



City of Newton, Massachusetts
Community Preservation Committee

DOCKET
ITEM NO.

40-10

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

FUNDING RECOMMENDATION

DATE: 2 February 2010

TO: The Honorable Board of Aldermen

FROM: Community Preservation Committee

RE: **recommended Community Preservation funding for
CITY ARCHIVES – COMBINED**

PROJECT GOALS & ELIGIBILITY

This project will preserve the archival collections and rare publications listed below, currently held in the collections of the Newton Free Library, Jackson Homestead (Newton History Museum), and Newton City Clerk. As required by the CPA, the Newton Historical Commission has determined that these materials are significant in the history and culture of Newton. All of these materials are in fragile condition.

Note on City Directories: These list residents and businesses geographically as well as alphabetically, and often provide occupations as well as business addresses in other cities and towns for people who resided in Newton. They are at particular risk from heavy use, but are being proposed for digitization only, because their significance lies in their content and design rather than in their paper and ink. De-acidifying and encapsulating their 25,000-plus pages would increase the cost of this project by approximately \$220,000.

(For further discussion, see appendix.)

FUNDING RECOMMENDATION

On 20 January 2010 the Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously (9-0) to recommend that \$37,044.75 be appropriated from the historic resources and general reserves of the Community Preservation Fund for this project, and allocated 100 percent to historic resources.

City Archives - Combined Project Budget						
<i>Item or collection</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>No. of items</i>	<i>Preservation (de-acidification, repairs, remounting)</i>	<i>Digitization</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
Plan of Proctor Map	ca 1868	Newton Corner	1	\$660.00	\$120.00	\$780.00
Map of Newton Center	1878	Newton Centre	1	\$1,410.00	\$455.00	\$1,865.00
Samuel Smith Manuscript	ca. 1870s	Newton	250 pp.	\$2,950.00	\$2,087.50	\$5,037.50
Photographs	late 19th cent.	Newton Corner/ Nonantum Square	14	\$365.00	\$91.25	\$456.25
Eliot Church <i>Annual</i>	1845-1887	Newton Corner	64 pp.	\$2,170.00	\$690.00	\$2,860.00
Oversized photographs: Allen House	late 19th cent.	West Newton	14	\$1,035.00	\$110.00	\$1,145.00
Photographs: Newell family & homestead	late 19th cent.	West Newton	7	\$725.00	\$53.75	\$778.75
Newton City Directories with Maps	1868-1934	Newton	36 vols./ 25,360 pp.	\$10,150.00	\$10,150.00	\$20,300.00
Subtotal				\$19,465.00	\$13,757.50	\$33,222.50
Contingency			10%			\$3,322.25
Project Total						\$36,544.75
City of Newton legal costs						\$500.00
TOTAL CP Funds recommended						\$37,044.75

ADDITIONAL SOURCES & USES OF FUNDS

The requested CP funding will leverage \$8,676.25, in the form of contributed staff time covered by the City of Newton general budget and a small grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners' Library Services and Technology program.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Interdepartmental Archival Survey & Priorities: The Community Preservation Committee found it difficult to weigh the merits and priority of the current proposal against other competing uses of CP funds, including expected future proposals for City archival collections. Historically significant archives are held, often in conditions that fall far short of current best practices for either preservation or public access, by a wide range of City departments, including but not limited to the Engineering Division of the Public Works Department, the Fire Department, and the School Department.

Before any City department submits an additional funding proposal for archival collections, the Committee hopes the City will conduct a basic, interdepartmental survey of all such archives and will identify broad funding priorities across those collections, based on a combination of current condition and historic significance. Without committing funds in advance, the Committee would welcome a funding proposal for such a survey and priorities.

For the current project, the Committee recommends that:

1. These funds be appropriated to the spending authority of the Director of the Newton Free Library.
2. The project begin within 3 months, and be completed within 18 months, of the Board order appropriating the recommended funds, or by any extension of that deadline granted in writing by the Community Preservation Committee.
3. The project manager designated by the Library Director be responsible for:
 - ◆ working with the City of Newton Purchasing and Law Departments to award a contract for these preservation services
 - ◆ managing the delivery of services and payment of invoices under from project funds
 - ◆ responding to all requests for updates from the Community Preservation Committee
 - ◆ within 1 month of completing all work on the project, submitting to the CPC a report of how all funds were spent, comparing actual expenditures with those in the original, approved scope of work
 - ◆ working with the CPC and its staff to publicize the project actively, both before and after all funds have been spent.
4. Any portion of the Community Preservation Fund grant not used for the purposes stated herein shall be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.
5. The project sponsors work closely with the Community Preservation Committee and its staff to publicize the project, both before and after all funds have been spent.

ATTACHMENTS

(delivered to the clerks of the Committee on Community Preservation and Finance Committee)

- ◆ Proposal
- ◆ Letters of support
- ◆ Supplemental information requested by the Community Preservation Committee
- ◆ Review of eligibility by City of Newton Law Dept.

See also detailed findings on funding eligibility & priorities on following pages. →

Appendix:

DETAILED FINDINGS on FUNDING ELIGIBILITY & PRIORITIES

Community Preservation Act (MGL c.44B) and Newton Community Preservation Plan

Historic resources are one of the three reserved purposes for community preservation funding. The Community Preservation Act's definition of historic resources explicitly includes any "document or artifact that has been determined to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture or culture of a city or town."

Well-managed, accessible archives are also a prerequisite for the preservation, restoration, or rehabilitation of all other historic resources under the CPA, including buildings, landscapes, and works of art. The Newton CPC requires that proposals for all of these resources comply with .. the *United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, by basing the proposed treatment of the resource on an analysis and evaluation of its historic integrity and significance. That analysis requires access to archives.

This project also addresses the following specific goals previously identified in Newton's citywide plans:

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.
3. Demonstrate the highest cost/benefit value relative to other proposals.
5. Preserve a resource or opportunity that would otherwise be lost.

Historic Resources Goals

1. Support the preservation and/or restoration of municipally owned resources that are found to be historically significant by the Newton Historical Commission.
4. Enable access to the resource by the public, including access by disabled residents.
5. Support the objectives and priorities of local historic preservation organizations, such as the Newton Historical Society [and] the Newton History Museum ...

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: PLANNING FOR & WITH HISTORY

Vision

- ◆ The City uses historical images and examples in presentations and meetings about all planning and development issues ...
- ◆ Planners, architects, contractors, and property owners use [historic] documents, maps, and photographs [to] inform their conversations with neighbors about new projects. ...
- ◆ Educators teaching in the Newton Public Schools, community service learning, afterschool programs, and summer camps use local historical resources and sites ...

Strategies

- ◆ Put community education first, instead of last. ...

Actions

- ◆ Initiate neighborhood-level implementation of this *Comprehensive Plan* through history presentations/discussions that cover all the issues and goals covered in the *Plan* ...
- ◆ ... invest more resources in education and incentives that can make regulatory decisions more predictable or transparent, and less controversial.
- ◆ Develop new tools and training to encourage the broader use of historical information by all City staff, nonprofit, and for-profit organizations involved in planning and development.
- ◆ Support more systematic use of local historic sites and resources in Newton Public Schools.