

Community Preservation Committee
August 23, 2010
Police Station Conference Room
7:00 pm

Members present: Mike Dissette, Judith Grohe, Paul Healy, Margaret Welch, Don Little, and Jane Healey. Emily Wentworth, CPC Administrator, was also in attendance.

Also present: Councilors Bob Cronin and Ari Herzog (Budget and Finance Committee) and Councilors Brian Derrivan and Barry Connell (Planning & Development Committee)

A joint meeting was held with the City Council Planning and Development and Budget and Finance Committees to Review 2011 CPC Funding Recommendations.

Mr. Dissette said that the CPC received 15 applications, which were due in February. The CPC held a series of public meetings for each category where they evaluated and determined funding recommendations, along with specific conditions for each appropriation. The Committee recommended to appropriate a total of \$753,547. Mr. Dissette said that each grant recipient must submit quarterly reports after appropriation until completion and projects must also be completed within 12 months, unless an extension is approved. Grant funds are contingent upon receiving matching funds from the state, which is estimated to be 25% of local surcharge revenues collected.

1. Bartlett Wharf Timber Conservation – applied for by the City when an historic wharf was discovered during the WWTF project. The CPC recommended funding from prior year unreserved funds. \$3,740 for the work of the conservatory and shipping costs. Funds were advanced by Pieter Hartford, he will be reimbursed. Councilor Connell asked if the CPA allows reimbursement to an individual. Emily Wentworth stated that it was his corporation that fronted the funds, and they were eligible for funding.

2. YWCA Affordable Housing – The CPC recommended \$50,000 to preserve 5 units and add an additional 5 units at 11 Market Street. The YWCA provides housing for very low income households. This funding would be the next step to move their project forward. The funding may provide a local match for other grant applications and funding sources. Units would be on subsidized housing inventory. The entire project cost was approximately \$2m. Councilor Cronin mentioned that parking was an issue on Market Street. Mrs. Wentworth explained that the ZBA held several public hearings and granted dimensional variances to allow the IC church to lease spaces for tenants if needed. A lot of the tenants of the YWCA don't have vehicles. Currently, 2 tenants now have vehicles. Parking is also provided in the main lot. Mr. Dissette spoke of working with the Affordable Housing Trust for comments on housing related projects and the CPC has adopted their suggestions. He noted that the CPC appreciates their input.

3. Newburyport Housing Rehab Program – The CPA recommended \$75K for the continuation of the Program to be managed by the Office of Community Development. The award would be on the

condition that refunds received back from grantees shall be returned to CPA Housing Reserves. Mr. Dissette said that the program was always supported in the past but now the only funding source remaining is CPC. The total grant should fund 10 individual projects each secured by a 15 year lien. Mr. Connell asked if the City was still applying for CDBG funds. Andrew Port said they would in the next round but didn't in the previous cycle. Councilor Connell noted that the City wasn't as likely to receive CDBG funding possibly due to economic success of Newburyport.

4. Milk St. Affordable Housing Restoration – The CPC recommended funding \$11K to replace a boiler. The Newburyport Housing Authority owns property and leases it for a Ch. 689 program for handicapped individuals. American Training Inc. operates the assisted living program. The Housing Authority does not receive sufficient funds to replace their 40 yr. old boiler.

5. Newburyport Affordable Housing Trust – The CPC recommended funding \$50K to preserve affordable housing ownership opportunities. Funding will be for the Down Payment Assistance Program and MLS Input Only Listing Services. This project was being done in an effort to retain the City's existing affordable housing inventory. Down payment assistance provides up to \$15K of gap financing for purchase of a deed restricted resale unit to eligible buyers. MLS allows sellers to list units on MLS to reach a broader audience, and also extends the affordable marketing period. Councilor Derrivan agreed that MLS is a better way to publicize available units than just the website. NAHT does not own any property at this time. These funds would be to purchase privately owned units. Councilor Herzog asked if Down Payment Assistance has been being used. Mrs. Wentworth said 3 or 4 units have been granted funds over the past year.

6. Old South Church Roof Restoration – The CPC recommended \$29K for the roof restoration project. Mr. Dissette said the Old South has been funded before for previous historical renovations. They have worked on budget, on time, and well done. He mentioned that they also have an active capital campaign. This grant would be a small piece of their budget.

7. St. Anna's Chapel Restoration Project – The CPC recommended \$15K for roof restoration. Mr. Dissette said this was also an ongoing project, and St. Anna's was a prior grantee. They have been on time, on budget, etc.

8. Rediscovering Caleb Cushing – The CPC recommended \$3K to make Caleb Cushing's gravesite at Highland Cemetery more accessible. There would be oversight by DPS. The plan was to create a 220' pathway from the street to the gravesite. The group has matching funds and a granite marker already.

