

January 10, 2022

Jeremy and Team:

Hope you had a great weekend. We look forward to speaking this evening and appreciate you putting us on your agenda!

Since Jeremy and I last traded emails, the CCAG board met several times and felt it made sense to send you something in advance of tonight's meeting. Please excuse the short notice.

Below is an update on our progress and a request for the Council to consider. This e-mail has also been attached with project images if helpful for new Council members.

CCAG Update:

As a group of Cape parents / fellow residents and volunteers, Cape Community Arena Group (CCAG) would like to provide the following update on our progress with the Cape Community Arena (CCA) project:

1. **Strong Demand:** CCAG has launched a community survey to gather feedback from Cape residents and other stakeholders. Survey results are still rolling in, yet feedback to date is overwhelmingly supportive of our proposed project ([see link to stats](#)). Early indications are that we are reaching beyond our core stakeholder base, reinforced by in-person info sessions we've been conducting at various town locations over the past few days. In addition to providing Cape residents with a myriad of sports, education, and entertainment opportunity ([see survey](#) for a list of possible activities), we continue to hear from outsiders that our proposed project fills a very real need in the greater Portland region a) alleviating a logjam that exists for refrigerated regulation-size ice surfaces, offering the Portland Symphony (and other intimate-entertainment groups) an ideal outdoor venue they are actively seeking, and also creating an alternative facility option for shoulder (and warmer) season sports organizations. No regional venue options provide the covered and open-air experience that we're proposing. Both Cape resident and outsider demand were further reinforced through a great conversation we had recently with Cape's Athletic Administrator, Jeff Thoreck, namely the Town's ability to retain precious budget dollars vs. paying for venue rentals/transport outside of Town at far less than ideal times.
2. **Qualified Site:** CCAG performed wetland delineation work (see map attached) at the proposed site adjacent to Public Works, confirming that our proposed area of interest is viable, particularly if able to secure a Permit by Rule reducing our setback requirement to 25'. In addition, community survey results supporting the Public Works site at Gull Crest (specifically) have also been overwhelmingly positive. Furthermore, we sat down with Public Works Director Jay Reynolds to discuss our preliminary plans and he expressed his support, mainly asking that we ensure acceptable vehicle circulation and take into account snow removal from their existing lot within our design. We also met with Cape Elizabeth Land Trust (CELT) at the proposed site, where informal feedback was also very positive, noting no serious concerns around trail system or wildlife impact (simply considerations), and confirming that some tree removal (which is already minimal) within part of our area of interest would be of benefit given poor tree health, especially if we consider a planting offset near contiguous habitat as part of our design. All of this, along with any traffic impact along Spurwink Ave, we look forward to addressing in fine detail during the permitting process. We truly believe CCAG to be the best alternative use for the proposed

site, syncing seamlessly with Public Works, the current athletic complex, and natural backdrop at Gull Crest – in no way impacting preservation land or access to trails.

3. **Funding:** CCAG has secured serious interest from a potential donor willing to fund our proposed open-air, multi-purpose, intergenerational, community arena in its entirety. This particular donor has Cape Elizabeth roots and is well respected, yet time is of the essence for us to lock down their pledge. Evidence that our project has gained material traction with the Town (i.e., entering the permitting process), demonstrating that we're sticking to our timeline (Cape residents skating at some point during the winter of 22/23), will achieve this.

Given the progress above, and to stay within on our timeline and keep our anchor donor engaged, **we kindly ask that the Council consider us for the Planning Board process during tonight's voting session.**

We realize this is not exactly how you and I left things the last time we communicated, yet after several discussions with the CCAG board, we all agree this to be the most logical next step, which we expect to be a low-risk / high-reward vote for the Council. A vote that should ultimately have minimal impact on the Council's already limited bandwidth in 22', and we fully understand there is no approved project without Planning Board, State, and final Council approval.

Also, after several recent discussions / correspondence with independent Council members (thank you!!), we noted that 'Town management of the arena' is a big factor for some. Something we completely understand, even with CCAG delivering the Town a buttoned-up and easy to execute operating and revenue plan prior to final project approval (something we plan to develop in full coordination with Town departments like Facilities, Public Works, Community Services, and in parallel with the permitting process). To further alleviate this concern, in addition to funding 100% of the project's capital expense and donating the project to the Town, the CCAG board has agreed to also fundraise for an endowment that covers operating expense in the project's early years, and offer some reasonable level of arena management support. We also realize that in order to formally kick-off the Planning Board process, a site control agreement will need to be in place between the Town and CCAG. As you and I discussed, a simple Development Rights Agreement or something similar should work, and can easily be ironed out over the next few weeks.

Finally, we would like to point out CCA alignment with the Town's comprehensive plan:

- We strongly believe that a unique community asset like CCA is well aligned with the Town's commitment to 'embracing changes that enhance our community'.
- In addition to our town's wonderful and unique attributes, we believe CCA fully supports the Town's commitment to ensuring 'Cape Elizabeth will continue to be a desirable place to live'.
- Based on our tight footprint and green-build design, we believe CCA does not 'encroach on open spaces, farms or forests' and actually enhances any 'existing parks, outdoor recreational areas and trails'.
- Since 'understanding population growth and trends is essential to planning for the future and ensuring that the community has adequate services and resources', CCA is a perfect solution for Cape!

With gratitude for the Council's dedicated time, we look forward to discussing tonight, and we welcome any and all feedback in advance.

Thank you very much for your consideration!

Best regards,

Jay Brandeis
Board Secretary
Cape Community Arena Group (CCAG)
(415) 203 8231

<Project images on the following two pages>



