

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (CPA) COMMITTEE MEETING

Organizing Meeting

Wednesday, June 3, 2026, 5:30-7:00 P.M.

Committee Members Present: Elaine DeRosa, Mary Flynn, Kevin Foster, Chandra Harrington, John Nardone, Taha Jennings

Committee Members Absent: David Lyons, Ellen Schacter

Staff: Daniel Liss, Chris Cotter, Cortney Kirk, Claire Spinner, Samantha Elliott

Introduction

Taha Jennings (TJ) opened the meeting and gave an overview of the agenda. TJ noted that Victoria Berglund retired from the Cambridge Housing Authority board, so the CPA committee currently has a vacancy. Chris Cotter is working with the CHA to help identify a new member and the hope is to have the vacant seat filled quickly.

Election of Chair

The committee elected Taha Jennings chair by a vote of 6-0-2.

Approval of minutes

The committee approved the minutes from the September 3, 2025 meeting by a vote of 6-0-2.

Background / Introductions

TJ gave a brief overview of the history of the CPA process in Massachusetts and Cambridge. Funding can support affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space, with a requirement that a minimum of 10% go to each category.

FY27 Funding Estimates

TJ provided an overview of anticipated funding for FY27. The City's finance team is working on projecting the amounts for FY27, with a preliminary amount of \$23,250,000. That would work out to a minimum of \$2.3M and a maximum of \$18.6M for each funding category.

2026 Meeting Schedule & Process

TJ provided an overview of the 2025 CPA committee schedule. The committee was in the organizing meeting. There will be two public hearings in July or August, one on project ideas and one on the allocation of funds between the three categories, that are being scheduled. Finally, there will be a meeting in August or September to vote on recommendations to the City Council. TJ asked whether committee members would be available on Monday, August 24 or Monday, August 31. Committee members indicated availability on August 31.

Daniel Liss provided an overview of the proposal solicitation process, explaining that the two-step process used the previous year was a success. The FY27 process will mirror the FY26 process, with a call for letters of interest from community organizations to be due July 10. In addition, there will be a form posted on the City website for residents to offer comments.

Daniel finally noted that he spoke with Jackson Price, the City's Director of Community Engagement, and was told that the most effective method of outreach is word of mouth, and urged the committee to use their networks.

TJ also noted that the CPA committee has requested a meeting with the Affordable Housing Trust, and proposed a joint meeting at the Trust's normally meeting time of Thursday, July 23 at 4:00. Committee members indicated that they were available to attend the joint meeting.

Committee Discussion

TJ asked Committee members whether they had specific questions or discussion topics for the joint meeting with the Housing Trust so that staff can prepare. Committee members made the following suggestions:

- How are CPA funds used in the trust award process? Is there a standard process to allocating funds? (Mary Flynn)
- How does CPA fit into the whole process, and how important is it? (Chandra Harrington)
- What are some recent projects Trust money was used for so the committee can get a sense of actual projects funded with CPA funds? (Mary Flynn)
- How much of an impact does CPA funding have on the Housing Trust in terms of number of projects moving forward? (Kevin Foster)
- Who are Cambridge's nonprofit developers and how do they operate? (Elaine DeRosa)
- Are any of the nonprofit developers minority- or women-owned? (Kevin Foster)
- Have the multi-family housing zoning changes affected efforts in affordable housing? (Chandra Harrington)

Daniel noted that committee members could send him additional questions.

Mary asked whether we had a list of projects that received funding from other sources in addition to CPA. TJ stated that that information could be presented at the next public hearing.

Taha moderates committee discussion

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Closing

TJ reminded committee members to assist DL in scheduling the two public hearings.

The meeting was adjourned by a vote of 6-0-2.