

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (CPA) COMMITTEE MEETING

Public Hearing on FY 21 Allocation Percentages

Wednesday, August 5, 2020, 6:00 P.M. – 7:05 P.M.

Meeting Intro & Zoom Process Explanation

- Chair Lisa Peterson opens meeting and summarizes process for Committee and public through Zoom, consistent with Governor Baker’s Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 Virus.
 - This is the August 5th hearing of the Cambridge CPA Committee; conducted through Zoom.
 - Meeting will begin with Committee review of the minutes from our July 1, 2020 meeting.
 - We will then go to the public comment period. Before public comment, members of the public will be muted.
 - If anyone is having technical difficulties and cannot hear during the Committee discussion or staff presentation portions, please use Zoom’s “raise your hand” feature. Staff will work to assist you.
- Chair Peterson calls the roll for Committee:
 - Corinne Espinoza – absent
 - Susan Schlesinger – present
 - Kaki Martin – present
 - Chandra Harrington – absent
 - Ellen Shachter – present
 - Kevin Foster – present
 - Victoria Bergland – present
 - David Kale – present
- Anytime a committee member or city staff speaks tonight, ask that they first identify themselves by name. Speak clearly.

FY21 Committee Process Overview

- Committee’s first meeting was Wednesday, June 10, 2020. This was an organizing meeting for FY21 and the Committee voted to allocate \$1,000,000 from CPA fund balance to the COVID-19 Housing Stabilization Program.
- Last meeting was Wednesday, July 1, 2020. This was a hearing on project requests.
- Tonight is a hearing on the allocation percentages for affordable housing, open space, and historic preservation projects. Each category must receive at least 10% of the FY21 CPA revenues and the remaining percentage can go toward any category.
- Wednesday, September 9, 2020 will be the vote meeting on FY21 funding allocations and projects.

July 1, 2020 Minutes

- Committee unanimously approves minutes.

Public Comment

- The comment period on projects will close tonight.
- The comment period on allocation percentages will remain open until the September 9, 2020 meeting.
- Public can submit comments online through the form available on CPA website. Can also email comments on allocation percentages to myself (lisap@cambridgema.gov) or Jennifer Mathews (jmathews@cambridgema.gov).
- Anything received electronically after tonight's meeting will be read into the record on September 9, 2020.
- Chair Peterson opens the meeting to public comment.
 - Explains Zoom raise/lower hand process and how public comment will proceed. Asks commenters to please limit to 3 minutes.
 - If member of the public has materials to share or submit, we ask that they describe them during comment; then email them to lisap@cambridgema.gov or jmathews@cambridgema.gov for the record.
- Cathie Zusy
 - Advocating for allocation of 60% affordable housing, 20% historic preservation, 20% open space ("60/20/20"). Affordable housing is a priority, but the pandemic shows that green space and the City's unique historic character are also important. The Cambridge Historical Commission does varied work on important historical resources throughout Cambridge. Also advocating for Magazine Beach project.
- Suzanne Blier
 - Supports allocation of 60/20/20. Member of the Harvard Square Neighborhood Association but speaking individually. Now is the time for this funding; we are seeing drastic climate change. Funding could also support the affordable housing overlay, mature trees, and needed open spaces for lower income residents. Funds would support preservation of historic building facades. Supports home ownership programs within the affordable housing funding, and encourages funding for neighborhood associations.
- Kenneth Carson
 - Supports allocation of 60/20/20. On the board of Magazine Beach Partners; also supports the Magazine Beach project.
- Tina Alu
 - Supports continuing the allocation of 80% affordable housing, 10% historic preservation, 10% open space ("80/10/10"). Executive Director of the CEOC and speaking on their behalf. Every year hundreds of residents sign petitions to support this continued allocation. Could not this year because of COVID-19 but has talked to hundreds of tenants over the past few months who speak to how critical this funding

