



City of Malden

Malden City Hall
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Meeting Minutes - Final Finance Committee

Councillor McDonald, Chair
Councillor Condon, Vice-Chair
Councillor Colon-Hayes
Councillor Spadafora
Councillor Taylor
Councillor Winslow

Tuesday, January 23, 2024

5:30 PM

City Hall, Room #105
215 Pleasant Street

Zoom Webinar:

[https://cityofmalden.zoom.us/j/94871129431?
pwd=cTg5VTdwT1NqWnpXU2hZY0tXNU1wZz09](https://cityofmalden.zoom.us/j/94871129431?pwd=cTg5VTdwT1NqWnpXU2hZY0tXNU1wZz09)

Roll Call

Present: 6 - Councillor Carey McDonald, Councillor Paul Condon, Karen Colon Hayes, Craig Spadafora, Ari Taylor and Stephen Winslow

Also Present: Councillors O'Malley and Linehan
Zaheer Samee-Assist. Solicitor
Maria Luise-Mayor's Office
Ron Cochran-Mayor's Office
Eric Rubin-Public Facilities Director
Daniel Koff-Clerk CPC
Alex Pratt-OSPCD
Chris Rosa-Tree Warden

Councillor McDonald called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

Minutes to be Approved

[27-24](#)

Minutes of December 19, 2023 to be approved.

Councillor Linehan was present for this vote which reflects a quorum of the 2023 Finance Committee Members.

A motion was made by Councillor Condon, seconded by Councillor Colon Hayes, that the Committee Minutes of December 19, 2024 be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[167-23](#)

Minutes of April 11, 2023 to be approved.

Councillor Linehan was present for this vote which reflects a quorum of the 2023 Finance Committee Members.

A motion was made by Councillor Condon, seconded by Councillor Colon Hayes, that the Committee Minutes of April 11, 2023 be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Business

11-24

Order: That the appropriation enumerated below, being in the amount of \$983,000 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Act Fund for the following project: Malden River Works: \$983,000 from Budgeted Reserve.

Sponsors: Stephen Winslow

Attachments: [MRW Phase1 Construction Recommendation Letter](#)
[Letter of Support CPC Submissions 1 4 2024](#)

Alex Pratt from OSPCD gives the committee a brief explanation of this paper. This CPC funding will almost close the financing of the project. We have raised more than half of the funds for this project. This will help to close that gap and we are still optimistic to secure other funds. We are working to aggressively pursuing state and federal funding for this project. We are funding toward the total budget of the Park and DPW. Due to operational challenges right now we have considered whether we have to advance on the DPW side prior to the Park side. The \$13mill is the cost of both of the projects.

A motion was made by Councillor Colon Hayes, seconded by Councillor Winslow, that the Order be recommended favorably to the City Council. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: 6 - McDonald, Councillor Condon, Councillor Colon Hayes, Councillor Spadafora, Councillor Taylor and Councillor Winslow

12-24

Order: That the appropriation enumerated below, being in the amount of \$730,000 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Act Fund for the following project: Malden Hospital Open Space Acquisition: \$730,000 from Budgeted Reserve.

Sponsors: Stephen Winslow

Attachments: [Malden Hospital - Open Space Acquisition Recommendation Letter](#)
[Letter of Support CPC Submissions 1 4 2024](#)

Councillor Linehan introduced the paper to the committee. She explained the CPC had a meeting before the holidays to go over the pending projects before them one of which was the open space acquisition at the Malden Hospital Site the request was for \$1mill but the amount that came through was \$983,000. As part of the cities agreement with Tufts for the redevelopment of the entire parcel we executed a letter of agreement that pending the CPC allocation we would be transferring the land to the City from the Hospital for open space preservation for passive use not recreation. We are hoping once this is applied we will apply for park and land grants. Both can be used for acquisition rehabilitation conservation and she feels they are on track for leveraging that. The goal is not looking to program for active recreation but passive recreation. The mental health facility which will be on the property will house 144 beds and be owned by Tufts jointly with Acadia which has experience running other facilities. We will obtain tax revenue from this facility. This facility will be 100% in Malden. The groundbreaking is tentatively in late March. The committee asked about rodent problems and Councillor Linehan said it has been minimal since the building has been vacant for so long. The park and land grants aren't due till June or July and will hear about it in the Fall which is the earliest we will know what we are working with to proceed with the next phase. The final approval will have to come before the Council. We are looking at the grant here but the actual purchase of the property and the terms of it has to go through the Council before it is

finalized.