9. Oak Hill Cemetery Gravestone Restoration – The CPC recommended \$2K to restore gravestones at Oak Hill Cemetery, managed by Ghlee Woodworth. This was an extension of a previous project funded in the past. Funded by volunteers, fines, etc. Ms. Woodworth said they had someone train them to do the repairs as opposed to paying \$20K for having 51 stones restored.

10. Open Space Reserves - \$50K for use of future CPC recommendation and council appropriation. Funds would be available on short notice in case an opportunity to purchase open space arises. The total reserve balance would be \$773K with this appropriation.

11. Moseley to Maudslay Connection Project - \$45K to support design and permitting of new recreational trail along the Merrimack River connecting parks. This project was time sensitive because of the neighboring bridge restoration project. The City was hoping to get their requests incorporated into the State's plans. Councilor Connell asked what the project costs would be if this was just for planning purposes. Mr. Port said it could get up to \$1mil. Mass. Highway has not agreed to include this in their project. Mr. Port said MH doesn't want to slow down their permitting process by including the trail. The trail would be connected to shared-use path from Ferry Road. Approximately ½ mile of work. Councilor Herzog asked if DCR was supporting the project. Mr. Port said it was not their jurisdiction because it would just be connecting parks.

12. Clipper City Rail Trail Extension – The CPC recommended \$53K to support 2nd phase of rail trail. Work along waterfront and south end. Ongoing project, many years away from completion.

13. CPA Administration - \$12K to fund expected administrative costs. Stipend, annual dues, recurring expenses such as minutes, legal ads, legal review, etc. Unspent funds are rolled back into general funds. Same as previous years.

14. Open Space Acquisition Bond Payment - \$136,619 for bond payment for 2005 projects. Payments will continue through 2019.

15. City Hall Bond Debt Payment - \$207,188 for bond payment for City Hall Restoration project. Payments will continue through 2019.

16. Community Housing Reserves – The CPC recommended \$20K for the future creation, preservation, or support of housing opportunities. This fund works similar to Open Space Reserve. It needs future appropriation by CPC and Council. Balance is \$14,200 now. Mr. Dissette said this would provide quick access to funds if an opportunity arose to purchase affordable housing.

17. Reallocation of funds Custom House Maritime Museum for change in scope - The CPC recommended the reallocation of \$20K (granted on 8/9/10) for a feasibility study for HVAC, ADA, and auxiliary museum space. The Building Committee has requested a change in scope for slate roof restoration, masonry repointing, guardrail restoration, security,... This was a significant change in scope from what they proposed in their application. They decided the existing building is in dire need of repair and should be addressed before planning on new construction.

Councilor Connell asked for public comment. None was given.

Councilor Cronin said he would like to look into the YWCA project further, specifically regarding parking in the area. He stated he would look into the ZBA's decision and was concerned about the ZBA granting a variance.

Councilor Connell stated that he didn't see any objectionable recommendations though he suggested the CPA program was sold to voters primarily for protecting open space. He urged Councilors to keep in mind the intention of voters.

Councilor Herzog questioned why funds were being granted for unknown potential opportunities in the case of the Reserve accounts. Councilor Cronin said without a reserve account, the City would have to scramble to find a way to fund open space or affordable housing opportunities.

Councilor Derrivan motioned to recommend adoption of all 16 applications plus one reallocation of funds. Councilor Connell seconded and the motion was approved 2-0. (Planning and Development Committee).

Councilor Cronin motioned to move YWCA out of committee with no recommendation and recommend the remaining applications for funding. Councilor Herzog seconded and the motion was approved. Councilor Cronin said he would look into the YWCA project further prior to the vote at the next City Council meeting.

The joint meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

The Commission reviewed the minutes of 7/26/11. Mike Dissette made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted and Paul Healy seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Status of State Reporting - Emily Wentworth reported that both the CP-1 and CP-3 forms have been filed for the City already although they are due Dec. 15. She said the City collected a little more than was estimated. There was approximately \$615K in local revenue, which will also increase the state match. The City should receive matching funds on Oct. 15th.

Ms. Wentworth said that she also drafted a grant award letter with built in general conditions. Specific conditions would be added to each award letter. Mrs. Wentworth mentioned that some projects had dedicated members from the NHC overseeing projects. She suggested doing the same for ongoing projects. Emily and Dianne will both be contacts for other projects. Emily will return from maternity leave in late November and Dianne will be the CPC contact until her return.

The Commission agreed to schedule the annual public meeting for October 25th. Applications would be released then for a due date in February.

The next regular meeting was scheduled for 9/27/11.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

Dianne Eppa
Minute Taker