

Town of Harvard Capital Planning and Investment Committee Minutes January 23, 2014, Town Hall

Members present: Keith Cheveralls, Marie Sobalvarro, Alan Frazer, Debbie Ricci, David Kassel, Tim Bragan, and Lorraine Leonard

The meeting was called to order at 8:20 a.m. The minutes from January 16 were approved as amended.

Keith said the CPIC's objective calls for submission by the CPIC of a final draft of the Capital Plan to the Finance Committee on January 31, with a meeting scheduled with FinCom on Feb. 8.

In liaison updates, Marie said she had talked with Steve Beck of the ambulance squad, who said the goal is to fully fund an ambulance, but they are expecting a shortfall in funding of \$50,000.

There was discussion about a project recommended for funding in FY 15 to repair the front driveway at the elementary school. Keith said there is a larger issue involving of the tie-in of the project to parking in the back of the school. David asked whether a comprehensive study would be done, and Keith said the project will not go forward until a study is done.

The CPIC then took up consideration of proposed FY 15 projects that had not been voted on at the previous meeting:

1. One-ton DPW truck. Debbie moved that the CPIC recommend funding of this project from the Capital Investment Fund. Seconded by Marie. The motion carried unanimously.
2. Front-end loader for the DPW. Debbie moved that the CPIC recommend financing this project through a capital exclusion. David seconded. The motion carried unanimously.
3. Repair of spalling concrete at the Bromfield School. Debbie moved that the CPIC recommend financing this project as a capital exclusion. Seconded by Marie. The motion carried unanimously.

Tim said he had talked to Rich Nota about the CPIC's decision to defer a vote on the DPW's proposed Asset Management project.

The CPIC then considered whether to recommend the Hildreth House renovation and Bromfield science lab and HVAC upgrade project for financing via excluded debt.

Keith noted that neither project drew high ratings from the CPIC, largely because of the way they were presented to the Committee and not due to a lack of merit on the part of either one.

Tim said he believed that had the HVAC upgrade (the main safety issue) been considered as a separate project from the rest of the science lab renovations, the CPIC rating of the project would have been higher.

Regarding the Hildreth House project, Tim suggested that while the project's advocates had done "yeomen's work in scaling back the project cost," the project remains expensive and runs the risk of cost overruns.

Keith noted that even if the CPIC votes not to recommend financing of either project, both can still be put forward at Town Meeting. The CPIC's recommendations of excluded debt financing are advisory in nature. The Committee's approval is needed only for projects funded or financed through debt from the Capital Fund.

Keith also maintained that a CPIC vote against the Hildreth House project should not be perceived as anti-Council on Aging. He believed there are too many unanswered questions about the project's cost and potential utilization by more than a small number of seniors in town.

Marie moved to defer a Committee recommendation in favor of the Hildreth House project until there is successful consideration of other major projects in town. Debbie seconded the motion and offered an amendment that the Hildreth House project be deferred to future years due to the consideration of other building projects in process and under consideration. The Committee voted unanimously in favor of the amended motion.

Regarding the science lab project, Keith said he thought the RFP had "drifted dangerously off scope, even though a laudable effort was made to scale it back to \$1.95 million."

Debbie moved that the CPIC not recommend financing of the \$1.95 million science lab project as presented. The motion was seconded by Marie. The vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.

Lorraine then suggested that the CPIC consider recommending the financing of the FY 2014 \$157,000 Pond Road parking lot repair project at the high school in the current fiscal year via a 5-year BAN rather than a long-term General Obligation Bond. She said the interest rate would be cut in half and the town will save money in the long term. Marie moved to recommend financing of the Pond Road project via a 5-year BAN. Seconded by Alan. The motion carried unanimously.

The Committee then discussed the process of writing articles for the Town Meeting warrant booklet with recommended funding and financing of all projects considered by the CPIC. Tim suggested that the write-up should explain the Committee's decision-making process and savings impacts of those decisions. He added that projects not approved for financing be listed in the write-up as well.

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved at 10:15 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by David Kassel