



JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

Somerville CPA



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES
JUNE 24, 2015**

MEMBERS
Michael A. Capuano, Chair
Dick Bauer, Vice Chair
Tanya Cafarella
Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello
Michael Fager
Arn Franzen
Ezra Glenn
Courtney Koslow
Uma Murugan

STAFF
Emily Monea

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) held a public hearing at 7:00pm in the cafeteria of the East Somerville Neighborhood School at 50 Cross St., Somerville, MA 02145. An audio recording of the hearing is available upon request.

- Members Present** Chair Michael Capuano, Vice Chair Dick Bauer, Tanya Cafarella, Michael Fager, and Courtney Koslow
- Members Absent** Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello, Arn Franzen, Ezra Glenn, and Uma Murugan
- Staff Present** Emily Monea
- Others Present** Roberta Bauer, Luisa Oliveira, and Alan Bingham

The Chair opened the hearing at 7:04. He explained the purpose of the hearing – to gather public feedback on how the City should prioritize disbursing Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds – and noted that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) would accept written comments through Monday, July 20th. Due to a power outage at City Hall for most of the day, Emily Monea was unable to bring a presentation or materials to the meeting.

Agenda item 1: Committee introductions

The Committee members introduced themselves.

Courtney Koslow arrived at 7:10; a quorum was now present.

Agenda item 2: Presentation on CPA and Community Preservation Plan (CPP)

Ms. Monea gave a brief verbal presentation on the CPA and the CPP. She noted that, to date, the CPC has not changed any of the priorities established in the FY15 CPP. The CPC has undertaken a Historic Preservation Plan (HPP), which should be done by the end of September. This timing means that the HPP will not be done prior to the release of the FY16 application materials or the due date for the first phase of the application process. However, the HPP will be done by the time the full applications are due and the CPC evaluates them.

The Chair asked if the public meeting participants had questions. Alan Bingham, a member of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), asked whether the funding allocations across the CPA focus areas would change in the FY16 funding cycle.

The Vice Chair noted the Committee has not discussed this, but, speaking for himself, he will account for the fact that the demand for historic preservation and open space/recreation funds did not reflect the CPC's allocation in FY15 (15% of total funds for each).

Ms. Monea reviewed the priorities established in the FY15 Community Preservation Plan. She also reviewed the Affordable Housing Trust's use of CPA funds, noting that they had distributed funds to a Somerville Community Corporation (SCC) project at 163 Glen Street, to the Housing Authority's Mystic Water Works project, and to two programs run by the Somerville Homeless Coalition. These projects and programs account for about \$780,000 of the \$2.2 million granted to the Trust. She noted that the Trust intends to use about \$1.2 million in funds to pilot 100 Homes, which is an initiative of the City's Housing Division and SCC to preserve affordability in the city's existing housing stock. The City and SCC intend to request that the CPC and the Board of Aldermen authorize bonding for roughly \$6 million, with the debt service to be repaid with CPA funds over a roughly 25-year period. She noted that in the worst case scenario, the debt service on the bond would consume at most 23% of projected CPA revenue. A few CPC members noted that the debt service would come out of the funds that the CPC grants to the Trust.

In response to a question from Mr. Bingham, Ms. Monea noted that unexpended CPA funds roll over year to year and are available indefinitely.

The meeting attendees reviewed the finances from the FY15 funding cycle. All of the designated historic resources and community housing funds were spent. About \$500,000 in open space/recreation funding will carry over to FY16. About \$150,000 to \$200,000 of undesignated funds was left at the end of the funding cycle. Finally, if the Mayor's request to appropriate \$1.2 million into the CPA Funds is approved by the Board of Aldermen, the CPC will have a significant amount of additional funds that carry over into FY16. The CPC expressed their thanks to the Mayor for the requested appropriation into the CPA Fund.

Agenda item 3: Public testimony

The Chair opened the hearing to public testimony

Mr. Bingham noted that the CPA does not appear to be well understood by the public. He noted that the first year is a learning experience and that the public will likely become more appreciative of the program in future years. Tanya Cafarella noted that this will be especially true once projects are underway and have signs up acknowledging the funding source.

Mr. Bingham noted that the Historic Preservation Commission often receives requests from historically designated property owners to use less expensive materials that are also less historically appropriate. He said it would be great to have a program that fast tracks projects submitted by historic homeowners to improve their properties in historically appropriate ways and noted that this is a great way to get people engaged in the program. Ms. Koslow noted that there has been discussion about the HPC requesting funds for such a program.

Mr. Bingham asked whether CPA funds can be used to support affordable housing for seniors. Ms. Koslow said yes. He asked whether the CPC considers universal design. Ms. Koslow said the CPC had not addressed this explicitly in the Community Preservation Plan but could. She also explained what universal design is. Ms. Bingham noted that he is concerned about aging in place.

There were no further comments, so the Chair closed the public testimony portion of the public hearing. He reiterated that the written comment period will stay open until July 20th.

Agenda item 4: Approve minutes from April 22nd and May 27th meetings

The Vice Chair moved to approve the minutes from the April 22nd and May 27th meetings; Mr. Fager seconded the motion. The Vice Chair withdrew the motion to account for differing member absences at the two meetings.

Upon motion from the Vice Chair, seconded by the Chair, the Committee voted 3-0 to approve the minutes from the April 22nd meeting, with Ms. Cafarella and Ms. Koslow abstaining as they were not present at the meeting.

Upon motion from the Vice Chair, seconded by Ms. Koslow, the Committee voted 4-0 to approve the minutes from the May 27th meeting, with the Chair abstaining as he was not present at the meeting.

Agenda item 5: Next meeting: Wednesday, July 22nd at 7 p.m. (Visiting Nurse Association)

The Vice Chair noted that Ms. Cafarella is stepping down from the Committee and thanked her for her service and contributions.

Meeting Adjournment

Upon motion from the Chair, seconded by Mr. Fager, the Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn at approximately 7:45.