

# **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (CPA) COMMITTEE MEETING**

## **Vote Meeting**

Thursday, September 12, 2024, 5:30 P.M.

Via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Elaine DeRosa, Mary Flynn, David Lyons, Taha Jennings, Kathy Watkins, Chandra Harrington (left 6:03), Kevin Foster

Committee Members Absent: Ellen Schacter, Victoria Bergland

Staff: Daniel Liss, Gary Chan, Jen Letourneau, Chris Cotter, Charles Sullivan, Mark Gallagher, Andrea Carillo-Rhoades

### **Introduction**

Taha Jennings (TJ) opened the meeting.

### **Summary of Committee Process**

TJ provided a summary of the CPA Committee process. The Committee had an organizing meeting on May 29, 2024. There was a hearing on July 17, 2024 to hear testimony on project requests for FY25 funding and another on July 31, 2024, about the allocation percentages. This meeting is to vote to recommend funding allocation percentages and on projects for funding. The committee's recommendations will be on the City Manager's Agenda for the City Council Meeting on Monday, September 23.

### **Review & Adopt July 31, 2024 Minutes**

The minutes from the July 31, 2024 meeting were adopted by a vote of 7-0-2.

### **Public Comments received through September 12, 2024**

Daniel Liss provided a summary of public comments received since last meeting:

- Madeline Lee of Garden St. wrote in support of the maximum allocation of funding for 80% affordable housing allocation.

### **Project Requests Book & Finances**

Daniel Liss provided an overview of the CPA Request book, noting the financial overview, information about affordable housing, the requests for historic preservation and open space, and a summary of public comment received during the process.

### **Committee Vote on Allocation Percentages**

TJ opened discussion on the funding allocation percentages between affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space.

- Mary Flynn was pleased with the extra community outreach and projects for historic preservation and open space, but felt that it's clear the need for affordable housing still warrants the 80% allocation.

- Elaine DeRosa felt that with the affordable housing overlay, there is momentum building for housing and keeping the 80% allocation is important.
- Kathy Watkins supported the 80% housing allocation, and said it’s incumbent on City staff to make sure there are enough projects to use the remaining money in the two reserve funds.
- David Lyons said that the additional outreach brought additional projects requested by community organizations, but felt that if there are additional funds for open space, there should be uses for it.

The committee voted to allocate 80% of funding to affordable housing, 10% to historic preservation, and 10% to open space (7-0-2).

**Committee Vote on Projects**

Daniel Liss read the list of historic preservation project requests:

Project Title	Amount	Project Requestor
CDASH Records Preservation Project	\$75,000	Cambridge Historical Commission
City Hall Façade Restoration	\$50,000	Cambridge Capital Building Projects (CBP)
The Dance Complex Phase 2 Capital Project: Envelope Restoration	\$500,000	The Dance Complex
Fresh Pond Golf Clubhouse Restoration	\$325,000	Cambridge CBP
Historic Entry Stairs Repair at CPL	\$40,000	Cambridge Public Library
Lexington Ave. Firehouse Window Replacement	\$500,000	Cambridge CBP
Margaret Fuller House Restoration	\$270,000	Cambridge Redevelopment Authority
Preservation Grants – Affordable Housing and Institutional	\$700,000	Cambridge Historical Commission
River Street Firehouse Envelope Repairs	\$600,000	Cambridge CBP
WPA Painting Restoration	\$25,000	Cambridge DPW
Winthrop Park Marker: An Indigenous Perspective on the Settlement of Cambridge	\$30,000	Cambridge Historical Commission
Historic Preservation Requests, Total	\$3,115,000	

- Kevin Foster asked how much funding is available. Daniel Liss explained that between the FY25 fund and the Historic Preservation Reserve Fund, there is \$3,228,187.28 available. If all projects are funded, the reserve fund would have a balance of \$113,187.28.
- Chandra Harrington asked about the relative cost of the Margaret Fuller House being so much less than the Lexington Firehouse Windows. Charlie Sullivan explained that the Margaret Fuller House project already received \$500,000 in funding in FY23, so this is in addition to that. He also explained that the firehouse has many windows to replace, and they are expensive.

- Kevin Foster asked about the River Street Firehouse envelope repairs and how the funds relate to the ongoing renovations. Kathy Watkins explained that the interior renovations and to living areas and structural repairs had significant cost, so these funds are in addition.
- Kevin Foster asked about there only being two projects from outside requestors. Charlie Sullivan observed that the \$700,000 for the preservation grant programs will be distributed to non-profits, affordable housing organizations, and qualifying low-income homeowners. The grant program is more flexible and has an easier application process than a direct CPA allocation.

