



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

James Freas
Acting Director

**Community Preservation Committee
FUNDING RECOMMENDATION for
Farlow Park Pond & Bridge**

date: 18 August 2014
from: Community Preservation Committee
to: The Honorable Board of Aldermen

PROJECT GOALS & ELIGIBILITY

This project will restore the historic pond in Farlow Park and will construct a pedestrian bridge over the pond that honors the design of the park's rustic historic bridge, while meeting current accessibility standards. The project will also preserve the Underwood Elementary School's playing fields within the park by installing a new irrigation system. A new well will supply water for both the pond and the irrigation system.

The site's eligibility for CPA funding as a historic resource was established for two prior CPA appropriations: Board order 257-05 for a historic landscape report and Board order 193-08 for a pond feasibility study/water source exploration.

RECOMMENDED FUNDING

On 30 April 2014 the Community Preservation Committee voted 8-0 (member Dan Green absent) to recommend appropriating \$476,780 for this project to the control of the Commissioner of Parks & Recreation. On 5 August 2014, the CPC also voted 6-0 (members Mike Clarke and Tom Turner absent) to allow the release of CPA funds for design costs prior to the commitment of non-CPA funds required to complete the project.

Farlow Park Pond & Bridge - CPC Recommendation		
Uses		% of total
* capital improvements (to be managed by Parks & Recreation Dept.), including:		
project management (Parks & Recreation Dept. staff time + funds for contracted manager)	\$61,600	10.1%
design & construction (total for pond & bridge)	\$520,780	85.0%
** operating reserve (minimum, to be held by Friends of Farlow Park)	\$30,000	4.9%
total	\$612,380	100.0%
Sources		
* CPA	\$476,780	77.9%
* City of Newton general budget (Parks & Recreation Dept. staff time)	\$5,600	0.9%
* CDBG	\$10,000	1.6%
* community sponsors (minimum, incl. \$1,000 from Newton Corner Neighborhood Association)	\$90,000	14.7%
additional non-CPA funds (community sponsors, CDBG, or other)	\$30,000	4.9%
total	\$612,380	100.0%
* As listed in November 2013 proposal to the CPC.		
** Neither CPA nor CDBG funds may be contributed to the operating reserve.		

website www.newtonma.gov/cpa

contact Alice E. Ingerson, Community Preservation Program Manager

email aingerson@newtonma.gov phone 617.796.1144

SPECIAL ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE CPC

This recommendation is the culmination of a neighborhood aspiration expressed since at least the 1980s and of prior funding proposals submitted to the CPC by the all-volunteer Friends of Farlow Park in 2004-05 (denied), 2005-06 (funded), 2006-07 (denied), and 2007-08 (funded). The CPC's support for the current proposal reflects the Friends' responsiveness to the two major needs the Committee has identified most consistently since 2005: for raising private funds and for ensuring future maintenance.

Project Phasing: At the CPC's urging, based on both aesthetic and project management concerns about deferring the replacement of the current concrete-slab-and-chain-link "bridge," the Friends of Farlow Park expanded the current project to include a new bridge.

Funding Leverage: Also in response to the CPC's concerns, the Friends of Farlow Park increased their commitment to community fundraising from \$1,000 in the pre-proposal to \$90,000 in the full proposal.

Stewardship: Based on both the history and the appropriate, primary use of Farlow Park – for passive recreation by neighborhood residents – the CPC has always been concerned that in the future, it may once again be difficult for this historic gem to compete for routine City funding with larger, more active recreation sites. As part of the current proposal, the City of Newton has committed to invest in maintaining Farlow Park the annual \$4,000 it anticipates saving by switching from MWRA water to well water for irrigating the Underwood School playing fields. In addition, the Friends of Farlow Park have now become a permanent 501(c)3 nonprofit, committed to holding at least \$30,000 of community donations in an "operating reserve" for the uses described in their 10 April 2014 submission to the CPC: "1. cost overruns [for the current project]; 2. future projects such as plantings and other ancillary needs such as new benches; and 3. emergency maintenance, if the Friends of Farlow Park determine the City of Newton has failed to fulfill its maintenance commitment" to Farlow Park.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS (*funding conditions*)

1. Funds for this project should be treated as 100% for historic resources and appropriated first from the Community Preservation Fund's historic resources fund balance and reserve, then from the general fund balance as needed.
2. CPA funds may be released for project design costs without condition. CPA funds may be released for construction once all other funds listed in the budget on page 1 of this recommendation are committed.
3. Construction should begin within 6 months and be completed within 2 years after all funds listed in the budget on page 1 of this recommendation are committed, or by any extension of these deadlines granted in writing by the CPC in response to a request from the Commissioner of Parks & Recreation.
4. The Parks & Recreation Dept. will provide project updates upon request to the Friends of Farlow Park, the CPC and the Board of Aldermen; and prior to spending the final 10 percent of CPA funds, will present to the CPC an in-person and written report comparing budgeted-vs-actual expenditures.
5. Any CPA funds appropriated but not used for the purposes stated herein will be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.

KEY OUTCOMES

The Community Preservation Committee will evaluate this project based on these key outcomes:

- Completion of construction within the budget shown on page 1 of this recommendation, and by the deadlines listed above.
- Historically appropriate maintenance of Farlow Park, with minimal use of the "operating reserve" held by the Friends of Farlow Park.

ATTACHMENTS (delivered to the clerks of the Programs & Services Committee and Finance Committee)

- Original proposal and supplemental submissions by the Friends of Farlow Park
- Friends of Farlow Park slide presentation at the CPC's public hearing on this proposal
- All written public comments and minutes of all public hearings/meetings on this proposal
- ◆ Copy of CPC project webpage, listing links to additional information available online:
<http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/cpa/projects/farlow.asp>