



David B. Cohen
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts Community Preservation Committee



MEMORANDUM

REVISED 3/19/03 and 4/7/03

TO: Honorable Board of Aldermen
FROM: Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
DATE: 19 February 2003
RE: **CPC Recommendation for CPA Funding**

PROJECT TITLE: **CITY HALL RENOVATIONS**
CPA CATEGORY: Historic Preservation

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant, City of Newton, Public Buildings Department and Public Buildings Preservation Task Force, requests funding to restore 16 interior light fixtures, complete the restoration of the exterior balustrade and cupola with finishes, and rehabilitate historic windows in the Aldermanic Chamber and Memorial Hall. The original funding request was \$190,000, however additional information was submitted to the CPC in a packet dated February 3rd that includes new cost estimates the scope of work and the revised request is \$391,260. The window work is estimated at \$119,400 (the original estimate was \$100,000), the fabrication and installation of 16 new custom light fixtures is estimated at \$96,200 (the original estimate was \$40,000), and exterior painting is estimated at \$175,660 (the original estimate was \$50,000).

FINDINGS

Community Preservation Act

This proposal meets the criteria established under MGL c.44B for the following reasons:

1. The City Hall is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, the property complies with the definition for historic resources which requires listing on or eligible for the State Register or a local determination of significance (National Register determinations automatically translate to the same State Register determination).
2. In accordance with §5(b)(2), the project will rehabilitate and restore elements of this historic resource. Specifically, the project would rehabilitate existing historic windows, restore historically-appropriate light fixtures, and complete the restoration of the balustrade and cupola.
3. Since the proposal does not include any acquisition of real property or real property interest, no permanent deed restrictions are required by the Act. The property is currently city-owned and the plans call for the continued use of this historic structure as a City Hall.

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. Yes
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. See below
8. Demonstrate strong community support. See below
9. Serve to equitably distribute CPA funds throughout the City. See below

Additional comments on selected goals:

Goal #3: Projects received during this funding round include a high CPA cost of \$850,000 and a low CPA cost of \$24,780. The CPA cost for this project is \$391,260. The relative benefit for this project is the preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic elements of City Hall.

Goal #7: The restoration of the existing windows and conversion from single to double-panes is a reasonable alternative to improve the energy efficiency of the windows while maintaining historic integrity. The proposed painting of the balustrade and base of the cupola is the final phase to complete the restoration of these elements. The replication of the existing light fixtures would improve the historic character of the interior public spaces of City Hall.

Goal #8: The original project application included a description (p. 3) of the extent of community support which includes elected and appointed city officials. The League of Women Voters letter dated 1/15/03 states opposition to the funding request and raises the issues of maintenance vs. preservation, ongoing maintenance, energy efficiency of light fixtures, and leveraging CPA through other funding.

Goal #9: As presented at a recent CPC meeting, this round of applications is geographically distributed throughout the City; this project is located in Newton Centre.

Historic Preservation Goals

1. Support the preservation and restoration of privately-owned properties that are on the National or State Historic Registers, or that have been landmarked or found to be "preferably preserved" by the Newton Historical Commission. No
2. Support the preservation and/or restoration of municipally-owned resources that are on the National or State Historic Registers, or that have been landmarked or found to be "preferably preserved" by the Newton Historical Commission. Yes
3. Encourage protection of resources that retain their historic integrity, in terms of location, context, design, style, workmanship, and materials. Yes
4. Enable access to the resource by the public. Yes
5. Support the objectives and priorities of local historic preservation organizations, such as the Newton Historical Society, the Jackson Homestead, local historic districts, and other such organizations within the City of Newton. Not known

CPC RECOMMENDATION

This proposal is consistent with the CPA criteria and many of the Plan's goals, as described above. Due to the time sensitive nature of the window restoration component of the proposal and particular concern for potentially escalating rehabilitation costs as a result of further deterioration if not acted upon, the Committee supported this component of the proposal on February 19. Therefore, on February 19, the Community Preservation Committee, in a 5-2 vote, recommended funding this application for the rehabilitation of the **windows** in the Aldermanic Chamber and Memorial Hall of City Hall by appropriating and transferring \$119,400 to be expended under the direction and control of the Commissioner of Public Buildings, in consultation with the Public Buildings Preservation Task Force, for purposes of funding the window rehabilitation as detailed in the application (dated 1 November 2002 with subsequent submittals dated 3 December 2002 and 3 February 2003), subject to the following conditions:

1. Work shall commence no later than 31 December 2003 and shall be completed no later than 31 December 2004 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. Any portion of the grant not used for the purposes stated herein shall be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.

Subsequently, on March 19, the Committee also supported restoration of the historic **lighting** because the project will rejuvenate the main corridors in City Hall and be a substantial visual improvement. Therefore, on March 19, the Community Preservation Committee, in a 8-1 vote, recommended funding this application for the restoration of historic light fixtures in the main corridors of City Hall by appropriating and transferring \$96,200 to be expended under the direction and control of the Commissioner of Public Buildings, in consultation with the Public Buildings Preservation Task Force, for purposes of funding the lighting restoration as detailed in the application (dated 1 November 2002 with subsequent submittals dated 3 December 2002 and 3 February 2003), subject to the following conditions:

1. Work shall commence no later than 31 December 2003 and shall be completed no later than 31 December 2004 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. Any portion of the grant not used for the purposes stated herein shall be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.

Also on March 19, the Committee supported completion of the restoration of the **balustrade and cupola**, because the unfinished material detracts from the beauty and the historic integrity of the building. Therefore, on March 19, the Community Preservation Committee, in a 7-2 vote, recommended funding this application for completion of the restoration of the balustrade and cupola of City Hall with historic finishes by appropriating and transferring \$175,660 to be expended under the direction and control of the Commissioner of Public Buildings, in consultation with the Public Buildings Preservation Task Force, for purposes of funding the balustrade and cupola restoration as detailed in the application (dated 1 November 2002 with subsequent submittals dated 3 December 2002 and 3 February 2003), subject to the following conditions:

1. Work shall commence no later than 31 December 2003 and shall be completed no later than 31 December 2004 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. Any portion of the grant not used for the purposes stated herein shall be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.