- is. If the affordable housing overlay passes, CPA funding will be even more important. Buying land and building more housing is so difficult and the 80/10/10 split lets you expand production.
- Cathy Higgins
 - Supports allocation of 80/10/10. The current demand for safe, secure housing has only continued with COVID-19. Green space and trees don't mean much without housing.
 - Lauren Curry
 - Supports allocation of 80/10/10. Long term housing advocate, and housing is critical to secure a future. All – housing, historical preservation, and open space – are valuable resources to the City, but the potential for the housing overlay to pass means CPA funds for housing creation are critical. Applications for housing far outstrip the supply. Money from CPA has created hundreds of units but many hundreds more are needed.
 - Noah Sawyer
 - Supports allocation of 80/10/10. Speaking for Just-A-Start. JAS is excited to have a planned pipeline of approx. 250 new units over the next few years, but those units won't be available without continued funding.
 - Bill Cunningham
 - Supports allocation of 80/10/10. Lives in public housing where he is lucky to have green space, and also values the historic nature of his home. Being low income doesn't mean you don't care about those things. But because of the expenses involved in housing, to get the balance of the three, you actually need the 80/10/10 split. Housing just costs more. Many public/affordable housing options aren't ideal; it may be good for City to maintain more supervision over the programs funded.
 - James Williamson
 - Due to concerns with oversight and management of affordable housing in Cambridge, supports an allocation of 60/20/20. Would not vote for the CPA again if it were being considered. Lives in affordable housing in Cambridge and was previously president of tenant council. Hears many complaints about management and equity issues within housing. Feels development/developers like JAS are the focus rather than management of the housing and supporting tenants. Need to continue involvement and monitoring of developments funded.
 - Margaret Moran
 - Supports allocation of 80/10/10. Serves as the Director of Planning & Development for CHA, and there are over 19,000 applications on CHA's waiting list. There is an overwhelming need. Cambridge is a high cost area and without the financial support of the City, this just wouldn't be possible. CHA looks for opportunities to expand their portfolio and can only do so with CPA funding. The housing Bill C. just talked about shows how the three areas – housing, open space, historic – can cohabitate. Also, CHA has real and meaningful tenant participation. Very proud of their work and recent renovations like Manning Apts in Central Square.
 - Eva Martin Blythe

- Supports allocation of 80/10/10. Executive Director of the YWCA, which provides housing. YWCA property was actually renovated through CPA historical preservation funds, and supports that, but encourages the 80/10/10 split. Over the years, has seen the importance of the supportive housing YWCA provides 24/7. The other areas – open space and historic – are appreciated too, but more than that you need housing. It’s hard to appreciate other things when you don’t have a place to live. CPA funding also provides opportunities to increase other support/make the funds go even further for affordable housing, which is critical.
- Chair Peterson asks for any other comments. No further speakers with hands raised on Zoom.
- Jennifer Mathews summarizes comments received online and via email from:
 - Jean Hannon – supporting 80% affordable housing allocation
 - Golnaz Tabatabai – supporting 80% affordable housing allocation
 - Peter Daly – supporting 80% affordable housing allocation
 - Debra Fox – supporting 80% affordable housing allocation
 - Jonathan Behrens – supporting 80% affordable housing allocation
 - Joseph Rose – supporting 80% affordable housing allocation
 - Hasson Rashid – presenting Homelessness Tiny House Village project
 - Catherine Zusy – providing additional detail and images for Magazine Beach project
 - Elaine DeRosa – supporting 80% affordable housing allocation
 - Sharon Zimmerman – supporting CRA/Bishop Allen project
 - Maisha Moses – supporting CRA/Bishop Allen project
 - Cathy Higgins – supporting affordable housing initiatives and funding generally
 - Tracy Strauss – supporting affordable housing initiatives and funding generally
 - Erica Schwarz – providing additional project renderings and details for CRA/Bishop Allen project
 - Louise Elving – supporting 80% affordable housing allocation
 - Anonymous resident via Noah Sawyer – supporting 80% affordable housing allocation
 - Cathy Higgins – supporting 80% affordable housing allocation in writing (as stated tonight in comments)
- All comments received electronically will be compiled, posted online, and emailed to Committee members.
- Valerie Bonds (additional public comment during virtual hearing)
 - Supports allocation of 80/10/10. Moved to Cambridge in 1987 with moderate affordable housing and now lives in CHA housing in order to be able to continue living in Cambridge. Former CRLS teacher. Also supports homeless resources. Know how critical the need is even without COVID-19. Also supports historic preservation and would like to see more historic projects recognizing women; and

grew up playing at Magazine Beach, but need 80% for housing. Gives Cambridge an A+ in caring for its residents.

Conclusion & Adjournment

- Chair Peterson thanks everyone for attending tonight and for comments. The comment period is now closed to project requests. The record will remain open to receive comments on allocation percentages until September 9th meeting. Comments can be submitted through the form on the website or via email.
- All comments will be posted online and emailed to Committee.
- Staff will also post and email Project Request Book to Committee prior to next meeting.
- Meeting adjourns at 7:05 P.M.

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