



City of Newton, Massachusetts Community Preservation Committee



David B. Cohen
Mayor

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Board of Aldermen
FROM: Community Preservation Committee
DATE: 29 June 2005
RE: **CPC Recommendation for Funding**

PROJECT TITLE: Study for the Preservation of Farlow and Chaffin Parks
CPA PROJECT ID: CPA-FY05-8
CPA CATEGORY: Historic Preservation

BACKGROUND

The applicants, the Friends of Farlow Park along with the Parks and Recreation Department, originally requested \$65,500 to secure the services of various professionals including a landscape architect, a surveyor and a structural engineer in the application submitted 15 October 2004 to create a preservation design for Farlow Park and Chaffin Park. The CPC held a public hearing on the original proposal on 16 November 2004 and a working session on 2 March 2005, after which the CPC decided not to recommend funding for the project.

Thereafter, the applicants took diligent steps to respond to the concerns raised by the CPC and were successful in securing over \$6,000 in neighborhood pledges toward the project as well as in kind services from the City to conduct the survey work. The Friends of Farlow Park submitted an amended application in June 2005 requesting \$51,500 of CPA funds. In addition, the City Solicitor submitted an additional request for \$677 for legal services associated with the project, for a total CPA request of **\$52,177**.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The CPA funds are being requested to secure the professional services of a landscape architect and structural engineer to prepare an historic and existing conditions report, conduct a structural engineering assessment of the current bridge, and perform a design analysis for the reinstallation and maintenance of a year-round pond, as well as several additional tasks. All aspects of the study will be incorporated into an overall landscape treatment plan. If this study is funded, the applicants plan to return to the CPC at a later date to request funding for subsequent phases of work.

FINDINGS

Community Preservation Act (MGL c.44B)

Historic Preservation

MGL c.44B defines an **historic resource** as “a building, structure, vessel or real property that is listed or eligible for listing on the state register of historic places or has been determined by the local historic preservation commission to be significant...” Both Farlow and Chaffin Parks are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Farlow and Kenrick Park National Register Historic District. A site listed as part of a historic district on the National Register is automatically listed on the State Register.

In accordance with §5(b)(2), the study would provide a scope of work required to **preserve** and **restore** the historic landscape. Conducting such a study complies with the *US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, Standards for Preservation*. Standard #6 states “The existing condition of historic features will be evaluated to determine the appropriate level of intervention needed...” After the study is

completed, a comprehensive scope of work for the preservation and restoration of the historic landscape will be laid out.

Newton Community Preservation Plan

Overarching Goals

The project meets some of the Overarching Goals including the preservation of Newton's unique character, boosting the vitality of the community and enhancing the quality of life, the preservation of a resource that could otherwise be lost, and by providing the most reasonable available option to achieve the objective. In addition, while the study phase of this project is primarily a preservation project, it fulfills the requirements of a recreation project as well, thereby serving more than one CPA category.

The following table illustrates the comparative costs of historic preservation projects.

TABLE 2: CPA Project Costs (historic preservation projects)

| <i>Project Name</i> | <i>Fiscal Year</i> | <i>Total CPA Funds (for preservation portion only)</i> |
|--|--------------------|--|
| Historic Burying Ground Restoration – Phase II | 05 | \$257,395 |
| Newton Corner Library | 03 | \$236,129 |
| Historic Burying Ground Restoration – Phase I | 03 | \$188,277 |
| YMCA | 05 | \$160,273 |
| City Hall – Balustrade | 03 | \$150,660 |
| Washington Park Lighting | 05 | \$131,035 |
| City Hall – Lighting | 03 | \$121,200 |
| City Hall – Windows | 03 | \$119,400 |
| 248 Elliot Street/Linden Green | 05 | \$63,290 |
| Farlow/Chaffin Park* | 05 | \$51,500 |
| Millhouse Commons | 05 | \$41,653 |
| City Hall Historic Landscape* | 05 | \$40,000 |
| Brigham House – Phase 1* | 03 | \$20,000 |
| Civil War Monument* | 05 | \$15,000 |
| War Memorial Stairs* | 05 | \$15,000 |
| Historic District Signs | 04 | \$2,000 |

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

Historic Preservation Goals

The project also meets several of the Historic Preservation Goals through supporting the preservation and restoration of municipally owned properties that are on the National or State Historic Registers, encouraging the protection of resources that retain their historic integrity, enabling access to the resource by the public, and supporting the priorities of the Newton Historical Commission and the Newton History Museum.

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 for the Farlow Park/Chaffin Park Restoration Plan by appropriating and transferring the requested \$52,177 to be expended under the direction and control of the Commissioner of Parks and Recreation for purposes of this project as detailed in the application (dated 15 October 2004, revised 22 June 2005), 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 study, the applicant shall submit to the Community Preservation Committee a final project development cost statement.
3. Consideration of CPA funds for future phases will require the demonstration of a good-faith effort on the part of the applicant to substantially leverage other funding sources; provided, however, the applicant understands and agrees that CPC's recommendation of funding for this design plan does not imply any CPC support for, or any applicant expectation of, a further CPC recommendation for the funding of future project design or construction phases.
4. Any portion of the grants to the Parks and Recreation Department and the Law Department not used for the purposes stated herein shall be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.