



City of Lowell – Community Preservation Committee

Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 22, 2022, 6:30p.m.

Conducted in-person and via zoom

Note: These minutes are not completed verbatim. For a recording of the meeting, visit www.ltc.org

Members Present

Adam Baacke, Chair
Sinead Gallivan, Member
Francesca Cigliano, Member
Ryan Rourke, Member
Yovani Baez Rose, Member
Sidney Liang, Member
Philip Shea, Member *In attendance virtually, but not able to participate*

Members Absent

Troy Depeiza, Member
Brad Buitenhuis, Member

Others Present

Peter Cutrumbes, Assistant Planner

A quorum of the Committee was present. A. Baacke called the meeting to order, the time was 6:30 pm.

I. Minutes for Approval

August 25, 2022 Meeting Minutes

S. Liang motioned to approve the minutes and was seconded by F. Cigliano. Approved unanimously (6-0).

II. Continued Business

III. New Business

CPA Application: 635 Middlesex Street, 01851

RG Realty, LLC has applied to the Community Preservation Committee seeking \$500,000 of CPA funds for a Historic Preservation project. The applicant proposes to use the funds to restore the historic building at 635 Middlesex Street.

On Behalf:

Richard Hupper, the applicant, spoke about the project. He provided a slideshow presentation for the Committee members.

R. Hupper stressed that the current condition of the building is poor. The building has issues with its foundation, structural brick walls, its carrying beam, and its roof. Additionally, he is looking to make improvements to the copper flashing, and to restore the windows to their original design as a historic storefront.

R. Hupper said that he is seeking CPA funding to fix the structural issues, as well as to make the previously mentioned upgrades. He said the goal of the project is to create two apartments and a commercial space.

In Favor:

None

In Opposition:

None

Discussion:

S. Gallivan asked if they are seeking \$500,000 of funds, as the presentation showed they are seeking less than that.

R. Hupper said no, as he didn't realize when he applied that the funding could only be spent on historic portions. S.

Gallivan asked what the total project budget was, and R. Hupper said roughly \$850,000.

F. Cigliano asked when he would be applying to the land use boards, as there are no guarantees that they approve it and may render the CPA grant moot. R. Hupper said he is waiting for the final plans from the architect.

S. Liang asked about what Special Permits or Variances he may need. R. Hupper said the parking lot behind the building may not be big enough to fit enough dimensionally compliant spaces for the residential + commercial uses. He mentioned they may also need a Special Permit for temporary customer parking, or that the kind of business use that moves in may need a Special Permit. S. Liang said that the building is part of an entrance to Cambodiatown.

A. Baacke asked if the potential LDFC financing mentioned by the applicant is related to the historic structures program the Committee helped them fund during the last CPA cycle. R. Hupper said he has spoken to Allison but is not sure on the exact nature of the funding. A. Baacke said he would encourage him to pursue this avenue for additional funding. A. Baacke also asked if he will take any measures in the short term to stabilize the building. R. Hupper said there is temporary patchwork happening on the roof, as well as a sump-pump. A. Baacke let him know that a historic preservation deed restriction would be necessary if funds are awarded.

F. Cigliano expressed concern that the discretionary approvals from the ZBA/PB process hasn't started yet. She said she is not sure if she feels comfortable granting money if the approvals aren't granted first, as it may put the Boards in an uncomfortable position. R. Hupper said they should have plans done fairly soon.

Minor Modification: Acre Crossing, 01854

Acre Crossing, LLC is seeking to remove the CPA condition of approval requiring property owners repay CPA funds should a property be sold. The project also included a condition that units be deed restricted for individuals and families earning 80% AMI, this restriction would remain.

On Behalf:

Francey Slater, Bill Martin, and Will Soucy appeared on behalf of the application. F. Slater shared that Acre Crossing is on the agenda for the next MassHousing meeting in October. The project is currently waiting for approval for \$8 million in state funding. She mentioned that MassHousing expressed concerns regarding the CPA's repayment requirement for certain residents who choose to sell their unit. F. Slater said that she is requesting the CPA funds are granted as a subsidy to the construction of the project. B. Martin said he is here to answer any questions from the Committee.

In Favor:

None

In Opposition:

None

Discussion:

Y. Baez-Rose asked about the MassHousing Affordability Restriction Standards. F. Slater said they do not have them on hand. Y. Baez-Rose clarified that she wants to make sure the 17 affordable units would stay priced at 80% Area Median Income. F. Slater said they will.

R. Rourke asked if this request is coming from the Council. F. Slater said the request is from MassHousing, and that MassHousing had an issue with the CPA award letter approved by the City Council. She clarified that Acre Crossing could not go through the Commonwealth Builder program application because of the repayment requirement. R. Rourke said that going back in front of the Council would be helpful. A. Baacke said that he has spoken to the City Solicitor and she is evaluating as to whether this needs to return to the Council. He said it is likely. B. Martin said he thinks it is within the CPC's abilities legally to modify the award letter, but agreed that the Solicitor's future ruling is binding. B. Martin asked if the Commission will vote on their preference at this meeting.

S. Liang asked if Acre Crossing's attendance in August for a modification was relayed to the City Council, and if not, does the Committee need to relay that to the Council? A. Baacke said no, it is the applicant's responsibility to report to the Council. R. Rourke asked if they can send it to the Council. A. Baacke said the Committee should vote to assert one way or the other tonight.

Motion:

Y. Baez-Rose said she is in support of the modification. She said it does not change that the City will get 17 units of deed restricted affordable housing, and that she thinks that is valuable for the City. With this in mind, Y. Baez-Rose motioned to support the minor modification, with S. Gallivan seconding. The vote was unanimous (6-0).

IV. Other Business

V. Notices

VI. Further Comments from Community Preservation Committee Members

A. Baacke congratulated Y. Baez-Rose on being a new member. A. Baacke requested to place a vote on the Committee's new Vice-Chair on the next agenda.

VII. Adjournment

F. Cigliano motioned to adjourn, with S. Gallivan seconding. The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 PM.