A motion was made by Councillor Colon Hayes, seconded by Councillor Condon, that the Order be recommended favorably to the City Council. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Yea: 6 - McDonald, Councillor Condon, Councillor Colon Hayes, Councillor Spadafora, Councillor Taylor and Councillor Winslow

13-24

Order: That the appropriation enumerated below, being in the amount of \$175,000 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Act Fund for the following project: Fitzgerald Park: \$87,500 from Open Space Reserve and \$87,500 from Budgeted Reserve.

Sponsors: Stephen Winslow

Attachments: [Fitzgerald Park Phase II Construction Recommendation Letter](#)
[Letter of Support CPC Submissions 1 4 2024](#)
[Public Comment, 1_30_24 Paper 13-24 "CPA Appropriation to Fitzgerald Park Project"](#)
[Fitzgerald Park Petition \(Responses\)](#)

Dan Koff explained the Fitzgerald Park Project is to expand the existing Fitzgerald Park into a second phase that is filled with mulch and a tree that is girdling a tank an underground storage tank that needs to be removed. The application is to construct that second phase of the part and to replace new trees for the ones that are being removed and to add addition spaces for children and families as a place to hangout downtown. Councillor McDonald said the CPC funds cannot be used to remove the tree. Alex explained the tree will be removed separate from these funds and separate from this project. Councillor O'Malley said we have talked alot about this project and we always anticipated expanding it with the additional space. He said there is a proposal to cut the tree down. He said is not clear who dug the test pit and they are trying to determine who did. There were two community projects for this site and participation was very low. He would like the opportunity to save the tree and would be willing to use Ward Funds to pay an arborist. Currently the project calls for cutting the tree down first then removing the test pit. He needs more time to try to save the tree and is asking the committee for more time. Alex explained that we have had the tree warden and have had numerous meetings about the tree that say it must be removed. We also have had professional consultant firms come in who say it is impractical to remove the tank without removing the tree, the tree will eventually topple. The removal of the tank will likely kill the tree. The tank has no purpose now. They are planning on planting new trees and increasing play structures. They want to stick with the colorful theme that is there and have also included a fencing plan for the safety of the children. Councillor McDonald clarified that the design submitted for the CPC Plan was not a final design. In a scenario where we could preserve the tree we would make a park design based on that. It seem to be unlikely but the approval of the CPC funds is not contingent of the specific design. The approval of the CPC funds do not dictate any particular thing about the tree it is about specifics to improving the playground. Alex agrees and states we already have the authorization for funding for removing the tank and the tree at this point. Councillor O'Malley said the plans are now to remove the tank and the tree without trying to save it. He said the tree Warden was not notified when the test pit was done nor was the Ward Councillor. He said they took a project he was essentially involved in and decided to expand it without coming to him and included removing the tree. He is not looking to stop the project but is looking for an opportunity to try to improve the design through community engagement and try to save the tree. Councillor Colon Hayes said she went

to the tree hearing and everyone there wants to save the tree. The question was asked why does the tree have to be taken down and we understand why it has to be taken down or we think we do. She asked if there is an urgent need to go forward with this or can we wait for the Councillor O'Malley do his due diligence to try to save the tree. Councillor Taylor asked was there an initial proposal that included the tree before we knew about the underground tank. When we first started phase two did we know we needed to take down the tree. Alex said we knew about the underground tank when we started phase two of the project. Uncovering the tank and based on reviews by the site professionals and Mass Protection Laws required that the tank needed to be removed. The conclusion was it would be unsafe to remove the tank and not remove the tree. Alex explained if we put off moving this funding forward in this cycle with inflation we are looking at a 15% -20% increase in this project next year. The tree will be removed regardless of this funding going forward or not. Chris Rosa, Tree Warden joined the meeting and explained that he has made the recommendation that the tree need to be removed. His understanding is that the Mayor agreed with his recommendations. His determination is going to stand because if in six months we had a big storm and the tree came down because of the digging around it he would never live with himself if the tree came down and killed somebody. If you choose to get someone else who wants to determine that tree can stay it won't be him. He feels one tree is not worth someone's life. Councillor McDonald said the scope of this committee is whether to approve this funding or not. From the Chair, he said he doesn't feel Councillor O'Malley's characterization of this process is accurate or fair. To be clear he is the Councillor working with this team on this and there has been community engagement and this is not the final design. He feels we often fund CPA projects without the final design. He is not worried about final design changes and he feels that he would like to save the tree but what would enable us to save the tree. We have a determination from the state to remove the tank and the tree warden is determining that it is not safe to leave the tree after digging out the tank. His question is what would we be delaying the vote in order to do. Councillor O'Malley said to get to final design, engage the public to get to final design which would be good for the neighborhood. How can we approve a design that is not final. Alex said as we finalize the design we will send it to CPC but we need to go forward with the funding. Councillor McDonald said this is a high utilization park and a lot of families use it. Alex said the vote tonight has nothing to do with the authorization for removing the tank and the tree which we already have. Councillor McDonald said the vote is not to approve the design the CPC has to approve the design. We can vote on this contingent upon final design approved by the CPC but not holding up the process.