Daniel Liss read the list of open space project requests:

Project Title	Amount	Project Requestor
Alewife Reservation Restoration	\$80,295	Green Cambridge
Farm@CRLS	\$84,630	Green Cambridge
Rafferty Park Construction	\$800,000	Open Space Committee
Raymond Park Renovation	\$1,000,000	Open Space Committee
Spatial Justice & Public Art at the Lynch Family Skatepark	\$50,000	Charles River Conservancy
Watershed Land Acquisition	\$1,000,000	Water Department
Open Space Requests, Total	\$3,014,925	

- Daniel Liss explained that including both the FY25 funding and open space reserve funding, there is \$3,291,038.36 available. If all requested projects are funded, there would be \$276,113.36 remaining in the reserve.
- Kevin Foster asked where \$1,000,000 is enough to purchase the entire parcel of watershed land, and what other funding would be used if it is not. Mark Gallagher explained that the entire price is \$3,000,000 and that the remaining \$2,000,000 will most likely come from water fund balance. He noted that the City might receive some funds from the Town of Lexington, Lincoln Land Conservation Trust, and Boston Properties, which would go to replenishing the water fund.
- Several committee members asked about whether the additional funds might replace the CPA funding rather than replenishing the water fund. Mark Gallagher and Kathy Watkins explained concerns about future increases to the water rates related to increased costs of PFAS filtration and other upcoming necessary maintenance.

The committee then voted to recommend project funding and refer them to the City Council:

VOTE 1: Fiscal Year 2025 Local Funds (\$14,700,000) Approved (6-0-3)

Vote 1A

80% of FY2025 CPA Local Fund revenues (\$11,760,000) allocated to Affordable Housing and appropriated to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust

Vote 1B

10% of FY2025 CPA Local Fund revenues (\$1,470,000) allocated to Historic Preservation as follows:

1. \$75,000 appropriated to the CDASH Records Preservation Project
2. \$50,000 appropriated to City Hall Façade Restoration
3. \$200,000 appropriated to the Dance Complex Envelope Restoration & Preservation
4. \$40,000 appropriated to Fresh Pond Golf Clubhouse Restoration
5. \$40,000 appropriated to Historic Entry Stairs repair at the Cambridge Public Library main branch
6. \$500,000 appropriated to Lexington Avenue Firehouse Windows
7. \$270,000 appropriated to Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House Restoration
8. \$240,000 appropriated to River Street Firehouse Envelope Repairs
9. \$25,000 appropriated to WPA Painting Restoration
10. \$30,000 appropriated to Winthrop Park Marker

Vote 1C

10% of FY2025 CPA Local Fund revenues (\$1,470,000) allocated to Open Space as follows:

1. \$500,000 appropriated to Rafferty Park Construction
2. \$640,000 appropriated to Raymond Park Renovation
3. \$50,000 appropriated to Spatial Justice & Public Art at the Lynch Family Skate Park
4. \$280,000 appropriated to Watershed Land Acquisition

VOTE 2: Fiscal Year 2024 State Matching Funds [received in FY2025] (\$3,000,000) Approved (6-0-3)

Vote 2A

80% of FY2024 State Match revenues (\$2,400,000) allocated to Affordable Housing and appropriated to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust

Vote 2B

10% of FY2024 State Match revenues (\$300,000) allocated to Historic Preservation as follows:

1. \$300,000 appropriated to the Dance Complex Envelope Restoration & Preservation

Vote 2C

10% of FY2024 State Match revenues (\$300,000) allocated to Open Space as follows:

1. \$300,000 appropriated to the Rafferty Park Construction

VOTE 3: CPA Fund Balance (\$3,600,000) Approved (6-0-3)

Vote 3A

80% of the Fund Balance (2,880,000) allocated to Affordable Housing and appropriated to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust

Vote 3B

10% of the Fund Balance (\$360,000) allocated to Historic Preservation as follows:

1. \$360,000 appropriated to River Street Firehouse Envelope Repairs

Vote 3C

10% of the Fund Balance (\$360,000) allocated to Open Space as follows:

1. \$360,000 appropriated to the Raymond Park Construction

VOTE 4: CPA Fund Balance - Administration (\$10,000) Approved (6-0-3)

Vote 4A

1. \$10,000 appropriated to Administrative Costs for Community Preservation Coalition membership dues

VOTE 5: Historic Preservation Reserve (\$985,000) Approved (6-0-3)

Vote 5A

\$985,000 of Historic Preservation Reserve funding as follows:

1. \$285,000 appropriated to Fresh Pond Golf Clubhouse Restoration
2. \$700,000 appropriated to preservation grants

VOTE 6: Open Space Reserve (\$884,925) Approved (6-0-3)

Vote 6A

\$884,925 of Open Space Reserve funding as follows:

1. \$80,295 appropriated to Alewife Reservation Restoration
2. \$84,630 appropriated to Farm@CRLS
3. \$720,000 appropriated to Watershed Land Acquisition

**Closing**

TJ stated that the project book will be updated and forwarded to the City Council to appear on the agenda on Monday, September 23. The updated book will be provided to the committee and posted online.

The meeting was adjourned (6-0-3).