and asked that they use that in reviewing applications. Should be included in future meeting packets.

**Other Business**

Sulda offered a progress report on designing temporary signs for CPA projects. She would like to approve money to purchase banners and yard signs for temporary posting at work sites. She would like to get a 2x6' banner and some yard signs. Sulda shared her screen showing rough design and quotes she obtained for banners and yard signs. The costs are between \$44 and \$80 for one banner, and between \$160-\$200 for 10 lawn signs.

Molis stated that he would prefer to go with Malden Business. He also suggested asking for banners to be designed to be used in all different kinds of environments with respect to wind resistance.

Babitskaya commented that the Historical Commission would like to see the signs include a City seal. Sulda said that she hadn't considered the seal to be important on temporary work-in-progress signs but will include it on permanent signs. She asked for other members to weigh in. Running stated that she doesn't have a strong opinion. Sulda agreed that the City seal will be important on permanent signs. Babitskaya said that it would be especially important to make it more visible that these are City projects.

*It was moved by Layne, seconded by Molis, and voted 6-0 to move forward with purchasing the temporary signs using CPC administrative funds.*

**Adjournment**

*At 7:27 it was moved by Layne, seconded by Running, and voted 6-0 to adjourn the meeting.*

**Documents Used at the 4/7/2021 Public Hearing and Meeting**

- ) CPC Agenda meeting 4-7-2021
- ) Malden CPC Draft Minutes 3-17-2021
- ) Applications:
  - o Wallace Park Wall
    - CPC FY22 Returning Application MHC Wallace Park Wall
  - o Fellsmere Park Master Plan
    - FoFH Fellsmere Park Master Plan CPC Presentation 2021\_04-07
    - 2021-03-02 Malden ConCom Letter re\_Fellsmere Park
    - Russell CPC Fellsmere Heights
    - Denoncourt CPC Fellsmere Heights
    - Fellsmere draft decision letter
- ) Hearing Public Comment
  - o Hearing Survey Responses