

City of Newton



David B. Cohen
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Community Preservation Committee

MEMORANDUM
REVISED 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: NEWTON CORNER BRANCH LIBRARY EXTERIOR RESTORATION

CPA CATEGORY: Historic Preservation

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant, Newton Free Library, originally requested \$196,000 for the preservation and rehabilitation of the Newton Corner Branch Library, a Greek Revival style building originally constructed as a single-family house in 1845. The comprehensive scope of work includes: site work, repair and/or replace roof sheathing as needed (membrane, metal, & slate portions of roof), replace wood gutters (in kind with copper-lined wood), paint and repair wood trim, clapboards, and doors as needed, repair and reglaze existing windows, and install installation. The request has been modified to \$195,129, since funding for corrective work on the recently-completed CDBG project has been removed from this scope of work (see attached letter from Kathy Glick-Weil dated 2/3/03).

FINDINGS

Community Preservation Act

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

1. The Newton Corner Branch Library is a contributing property in the Farlow-Kenrick Park Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, the property complies with the definition for historic resources which requires listing on or eligibility 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 preserve and rehabilitate an historic resource. In addition, based on review by the City Preservation Planner, the scope of work generally complies with the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, Standards for Rehabilitation. A full evaluation would require additional details and product specifications.
3. Since the proposal does not include any acquisition of real property or real property interest, no permanent deed restrictions are required. The property is currently city-owned and the plans call for the continued use of this historic structure as a branch library.

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, 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, see below
8. Demonstrate strong community support.	Yes, 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. This CPA cost for this project is \$195,129. The relative benefit for this project is its continued use as an community resource by the Newton Corner neighborhood and its contribution to the Farlow-Kenrick Park National Historic District.

Goal #5: The library is at risk of being lost as a result of severe deterioration and inadequate resources for full rehabilitation. Over the past 10 years several restoration projects were completed on the Library, including projects funded with CDBG monies and in connection to the 1994 construction of the Heritage at Newton Corner, however, these projects did not go beyond stabilization and addressing deferred maintenance.

Goal #7: Since the rehabilitation needs for the Library go far beyond maintenance, it is reasonable and necessary to undertake a comprehensive rehabilitation project to preserve the site as an important historic resource in the Farlow-Kenrick National Historic District and for continued and enhanced public use and education opportunities.

Goal #8: The project has strong neighborhood support as detailed and documented in the application. No opposition has been voiced.

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 Corner.

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.	Yes, see below

Goal #5: The Jackson Homestead and The Newton Historical Society have expressed support for this project through a letter by David Olson, Director of The Jackson Homestead, dated 10/15/02, attached to the application.

CPC RECOMMENDATION

The proposal is consistent with the CPA criteria and many of the Plan's goals, as described above. However, based on the existing deteriorated condition of the building, the Community Preservation Committee is concerned that ongoing maintenance is not adequately funded. Despite these concerns, the Community Preservation Committee, in a 7-0 vote, recommends funding this application for the rehabilitation of the Newton Corner Branch Library by appropriating and transferring the requested \$195,129 to be expended under the direction and control of the Commissioner of Public Buildings in consultation with the Library Director for purposes of funding the rehabilitation of the Newton Corner Branch Library as detailed in the application (dated 1 November 2002, with subsequent revisions in a letter from Kathy Glick-Weil dated 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. Future maintenance shall be done in accordance with standards to be developed by the Public Buildings Preservation Task Force.
3. Any portion of the grant not used for the purposes stated herein shall be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.