



Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

**City of Newton, Massachusetts**  
Department of Planning and Development  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone  
(617) 796-1120  
Telefax  
(617) 796-1142  
TDD/TTY  
(617) 796-1089  
[www.newtonma.gov](http://www.newtonma.gov)

Barney S. Heath  
Director

**Community Preservation Committee**

**MINUTES**

6 October 2016

The meeting was held on Thursday, 6 October 2016 at 7:00 pm in City Hall Room 204.

Community Preservation Committee (CPC below) members present: chair Jane Sender, vice chair Jonathan Yeo, and members Jim Robertson, Peter Sargent, Rick Kronish (arrived 7:05 pm). Members Don Fishman, Beryl Gilfix, and Mike Clarke were absent.

Community Preservation Program Manager Alice Ingerson served as recorder.

[Blue, underlined phrases](#) below are links to additional information online.

**COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**Options for enforcing non-CPA funding requirements for City projects** (recap of 8 September 2016 CPC working session)

By sense of the meeting, the members present agreed with Jane Sender and Jim Robertson that the Committee had adequately discussed this issue at the previous meeting.

Ingerson reported receiving a call from Mike Clarke, who had requested this discussion but had been unable to attend the September meeting. Clarke was still interested in making formal letters of commitment from non-CPA funders a prerequisite for CPC funding recommendation votes on City projects. Ingerson had suggested that the CPC could currently impose this requirement on a case-by-case basis, but had also explained that Clarke could propose new language for the proposal instructions or *Community Preservation Plan* making this an across-the-board requirement. Such a change would require a public hearing and CPC vote.

**non-CPA funding deadlines as a possible reason to consider proposals "off cycle"** (outside annual deadlines)

Ingerson noted that this proposed change to the [Proposal & Project Handbook](#) did not commit the CPC to off-cycle consideration of any specific proposal, but it would alert project sponsors that they could request off-cycle consideration not only for real estate acquisition but also if they could show that this would help their projects meet deadlines or otherwise qualify for substantial non-CPA funding.

After a brief discussion, Jim Robertson moved and Peter Sargent seconded accepting this change as worded by staff. The motion was adopted by a vote of 5-0. The revised instructions will be online immediately after this meeting.

**review of current reports:** available funds, current projects  
(regularly updated under [Reports & Presentations – Current](#) on program website)

Ingerson noted that the "currently available funds" report in the pre-meeting packet did not reflect the Planning Department's September 29<sup>th</sup> decision not to request CPA funds for a study to establish a new local historic district in Newton Highlands.

website [www.newtonma.gov/cpa](http://www.newtonma.gov/cpa)

contact Alice E. Ingerson, Community Preservation Program Manager

email [aingerson@newtonma.gov](mailto:aingerson@newtonma.gov) phone 617.796.1144

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In response to a question from Jonathan Yeo, Ingerson also noted that she had responded to an email from the City's Chief of Staff by clarifying that the Crescent Street project was still at the pre-proposal stage. She had been notified that the CPC should expect a request for that project on their November 3<sup>rd</sup> agenda, but she was not certain yet what the item would be. Sender encouraged all members, but especially Kronish and Sargent given their expertise in affordable housing finance, to review past submissions and CPC minutes for the Crescent Street project prior to the November 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

Robertson noted that the CPC could also use its administrative funds to commission outside expert reviews of specific proposals. Ingerson noted that the CPC had commissioned such an outside review for one past housing proposal, specifically to determine the minimum CPA funds needed to make the project viable. Partly in response to that review, the CPC's funding recommendation for that proposal had required partial repayment of any CPA grant, if the project's sales revenue from its market-rate ownership units exceeded a certain threshold. The City Council ultimately declined to fund that project.

Yeo reported that the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) might request CPA funds from Newton and Needham to reproduce the historic cast iron railing on the MWRA's Echo Bridge, between Newton and Needham in Upper Falls. Ingerson said that when she was first contacted about this project in 2007, the two communities' CPCs had agreed to consider such a request only jointly. More recently, she had clarified for the project's neighborhood advocates that the MWRA itself must be the applicant and potential grantee.

#### **approval of Fy16 Annual Report**

After a brief discussion, and based on a motion by Jane Sender, seconded by Rick Kronish, this report was approved as submitted by staff by a vote of 5-0.

Sender reported being interviewed by Watertown local-access television about Newton's use of CPA funds, as background for the upcoming CPA adoption vote in Watertown.

Ingerson reported, courtesy of Deputy Planning & Development Director James Freas, that the state CPA match for the current year, Fy17, had been estimated at 20% at a recent meeting of Metropolitan Area Planning Council for greater Boston. The state match will probably be confirmed in mid-to-late November.

#### **approval of CPC minutes from 8 September 2016**

Kronish was concerned that the minutes as submitted did not contain a clear summary of the CPC's understanding at the September meeting that CPA funds appropriated by the City Council would remain committed to the funded project for 3 years or more while non-CPA funds were pursued, specifically Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) funding for housing projects. Ingerson promised to revise the minutes to include additional points from that discussion: that funds appropriated for any specific project cannot be spent on other projects unless the designated project is canceled; that the CPC can set and enforce spending deadlines and extension options for non-City projects based on each project's specific circumstances; and that CPA funds for some past non-City projects had remained committed for 4 or more years, until all required non-CPA funding was confirmed.

After a motion by Jonathan Yeo, seconded by Kronish, the minutes were approved, with the staff commitment to revision, by a vote of 5-0.

The Committee adjourned by consensus at 7:35 pm.