

City of Newton



David B. Cohen
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts Community Preservation Committee

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Board of Aldermen
FROM: Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
DATE: 28 January 2004
RE: **CPC Recommendation for CPA Funding**

PROJECT TITLE: NEWTONVILLE & NEWTON UPPER FALLS HISTORIC DISTRICT SIGNAGE
CPA PROJECT ID: CPA-FY04- 4
CPA CATEGORY: Historic Preservation

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicants, Newtonville and Newton Upper Falls Historic District commissions and the Department of Public Works, are requesting \$2,000 to fund the design, fabrication, and installation of sixteen historic district signs (8 signs for each of the two districts). The signs will be placed in key locations throughout each district to demonstrate the size and approximate boundaries of each district. The application includes maps showing the proposed sign locations in each district. The design of the signs is based on the existing signs for the Chestnut Hill Historic District.

FINDINGS

Community Preservation Act (MGL c.44B)

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

1. MGL c.44 defines an historic resource as “a building . . . that is listed or eligible for listing on the state register of historic places. . .” Both the Newtonville Historic District and the Newton Upper Falls Historic District comply with the definition of historic resource because both districts are listed on the State Register of Historic Places. (In fact, Newton Upper Falls is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.)
2. The project complies with §5(b)(2), which allows the CPA to fund the preservation of historic resources. This project would serve to preserve the districts’ historic resources by increasing public awareness of the existence of the historic districts. The Community Preservation Coalition’s report titled *Potential Uses of CPA Funds* identifies several qualifying preservation projects including projects that “establish or expand signage or markers at historic sites”, such as this project would.

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

Additional comments on selected goals:

Goal #3: Projects received during the November funding round included a high CPA cost of \$375,000 and a low CPA cost of \$2,000. The CPA cost for this project is \$2,000. The relative benefit for this project is to increase the understanding of the City’s social and architectural history by identifying with signage the two local historic districts that currently do not have signage.

Goal #5: The application states that there are currently no other funding sources available for this project.

Goal #9: The November round of applications includes funding requests for projects in Nonantum, Newton Corner, Newtonville, Newton Upper Falls, West Newton, Newton Center, Chestnut Hill, and Newton Highlands; this project is located in Newtonville and Newton Upper Falls.

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.	Yes
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.	No
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, see below
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.	Yes

Additional comments on selected goals:

Goal #4: By clearly noting the location of the districts, the public will be made aware of the existence and scope of the historic districts.

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 to design, fabricate, and install historic district signs for Newtonville and Newton Upper Falls to be expended under the direction and control of the Director of Planning and Development for purposes of funding a grant for \$2,000 as detailed in the application (submitted 1 November 2003), subject to the following conditions:

1. Work shall commence no later than 31 December 2004 and shall be completed no later than 31 December 2005 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.