

CITY OF BEVERLY
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF BEVERLY
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2023 MAY 25 P 4: 19

BOARD: Community Preservation Committee
SUBCOMMITTEE: None
LOCATION: Beverly City Hall Council Chambers
DATE: March 16, 2023
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice Chair Derek Beckwith, Nancy Marino, Marilyn McCrory, Suzanne LaMont by phone, Danielle Spang, Robert Buchsbaum, Thomas Bussone
BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Chair Heather Richter, Christy Edwards
OTHERS PRESENT: Bruce Doig (City of Beverly Parks and Recreation), Victoria Healey (City of Beverly Planning Department), Randy Wetzel of 76 Trask Street, Jeremy Weir of 775 Cabot Street, Charlie Weir of 775 Cabot Street, Mike and Christina Petkavich of 60 Trask Street, Linda Briggs of 54 Trask Street, Margaret Vernon of 56 Trask Street, Bob Ashmore of 25 Mulberry Street, Robert Gates of 61 Trask Street, Tammy Marciano of 6½ Mechanic Street
RECORDER: Naomi Moca

1. Call to order

Vice Chair Beckwith chairs and opens the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

2. Review of Round 10 CPA Funding Applications

a. Birch Plains pickleball courts

Bruce Doig, Director of the City of Beverly Parks and Recreation Department, is present. Doig states that there are essentially no updates to report since the last meeting and clarifies that the budget came in at \$275,000, which is under the estimated \$297,000. Buchsbaum clarifies with Doig that the project site is under Conservation Commission jurisdiction.

Vice Chair Beckwith summarizes concerns raised by the project site's neighboring residents at the meeting held February 28, 2023. Vice Chair Beckwith observes that Mayor Cahill expressed some surprise at the concerns raised, and that there is a fact-finding effort to address the concerns, especially regarding sound pollution. Vice Chair Beckwith summarizes ideas that were discussed including moving the project site farther away from the neighborhood, reducing the number of courts, addressing the parking in the area by adding spaces on the site and reducing the number of spaces on the street to a single side, building soundproofing fencing barriers on all sides of the courts, and researching equipment to minimize sound. Vice Chair Beckwith and Chair Richter observed some surprise amongst the neighbors when they learned that the project is planned to move forward with the current schedule. Vice Chair Beckwith states that there was expected to be a follow up neighborhood meeting scheduled for the week of March 20, 2023 to review findings and mitigation.

A member of the audience states that Mayor Cahill has been aware of noise caused by pickleball due to the many years of research on various sites in Beverly where noise eliminated them as an option. Vice Chair Beckwith states that there were noise complaints from neighbors of the pickleball courts at Obear Park, and that various residents of the Birch Plains neighborhood were not consulted nor made aware of the project until just prior to the February 28th meeting.

A member of the audience states that Mayor Cahill's office had been researching possible sites and had concluded the Birch Plains site is the most optimal. Randy Wetzel of 75 Trask Street states he sent a petition to City and states that there is new research on the health risks associated with the noise caused by pickleball. Doig expresses his willingness to move forward with the project, but concedes that he is not in a decision-making position on the project. A member of the audience comments that the sport of pickleball has existed for more than 50 years.

Bob Ashmore of 25 Mulberry Street comments that whereas some pickleball court designs, such as at the base of an apartment building, are not optimal, there are new communities such as RV parks around the country that are proactively building pickleball into their design. Ashmore also advocates for not reducing the number of courts in the project, and states that he is of the opinion that the project is an enhancement to the community, not a detriment. A member of the audience compares the size of this proposed project to the courts-to-population ratio in Manchester-by-the-Sea.

The Committee discusses that the City has considered numerous alternate sites, but that each had prohibitive issues such as lack of parking or proximity to neighborhoods. Doig states that all the parks in the City, and even some private properties, were considered. The Committee discusses whether moving the courts farther away from residences is possible, and Doig states that to his knowledge the City engineers are designing it and they have many location issues to consider, such as possible ledge.

Spang clarifies that the Committee does not permit the project, just a part of the funding apparatus, and that the Parks and Recreation Department already has \$200,000 in funding and the City is asking for a little more from CPC. Bussone points out that in the course of all City projects, there have always been complaints. Bussone recalls his experience as president of Little League when working on the Harry Ball Field project, there were concerns from residents of the adjacent neighborhood.

Marino elaborates that from her experience with other projects such as Pete's Park, the Cove Playground tennis courts, and the Dane Street Beach playground, there were complaints or opposition for each of them. Marino states that in three years the City has conducted research in all possible locations for this project, that the City has done its due diligence, and that in all cases it has mitigated concerns by neighbors. Marino voices the Committee's commitment to listen and consider all concerns, and that at issue today is not the Committee permitting the project, but rather reviewing the guidelines for applicability of the funding.

The Committee discusses that sound mitigation is a priority, and that the size of the project, the number of courts, the plan for traffic, and an updated budget, among other information from the City, are needed before moving forward with a vote. The Committee expresses its commitment

to getting the project right from the start, especially with regard to the concerns of the residents of the Birch Plains neighborhood, despite how long the project has been in the works.

Bussone: Motion to continue until the April 20, 2023 meeting. Marino seconds. Vice Chair Beckwith takes a roll call vote. Motion carries (7-0).

Doig states that he will provide updated information and budget to the Committee.

Charlie Weir of 775 Cabot Street states that the Birch Plains area is part of the City watershed for Beverly and for Salem, and that any building project that affects the watershed may affect taxes [sic]. Weir expresses concern about the creeping nature of the project.

3. Approval of minutes

a. January 19, 2023

Members review and offer edits to the January 19, 2023 draft meeting minutes.

Bussone: Motion to accept the January 19, 2023 meeting minutes as amended. McCrory seconds. Vice Chair Beckwith takes a roll call vote. The motion is approved (7-0).

b. February 16, 2023

Members review and offer edits to the February 16, 2023 draft meeting minutes.

Bussone: Motion to accept the February 16, 2023 meeting minutes as amended. McCrory seconds. Vice Chair Beckwith takes a roll call vote. The motion is approved (7-0).

4. Other items not known in advance of the posting of this agenda

The Committee discusses treating the pickleball court project as an independent item in order to keep other items moving forward.

Bussone: Motion to forward all approved funding recommendations to the City Council. Marino seconds. Vice Chair Beckwith takes a roll call vote. The motion is approved (7-0).

Healey agrees to forward a letter to Chair Richter to sign off and move forward.

The Committee discusses that the Beverly Golf and Tennis designs did not move forward due to a meeting being postponed.

The Committee discusses moving the next meeting from April 20 to April 27 due to Beverly schools' April vacation.

5. Adjourn

Bussone: Motion to adjourn subject to the decision of the Chair on the next meeting date. Marino seconds. Vice Chair Beckwith takes a roll call vote. The motion is approved (7-0).

Meeting adjourns at 8:07 p.m.

The next meeting will be April 20, 2023 or April 27, 2023 subject to the decision of the Committee Chair.