

Capital Improvement Program Committee

Town of Hanover, NH

Meeting Minutes

Location: Hanover Town Hall Boardroom.

Date: October 27, 2023.

Time: 10:00 AM – 11:15 AM.

Committee Members: John Dolan (Chair), Jennie Chamberlain (Vice Chair), Nicolás Macri (Secretary), Brian Edwards, Carey Callaghan, Peter Kulbacki, Ellen Bullion, Kimberly Hartmann, Alex Torpey.

I. OVERVIEW OF CIP PROCESS – ROBERT HOUSEMAN (15 MINUTES):

- A. All members of the Capital Improvement Program Committee (CIPC) attended the meeting in person, except for Torpey, who was absent.
- B. Robert Houseman, the Director of Planning, Zoning, and Codes, presented a presentation on the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process.
 1. Refer to the attached slides for details.
- C. Callaghan notes that the execution capacity of the Department of Public Works may limit the ability of the Town of Hanover to carry out projects.
 1. Houseman notes that the submission form for the inclusion of projects into the CIP should include the priority of the project and the year that the project should occur to help plan for capacity.
- D. Macri asked for Houseman to clarify whether the CIP should include capital maintenance projects (repairing and replacing existing infrastructure) or only improvement projects (that add new infrastructure that did not exist before).
 1. Houseman specified that the CIP should focus on improvement (additive) projects like building new bike lanes or sidewalks, but individual projects that are primarily additive in nature can include some elements of maintenance related to the improvement project.
- E. Hartmann asks who would forecast the maintenance projects if the CIPC only focuses on improvement projects.
 1. Houseman answered that the staff in various town departments account for maintenance in their yearly budget requests.
 2. Hartmann clarified that the CIPC would not look at maintenance projects in that case, which Houseman and Kulbacki agreed is correct.

II. AGENDA REVIEW, PAST MEETING MINUTES REVIEW/APPROVAL (5 MINUTES):

- A. Dolan asked the CIPC to examine the draft meeting minutes for the October 13, 2023 meeting.
 1. Macri reported that all received amendment requests were included in the draft meeting minutes.

2. Edwards made a motion to approve the minutes for the October 13, 2023 meeting, which Callaghan seconded. The CIPC voted unanimously to approve these minutes.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (5 MINUTES/AS NEEDED):

- A. No members of the public were present, so no public comments were provided.

IV. PREPARATION FOR REVIEW OF DRAFT CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM AT NOVEMBER 3, 2023 MEETING – PETER KULBACKI AND JOHN DOLAN (10 MINUTES):

- A. The current draft of the capital expenditure proposal submission form is based on Kulbacki's previous capital improvement program process, which only included questions that asked information that Kulbacki needed to know.
 1. Kulbacki said that the CIPC may want to add more questions since not everyone has the same experiential knowledge as he does.
- B. Chamberlain notes that the submission form should ask respondents to tie their request to the vision statement of the Master Plan.
- C. Dolan says that the CIPC will look at the draft submission form at the November 3, 2023 meeting and vote to approve a submission form for sharing with town departments.

V. REQUIREMENTS/MECHANISMS FOR DISSOLVING CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDS AND ESTABLISHING A NEW FUND FOR A DIFFERENT PURPOSE; NORWICH, VT'S APPROACH TO MOVING ARPA FUNDS OUTSIDE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONTROL – ELLEN BULLION (10 MINUTES):

- A. Bullion notes that the dissolution process for capital reserve funds would simply require a vote on a warrant article at the 2024 Town Meeting, with the warrant article stating to return all money in that capital reserve fund to the unassigned fund balance.
 1. If the CIPC sought to create a new capital reserve fund for a different purpose, a subsequent warrant article could create a new capital reserve fund, contingent on the passage of the previous warrant that resolved the old capital reserve fund(s).
 2. Kulbacki notes that the voters could choose to dissolve the old fund and not establish a new fund.
 3. Kulbacki reminds the CIPC of the discussion last week that noted that merging capital reserve funds could save money as the Town of Hanover would not need to spend the effort balancing each fund and would not need to keep a sufficient minimum amount in each smaller fund and instead only have to do that for a smaller number of funds.

4. Dolan notes that the CIPC should prepare in advance for the 2024 Town Meeting to prepare recommendations to the Selectboard on what warrant articles to propose and that the CIPC should also prepare a strategy on how to educate the public on these warrant articles to avoid confusion.
- B. Callaghan left the meeting at 10:42 AM.
- C. Bullion notes that Katherine Heck from the New Hampshire Municipal Association stated the suggestion from last week of Norwich, VT using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to pay for salaries in order to create unrestricted funds from the general funds that would have been used to pay for those salaries is not recommended and may in fact be forbidden.
 1. ARPA funds are meant to be for one-time additive (improvement) expenses, not recurring (maintenance) expenses.
 2. Heck recommended that these ARPA funds are contracted by the end of 2024 in order to protect against the chance that a future federal government claws back any unspent ARPA funds.
 - a) Kulbacki asked if merely placing a purchase order for any vendor is sufficient to protect the funds from being clawed back.
 - b) Chamberlain said that her understanding was that a contract was necessary.
 - (1) Bullion will look more into this question and ask Heck.
- D. Bullion left the meeting at 10:50 AM.

