



City of Newton, Massachusetts
Community Preservation Committee



MEMORANDUM

David B. Cohen
 Mayor

TO: Honorable Board of Aldermen
 FROM: Community Preservation Committee
 DATE: 27 April 2005
 RE: **Recommendation for CPA Funding**

PROJECT TITLE: Accessibility Enhancements to the Gath Pool
CPA PROJECT ID: CPA-FY05-18
CPA CATEGORY: Recreation

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicants, the Playground Project at Albemarle, Inc., the Friends of Albemarle and the Parks and Recreation Department, request \$122,475 to make various enhancements to the Gath Memorial Pool, including: the purchase and installation of a sun shade; fourteen additional benches complementing the three already present; replacement of two old drinking fountains with two new fountains meeting ADA standards; additional grab bars for the shower areas; and the purchase and installation of non-slip flooring for the locker rooms and public passage areas (\$1,600 of the total request is to cover the City Law Department’s costs).

FINDINGS

Community Preservation Act (MGL c.44B)

Recreation

MGL c.44B defines **recreational use** as “active or passive recreational use including...the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field. The Gath Memorial Pool is part of the Albemarle/Halloran Recreation Complex, and as such can be defined as a City-owned resource providing active and passive recreation opportunities.

In compliance with §5(b)(2), this project results in the **creation** of new recreational facilities at the Gath Pool. The proposed enhancements would enable accessibility to an increased number of Newton residents by providing a shaded area at the pool, adding fourteen benches around the pool deck available for sitting, and increasing ADA compliance through the installation of new drinking fountains. Currently, it is more difficult for certain populations to utilize the facilities without the above stated amenities. The proposed enhancements thereby create new recreation opportunities.

Newton Community Preservation Plan

Overarching Goals

1. Contribute to the preservation of Newton’s unique character, boost the vitality of the community and enhance the quality of life for its residents.	Yes
2. Serve more than one CPA category.	No
3. Demonstrate the highest cost/benefit value relative to other proposals.	See below
4. Leverage other public and/or private funds.	No
5. Preserve a resource or opportunity that would otherwise be lost.	No
6. Create incentives for other private projects to occur.	No
7. Show that a project is the most reasonable available option to achieve the objective.	Yes
8. Demonstrate strong community support.	Yes

9. Serve to equitably distribute CPA funds throughout the City.	Yes, see below
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Additional comments on selected goals:

Goal 3: Projects received during the October funding round included a high CPA request of \$1,000,000 and a low CPA request of \$19,250. The CPA cost for this project is \$122,475 (\$1,600 of this total is for fees accrued by the City’s Legal Department). The relative benefit for this project is the creation of additional recreation opportunities for Newton residents through the enhancement of several components of the Gath Memorial Pool, including a shaded area and increased sitting capacity and the installation of new drinking fountains. The Gath Memorial Pool is part of the larger Albemarle/Halloran Recreation Complex regularly used by residents of Newton.

In terms of CPA cost related to all other recreation projects previously approved or currently in front of the Board of Aldermen, this project ranks 3rd out of 12 total (that total drops to 11 when discounting for projects specifically requesting funds to conduct formal studies). The following table illustrates the comparative costs of recreation projects.

TABLE 1: CPA Project Costs (recreation)

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Total CPA Funds</i>
Senior Center Park	05	\$271,210
Forte Park*	03	\$250,000
Gath Pool Enhancements	05	\$122,475
Albemarle Community Classroom	03	\$99,931
Houghton Garden	04	\$90,000
Cabot Outdoor Classroom	04	\$68,270
West Newton Common Irrigation	04	\$65,968
Wellington Park Improvements	05	\$64,000
Thompsonville/Bowen Ballfield	03	\$56,805
Horace Mann Creative Arts Space	05	\$49,975
Stearns/Pellegrini Park Renovation**	04	\$30,000
Kayla’s Garden	03	\$23,718

* The Forte Park project was awarded a total of \$500K under the condition that \$250K be returned to the CP Fund after reimbursement through a state/federal grant. Therefore, this table represents that \$250,000 was the CPA funds awarded to this project.

**Denotes projects requesting CPA funds to conduct a study in preparation for a larger recreation project.

Goal 9: The FY05 applications include funding requests for projects in Nonantum, Newton Corner, West Newton, Newtonville, Newton Upper Falls, Newton Center, Newton Highlands and Waban, as well as city-wide projects. The Gath Memorial Pool is located on Albemarle Road in Newtonville.

Recreation Goals

1. Address the needs targeted in the <i>Recreation and Open Space Plan</i> and take advantage of other opportunities to meet the recreation needs of the residents of the City.	Yes, see below
2. Meet the recreation needs of the greatest number of residents possible.	Yes, see below
3. Meet the greatest variety of recreation needs possible.	Yes, see below
4. Serve passive as well as active uses. Finding ways to balance the range of recreational opportunities and serve the diverse recreation needs of the community is a priority of the CPC.	No, see below
5. Preserve sight lines consistent with open space. . . . Decisions about scale and placement should be made with the objective of enhancing or enabling open views.	NA

6. Access for disabled residents should be included in plans wherever possible.	Yes
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Additional comments on selected goals:

Goal 1: The project addresses the need targeted in the City of Newton Recreation and Open Space Plan 2003-2007 calling for all recreation facilities to be designed or modified to be accessible to those who have mobility limitations. The installation of grab bars in the shower areas and ADA compliant drinking fountains enables increased access to those with such limitations.

Goal 2: User demographics at the pool have been shifting over recent years. While classes and summer camps continue to target youngsters, more seniors are taking advantage of the recreational opportunities offered. Given this shift, the Gath Memorial Pool serves all residential age groups in Newton.

Goal 3: Past recreation projects have targeted walking trails and baseball and soccer fields. The Gath Pool constitutes the first CPA project involving a swimming pool as a source for recreation.

Goal 4: While the project is geared toward enhancing accessibility for those using the pool, the inclusion of expanded seating capacity allows those simply enjoying the outdoors to participate. In this way, passive recreation opportunities are created despite the project's focus on enhancing accessibility for active users of the pool.

CPC RECOMMENDATION

The proposal is consistent with the CPA criteria and many of the Plan's goals, as described above. Therefore, the Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously to recommend funding this application to support the creation of recreational opportunities through the described enhancements to Gath Pool by appropriating and transferring \$122,475 to be expended under the direction and control of the Commissioner of the Parks and Recreation Department for purposes of this project as detailed in the application (dated 15 October 2004), subject to the following conditions:

1. Work shall commence no later than 31 December 2005 and shall be completed no later than 31 December 2006 or such other date(s) as may be approved in writing by the Director of Planning and Development. In the event of failure to meet the project start or completion dates as stated herein or as approved by the Director of Planning and Development, any remaining funds in the project account shall be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.
2. Promptly after substantial completion of the project, the applicant shall submit to the Community Preservation Committee a final project development cost statement.
3. Any portion of the grant not used for the purposes stated herein shall be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund