

GREENFIELD

Committee reviews pickleball proposals

Funding requests include court expansions, climate change-resistant infrastructure

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GREENFIELD — The Community Preservation Committee heard two separate requests for pickleball courts as it reviews 14 applicants for fiscal year 2026 Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding.

The state CPA allows municipalities to adopt a property tax surcharge of up to 3%, the revenues from which are matched by state funds. Greenfield joined the CPA in 2020 with a local surcharge, allowing the city to receive state-matched funding for projects and initiatives related to housing, historic preservation, open space conservation and outdoor recreation.

Last week, the Community Preservation Committee heard Amy Proietti's request for \$50,000 to go toward a roughly \$700,000 expansion of pickleball courts in the grassy area near Abercrombie Field on Montague City Road.

Proietti opened her presentation by explaining that the project would include the construction of a six-court pickleball facility. A design concept

drafted by Berkshire Design Group indicates the courts will be within the bounds of a perimeter fence. The proposal includes approximately 18 parking spaces and site amenities such as benches, a bike rack, trash receptacles and a water fountain.

"Pickleball has expanded rapidly across the region in the past five years, and Greenfield's single pickleball court no longer supports the demand," Proietti wrote in her pre-application to the Community Preservation Committee. "Pickleball is truly a sport that engages users of all ages and abilities and is a much-needed addition to Greenfield's park system. This project aligns with the CPC recreational goals of enhancing and expanding recreation facilities."

When committee member Wisty Rorabacher asked why the project, which in 2022 was expected to cost \$300,000, has now become a more than \$700,000 project, Proietti said it has to do with rising construction and planning costs.

The project also includes construction of storm-resilient infrastructure and drainage systems such as water-permeable surfaces for the court, as well as rain gardens or a landscaped area designed to collect rainwater and reduce runoff, Recreation Director Christy Moore explained.

"That is the cost of doing business and delaying. It's just that the price has gone up,"

Proietti said. "The specifications for this proposal have not changed in all those years."

The applicant, Moore said, also applied for \$250,000 in capital funding for the project and plans to raise at least \$25,000 from the community. Moore also noted that the courts will require only minor maintenance, which can be conducted by the Department of Public Works' Parks and Forestry Division, alongside a volunteer group.

In addition to the Abercrombie Field proposal, the Community Preservation Committee also reviewed a separate application filed by Franklin County Pickleball Group Fundraising Chair Mike Reddig to fund the construction of climate change-resistant infrastructure at the existing pickleball and basketball courts at Green River Park. Reddig requested \$22,361 to fund the construction of a drainage ditch, shade netting and resurfacing of the park's court.

"Parts of my proposal are vital and would benefit not only the pickleball players, but other users of Green River Park — particularly the shade structure and some of the capital improvements to this existing court," Reddig said. "I strongly urge that the committee consider funding those."

Reddig withdrew aspects of the proposal seeking money for solar lighting and an interlocking pickleball court surface,



STAFF FILE PHOTO/PAUL FRANZ

Greenfield resident Ben Marsden returns a volley from Matt Bassett of Northfield and Nate Smith of Bernardston while playing pickleball with partner Charlie Tormanen of Montague, not pictured, at Green River Park in Greenfield in November. The city's Community Preservation Committee heard two separate requests for pickleball courts as it reviews 14 applicants for fiscal year 2026 Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding.

but kept requests for two solar shades and an extra bench.

Outside of pickleball, the Community Preservation Committee also reviewed an application from the Greenfield Recreation Department requesting \$32,000 to build science, technology, engineering and math-based play equipment at Hillside Park.

"The panels feature an elaborate design of levers, pulleys, slides and switches that users

can manipulate to change the way the elements relate, helping to develop cognitive and fine motor skills as well as provide insights into cause-and-effect relationships," Moore wrote in the application. "These whimsical and creative panels are sure to inspire learning opportunities and enhance the community's overall enjoyment of their park."

When committee member Becky George asked how van-

dalism-resistant the structures are, noting that she does not want to see the structures be destroyed, Moore responded that while nothing can be "vandal-proof," the structures are built to last.

The committee will further discuss applications at its next meeting Jan. 30.

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