A motion was made by Councillor Condon, seconded by Councillor Winslow, that the Order be recommended favorably to the City council as amended pending the CPC receipt of the final design. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Yea: 5 - McDonald, Councillor Condon, Councillor Spadafora, Councillor Taylor and Councillor Winslow

Nay: 1 - Councillor Colon Hayes

14-24

Order: That the appropriation enumerated below, being in the amount of \$67,360 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Act Fund for the following project: Linden Rink Construction: \$67,360 from Open Space Reserve.

Sponsors: Stephen Winslow

Attachments: [Linden Rink Construction Recommendation Letter](#)
[Letter of Support CPC Submissions 1 4 2024](#)

Ron Cochran is present to introduce the Linden Rink Construction which was an original

allotment of \$200,000 for comprehensive design for an ice rink. We made a pivot to see what was more feasible and we went back to look at the project to rebuild and replace what was originally a street hockey rink which was approved by the CPC. What was once a larger amount for a more complex series of drawings and designs for an ice rink is somewhat similar but would still like to use the rest of the \$200,000 funds and instead rededicate those funds to what would be construction part of the project to rebuild the rink. The design phase was not to exceed \$132,640 and the remainder of \$67,360 be allocated to the construction part of the project. It will no longer be an ice skating rink but it is not a single use asset. The kids are playing confined area soccer in there and there are various sports that could be housed there. The space is fully accessible. There is a significant amount of engineering that has to happen in drainage which is why we couldn't put water in it because of the pitch. It is all on the same footprint but it might be shrunk by 10 ft one way or the other. Same essential construction and will have 20-25 year shelf life for the boards, drainage improvement, sitting areas and benches.

A motion was made by Councillor Spadafora, seconded by Councillor Colon Hayes, that the Order be recommended favorably to the City Council. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Yea: 6 - McDonald, Councillor Condon, Councillor Colon Hayes, Councillor Spadafora, Councillor Taylor and Councillor Winslow

15-24

Order: That the appropriation enumerated below, being in the amount of \$151,650 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Act Fund for the following project: Oak Grove Community Center Design: \$151,650 from Historic Preservation Reserve.

Sponsors: Stephen Winslow

Attachments: [Oak Grove Community Center Design Recommendation Letter](#)
[Letter of Support CPC Submissions 1 4 2024](#)

Dan Koff introduces the Oak Grove Community Center Project to allocate funding for the 100% design and including to make it ADA accessible. This was advocated by the Oak Grove Improvement Association. It will be under all historical preservation standards and considering whether they can keep the front door of the building but it would change some of the structure to be ADA accessible. They are considering keeping the main entrance in the front door with considerable improvements or make the side of the building the main entrance to keep up with ADA accessible and historical standards. Changes will be determined for the final design through the process. Eric Rubin, Public Facilities Director explained CPC funded a feasibility study where they came up with a concept plan of what the building will look like and the funding here today will take the concept plan and allow us to draw up plans. This \$150,000 will allow the architect to come up with pricing and draw the plans final. This would allow us to go out to bid. Councillor McDonald asked about the archive material being stored at the building. Eric said they are looking at alternative space to be used for City Archives. They are currently in the process of how that will look. We do need to get the archive material moved to get this project started. Councillor McDonald notes there is funding to support a big chunk of the archive space which Councillor O'Malley found last year. The committee expressed investigating openness from the team about investigating the Washington Street entrance reconsidering the landscaping to preserve maximum trees.

A motion was made by Councillor Colon Hayes, seconded by Councillor Condon, that the Order be recommended favorably to the City Council. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Yea: 6 - McDonald, Councillor Condon, Councillor Colon Hayes, Councillor Spadafora, Councillor Taylor and Councillor Winslow

Other Business

Adjournment

Motion was made by Councillor Spadafora, seconded by Councillor Taylor, that this meeting be adjourned at 7:18 PM.. The motion carried unanimously.