VI. ADDRESSING POTENTIAL NEW PROJECTS RELATED TO THE MASTER PLAN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 CIP PROPOSAL – BRIAN EDWARDS (25 MINUTES/AS NEEDED):

- A. Edwards says that further public feedback sessions (“open houses”) for the Master Plan are scheduled in the coming days.
- B. Edwards notes that the Planning Board is ultimately responsible for adopting the Master Plan.
 1. While the Planning Board has had some time to discuss the Master Plan, this largely occurred during the summer months when attendance was lower and when Planning Board members who are not also on the Master Plan Advisory Committee were absent.
 2. Edwards notes that an **online feedback survey** is available for the public to provide further feedback.
- C. Edwards clarified that the Master Plan is an aspirational document that is not self-implementing, so implementation will require further action.
- D. Edwards, as Chair of the Planning Board, consolidated all of the goals and strategies of the Master Plan into one document to see which strategies would

cost some amount of money, dividing these into what Edwards predicted would be “big dollars” versus “small dollars”.

1. Edwards sent this consolidation to Vicki Smith, who serves on the Master Plan Advisory Committee, and received corrections from Smith, taking a look at what would and would not be included in the CIP process.
 2. Edwards seeks to filter this consolidation through more town experts like Houseman and Kulbacki.
- E. Edwards in his Planning Board role also examined what goals and strategies of the Master Plan will require amendments to the zoning ordinance, which would require public hearings of the Planning Board and then a warrant article at the 2024 Town Meeting.
1. Increases in density and height that the Master Plan calls for will require changes to the zoning ordinance.
- F. Edwards shared the current draft of this document consolidating the goals and strategies of the Master Plan with the CIPC.
1. Dolan reports that Edwards and Smith’s “first cut” shows 20 items that may require “big dollars” and will likely fall under the CIP, with 13 items as maybes.
 2. Edwards notes that items that the CIPC considers for the CIP should be analyzed for how much they follow the vision of the Master Plan.
- G. Hartmann recommends consulting with the Department of Parks and Recreation given that many members of the public are requesting that middle school sports be placed under the purview of Richmond Middle School instead of the Department of Parks and Recreation.
1. This could have a sizable impact at reducing costs for the Town of Hanover.
- H. Chamberlain notes that fulfilling the Master Plan goals of providing more recreation opportunities can involve the CIP given that purchasing land, like the purchase of Wilson’s Landing about a decade ago, can significantly contribute towards providing more recreation opportunities.
1. Chamberlain notes that public athletic facilities are deeply utilized and perhaps overextended during hours that are outside of school class times like afternoons, with some practices approaching midnight given the lack of fields or facilities.
 2. Dolan reiterates that whether the Town of Hanover or the Dresden School District supports a specific recreation improvement will have impacts on the CIP.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS (5 MINUTES/AS NEEDED):

- A. Dolan notes that the CIPC should reflect over the next week on what they wish the definition of a capital improvement to be in preparation for the decision next week for the submission form.
 - 1. Dolan suggests that to fulfill Chamberlain's earlier comment, the submission form could ask respondents to specify which particular Master Plan goal the requested project fulfills.
- B. Chamberlain notes that she feels that all needed projects, regardless of the funding source, should be included in the CIP in order to market projects for potential private investment, warning against sidelining projects due to hoping that they would be funded by private investment.
 - 1. Dolan notes that the CIP should be tied to the budget request for the next year, saying that if the CIPC knows a specific dollar amount for a project, it could be included in the CIP.
 - 2. Chamberlain says that other towns have included visionary projects whose dollar amounts are not known, which can provide helpful information less from a next year's budget perspective and more from a long-term perspective.
 - a) Edwards agreed, stating that the CIP should differentiate between projects for next year's budget and more visionary projects for the longer term.
 - 3. Hartmann wonders if the CIP, in addition to looking for additive projects, should consider looking for savings or efficiency opportunities, such as vehicles.
 - a) Kulbacki notes that the Town of Hanover currently has no defined plan with respect to transitioning the town vehicle fleet to a renewable future.
 - b) Chamberlain notes that looking at items like making fire trucks smaller in order to shrink vehicle lanes and expand sidewalks demonstrates the need to pay attention to matters like these.
 - (1) Kulbacki notes that the CIPC will need a plan for how to convince stakeholders like the Fire Department to accept changes like these.
 - c) Chamberlain suggests sharing the Master Plan goals and strategies most relevant to each town department could assist these departments in following the vision of the Master Plan.
- C. Dolan will share capital expenditure request submission forms that other New Hampshire towns (Bedford and Wolfeboro, recommended by Houseman) have used to generate CIPs, which can inform the CIPC's discussion next week.
- D. Dolan notes that the online meeting folder contains an updated schedule of the CIPC's meetings and deadlines.

1. Dolan noted that a good reference for thinking about CIPs is **a webinar titled “Recipe for a CIP: How to Start and Utilize a Capital Improvement Program”**, presented by the New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs.
 - a) Callaghan mentioned this webinar at the October 13, 2023 meeting, providing CIPC members with printed copies of the webinar’s slideshow.

VIII.ADJOURNMENT:

- A. The meeting adjourned at 11:26 AM.
- B. The next meeting will be on November 3, 2023 at 10:00 AM.