

Town of Agawam Community Preservation Committee
Minutes of CPA Meeting
July 23, 2025

Members Present: Henry Kozloski, David Cecchi, Frank DeStefano, Vin Ronghi, Vi Baldwin, Ray Moreau, Pat Asta Ferrero

Members Absent: Doreen Prouty, Lori Stickle

Others Present: Mayor Christopher Johnson, Vice President City Council Anthony Russo, Chris Lanski
Jennifer Bonfiglio; CPA Administrator

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Kozloski

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Member Prouty motioned to approve the April 23, 2025 meeting minutes. Second by Member Asta Ferrero. Member Moreau abstains.
2. **Application for Funding-Veterans Plaza- \$188,760**

Mayor Johnson presented a request for funding to support the relocation of the Veterans Green from its current site at the Phelps School to a new location within School Street Park.

He explained that although the CPA had previously approved funding for redesigning the Veterans Green at the Phelps School location, feedback from the consulting architect indicated that accommodating all desired elements at that site would be difficult. Limitations at the Phelps site include restricted access during school hours and a significant increase in anticipated costs.

Mayor Johnson outlined the proposed new location within School Street Park, which would connect the older and newer sections of the park. He references the application, referencing the visual designs included in the materials. He emphasized that this new site would allow for greater public participation and transform the space into a more central community gathering area, particularly for holiday events.

Member Baldwin inquired about the possibility of relocating benches or creating a memorial that individuals could contribute to through purchases. Mayor Johnson responded that the current design does not include benches, but suggested nearby locations such as Still Brook Park may be more appropriate for that purpose.

Chair Kozloski asked how many flags would be featured in the new design. Mayor Johnson confirmed the design includes six flags, representing each branch of the U.S. military.

Member Cecchi raised a question regarding the bell tower, which was part of the original Veterans Memorial, and whether it could be incorporated in the new location. Mayor Johnson explained that the existing bell tower cannot be physically moved but that plans are in place to include a new bell tower at a later stage.

A substantial discussion followed about the significance of the bell tower and the desire to include it in the current project.

Chair Kozloski opens the public hearing.

Councilor Russo (40 Corey Street), speaking as both a city councilor and the son of a Veteran, voiced strong support for including the bell tower in the new Veterans Green. He stated that, in coordination with local Veterans, the Bricklayers Union of Western Mass, of which he is the Business Agent, would donate all masonry materials and labor required to construct the new brick bell tower. He advocated for constructing the bell tower simultaneously with the rest of the Veterans Plaza.

Chris Lanski (24 Seymour Avenue) spoke to the emotional and historical significance of the bell tower and memorial plaques to Veterans and their families.

Member Ronghi expressed support for including the bell tower and asked if it would be feasible to integrate it into the project timeline and budget now rather than delaying.

After further discussion Member Ronghi proposed increasing the funding request to include the bell tower.

Member Ronghi motioned to increase the project funding by \$25,000, approving a total of \$213,760 from the Budgeted Reserve. Second by member Baldwin. All in Favor.

DRAFT