



City of Newton, Massachusetts
Community Preservation Committee

DOCKET
ITEM NO.

90-09

David B. Cohen
 Mayor

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 17 March 2009

TO: The Honorable Board of Aldermen

FROM: Community Preservation Committee

ABOUT: **recommended Community Preservation funding for
 NEWTON HISTORY MUSEUM Exterior Preservation**

1. PROJECT GOALS & ELIGIBILITY

This project will preserve and rehabilitate the 1809 Jackson Homestead, home of the Newton History Museum, by replacing or repairing deteriorated wood features (all of which are historic, though not all date to 1809); by installing a new, weather-tight synthetic-shingle roof to replace the current leaking/defective roof; and by painting the building's exterior, to help preserve the woodwork.

Projects can be funded under the Community Preservation Act (CPA) only if both the *resources* involved and the *activities* proposed are eligible for funding.

As a *resource*, this building clearly qualifies: it is on the National Register of Historic Places and is strongly valued by the community as a both a product of Newton's history and a symbol of our shared commitment to preserving and interpreting that history.

The *activities* proposed in this project require more detailed evaluation. Under the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, recommended as guidelines in the CPA, the proposed work does not qualify as "restoration," defined as "the retention of materials from the most significant [single] time in a property's history [and] the removal of materials from other periods." In particular, the new roof will use modern materials as the most cost-effective, lowest-maintenance way to preserve the building's structural integrity, and the irreplaceable collections that it houses.

However, the proposed work does qualify as **preservation**, defined in the CPA as "protection of personal or real property from injury, harm or destruction, but not including maintenance," and in the *Standards* as "the retention of all historic fabric [that] reflects a building's [evolution] over time"; and as **rehabilitation**, which similarly "emphasizes the retention and repair of historic materials, [but provides] more latitude ... for replacement [if] the property is more deteriorated prior to work."

SEE ALSO ATTACHED: memos from the Law Dept. on funding eligibility and from the CPC on preservation policy & priorities; and appendix on City plans & priorities.

2. FUNDING RECOMMENDATION

On 25 February 2009 the Community Preservation Committee voted 8 in favor, 1 opposed to recommend that the sum of \$138,224 be appropriated as follows (*see next page for additional notes*):

Newton History Museum Exterior Preservation BUDGET		
Site work and demolition/removal of deteriorated features	\$16,500	
Repair or replace deteriorated features	\$23,500	
Repair or replace thermal and moisture protection (flashing, gutters, downspouts, roof)	\$20,500	
Finishes (preservative and paint)	\$31,000	
Bonds & insurance (2%); general conditions (10%); overhead & profit (15%), contingency (15%)	\$41,724	
Preservation & rehabilitation SUBTOTAL		\$133,224
Move & store collections during repairs	\$3,000	
Legal costs	\$2,000	
TOTAL		\$138,224

The CPC recommends appropriating these funds under the direction and control of the Commissioner of Public Buildings, drawing first from the historic resources reserve and then as needed from the general reserve of the Community Preservation Fund, to be expended 100% for historic resources.

Opposing Vote CPC member Stephen Fauteux opposed funding on the grounds that some project components, particularly painting, constitute routine maintenance, which is explicitly ineligible for funding under the Community Preservation Act.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES & USES OF FUNDS

The Newton Public Buildings Department has absorbed \$18,900 in charges by its on-call architects to assess the Jackson Homestead's preservation and rehabilitation needs, and develop the detailed treatment plan and budget on which this proposal is based.

3. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Community Preservation Committee further recommends:

1. That all future annual budgets for the City of Newton's Public Buildings Department include a specific line item for the adequate annual maintenance of the Jackson Homestead.
The Commissioner of Public Buildings suggested and has committed to meeting this requirement; as well as to submitting this portion of his department's annual budget to the Community Preservation Committee for verification.
This recommendation reflects the Committee's recognition that
 - ◆ the Jackson Homestead's current preservation and rehabilitation needs are partially a result of past deferred or inadequate maintenance, particularly of the roof and exterior wooden surfaces (which would have been protected more effectively had they been repainted regularly);
 - ◆ future deferred or inadequate maintenance could significantly erode or even erase the public benefits created by this investment of CP funds; yet the Community Preservation Act forbids the use of CP funds for maintenance, so this critical work must be funded from other sources.
2. That work funded by this appropriation be completed with 18 months after the funds are appropriated.
3. That any portion of the Community Preservation Fund grant not used for the purposes stated herein must be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.

4. ATTACHMENTS

(delivered to the clerks of the Committee on Community Preservation and Finance Committee)

- ◆ Proposal
 - ◆ Letters of support
 - ◆ City of Newton Law Department memo on funding eligibility of this proposal
 - ◆ Community Preservation Committee memo on policy & priorities for city-owned historic properties (*will be submitted at a later date*)
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Appendix: Detailed Findings on City of Newton Plans & Priorities

Community Preservation Plan

This project addresses the following goals in this *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.
5. Preserve a resource or opportunity that would otherwise be lost.
6. Show that a project is the most reasonable available option to achieve the objective.
7. Demonstrate strong community support.

HISTORIC RESOURCES GOALS

1. Support the preservation and/or restoration of municipally owned resources that are on the National or State Historic Registers, or that have been landmarked, found to be "preferably preserved" or historically significant by the Newton Historical Commission.
3. Encourage protection of resources that retain their historic integrity, in terms of location, context, design, style, workmanship, and materials.
5. Support the objectives and priorities of local historic preservation organizations, such as the Newton Historical Society, the Newton History Museum, local historic districts, and other such organizations within the City of Newton.

Other Newton Plans & Priorities

The proposal as submitted includes supporting quotes from both the *Community Preservation Plan* and *Comprehensive Plan*.

The Jackson Homestead as a building represents the history of Newton through all eras from 18th-century agricultural development through 19th-century industrialization and suburbanization, and is especially valued for its role as a stop on the Underground Railroad. As the home of the Newton History Museum, it houses irreplaceable archives and historic artifacts and supports public and school programs that support "planning for and with history" as recommended in the *Comprehensive Plan*.