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Candace Havens
Director

March 14, 2011

Ms. Stephanie Gilman
Public Buildings Commissioner
City of Newton
52 Elliot Street
Newton, MA 02464

RE: City Buildings Condition Assessment CPA Proposal

Dear Ms. Gilman,

I would like to offer my support for your proposal to hire a preservation consultant to assist in a conditions assessment for city buildings. The City of Newton has numerous historic public buildings from former 19th century residences to stables, schools, libraries, and municipal offices. Many city buildings are recognized for their significance by their listing in the National Register of Historic Places. These buildings are indeed worthy of preservation.

This project will assist in the preservation of our city buildings by providing instruction and technical guidance through a detailed conditions assessment. Historic buildings require specific treatments in order to be properly maintained and this project will provide us with valuable information that can be used for years to come. I wholeheartedly support your effort, please let me know if there is any further assistance I can provide.

Sincerely,

Brian Lever
Senior Preservation Planner



Community Preservation Committee
Nancy Grissom, Chair
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

March 18, 2011

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing in support of the application of the Public Buildings Commissioner seeking \$98,780 in Community Preservation funds to conduct an assessment of the City of Newton's Historic Public Buildings as part of a larger public building assessment program. This assessment work will build on and augment the City's "Preservation Plan for City-Owned Properties" which was completed in 1997 and identified the historical significance of the 70 buildings in the City's care.

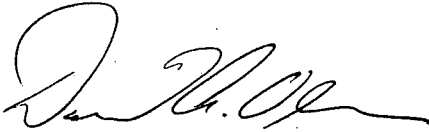
The City of Newton owns a number of historically significant buildings that add to the character of the City of Newton as well as house important city functions and services. Many of these municipal buildings were designed by significant architects and represent many periods of Newton's history. The most significant city-owned building, that is the recognized symbol of Newton city government, is Newton City Hall. Built during the depression in 1932, it is a beautiful representation of Newton's growth as a city and of the civic pride that Newton residents had during a bleak time in United States history. Newton residents sacrificed to pay for it, sending the Mayor and Newton legislators to the State Capital to ask that the City be allowed to borrow beyond their debt limit in order to pay for its construction. The funding was secured and the building was designed by the firm of Allen and Collens, whose principal architect, Charles Collens, lived in Newton, and was built by Newton-based contractors and construction teams. It is a model of design, engineering and construction.

At the other end of the municipal building spectrum is the Crafts Street Stables. Completed in 1895, this working building, also identified as historically significant in the 1997 plan, has played a huge role in the development of Newton. In 1894, money was appropriated to build this colonial revival structure and in the 1895 City Report, the Superintendent of Public Buildings reported that "the new highway stable and sheds on Crafts Street are now occupied, giving accommodations for thirty horses, with ample wagon room, machine shop, blacksmith shop and storage for two steam rollers. Built and completed inside of the appropriation." An 1896 article from the *Newton Journal*, proclaimed that the Crafts Street Stable was a fine structure. The stable has served the city well and still houses functions of the Department of Public Works.

Over the last 30 years, as has become painfully obvious, the maintenance of our public buildings has been reduced and the buildings are deteriorating. Not just those deemed of historic significance, but all of the buildings in the city. The pressures of increasing costs and decreasing resources for maintenance have placed many of the city's buildings in disrepair. The symbol of Newton's civic pride, Newton City Hall, has not been immune to the lack of maintenance. Today the building is plagued with leaking roofs, broken pipes, crumbling walls, and broken hardware.

It is vitally important that Newton get control of the maintenance of its municipal buildings and develop a plan to address the preservation and on-going maintenance of them. I encourage the Community Preservation Committee to fund this positive step in getting our municipal buildings in order, to identify the needs of the City's historic buildings, and to develop a plan to address the problems that have developed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Olson', written in a cursive style.

David A. Olson
Newton City Clerk