

Town of Canton, Massachusetts
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of May 28, 2020

The May 28, 2020 meeting of the Canton Community Preservation Committee was held remotely (on Zoom platform) consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law. The meeting was posted on the Town's website along with directions detailing how the public could participate and was called to order at 5:31 p.m.

Committee members in attendance: Stacey Gorman, Bob Panico, John McSweeney, Lisa Lopez, Tommy Theodore, Nichola Gallagher, George Comeau, David McCarthy, Josh Cohen (departed at 6:15 p.m.).

MINUTES

Upon a motion made by L. Lopez, seconded by B. Panico, the Committee was polled and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of May 5, 2020.

CONSIDERATION OF CPA APPLICATION FOR AN EMERGENCY HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Town Planner, Laura Smead presented the application on behalf of the Planning Board. She reviewed the need for the program, explained the manner in which it would be implemented and detailed the guidelines for receiving assistance. She noted that the Canton Housing Authority had submitted a letter of support while the Council on Aging was opposed to the project.

Following the presentation by L. Smead, S. Gorman opened the floor to questions/comments from CCPC members. T. Theodore asked whether this program was the best approach to the problem, or if CPA Housing Funds would be better utilized if the Town were able to establish a housing trust and direct CPA funds to that entity. D. McCarthy noted his opposition to the project and asked for an explanation of what would happen to the approximately \$52,000 being sought by the applicant if this program were not funded. S. Gorman stated that this application was limited to the funds remaining in the housing "bucket" and would remain there for future use if not expended this year.

L. Lopez outlined her reasons for supporting the program, noting that the full amount of the funding requested sits in the fund reserved for Community Housing and that the program would preserve the ability of up to ten families to stay in their homes in the wake of the economic impacts of COVID 19. She added that running an assistance program through a housing trust would have similar costs as the proposed approach (due to staffing/administrative requirements). Lastly, she expressed confidence that the concerns raised by the Council on Aging could be addressed.

J. McSweeney also expressed support for the program. He referenced the five- to seven-year waiting list for housing provided through the Canton Housing Authority and added that any families assisted through this program are residents who would not be added to that long wait list.

J. Cohen had to leave the virtual meeting prior to the vote on the Emergency Housing Assistance Program; however, he indicated prior to his departure that he did not support the recommendation of this funding request to Town Meeting.

Upon a motion by L. Lopez, seconded by G. Comeau, the Committee was polled and voted 7-1-0 to recommend the Emergency Housing Assistance Program to Annual Town Meeting in the amount of \$52,000.

**J. McSweeney – Aye
D. McCarthy – No
T. Theodore – Aye**

**B. Panico – Aye
G. Comeau – Aye
S. Gorman - Aye**

**L. Lopez – Aye
N. Gallagher – Aye**

Discussion about the schedule and guidelines for Annual Town Meeting followed.

Motion to adjourn at 6:28 p.m. by L. Lopez, seconded by D. McCarthy. Unanimously approved 8-0-0 by roll call vote.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Kristen Phelps

**Kristen Phelps
CCPC Administrator**