

November 19, 2021

Newton Community Preservation Committee,

The City of Newton Farm Commission is submitting this pre-proposal for CPA funding for the next phase of restoration and improvements to the farmhouse on the historic Angino Farm. This mid-1800 farmhouse has been modified in the past to include some more modern features and to make it more livable for the farmer and his family. However, as with any old structure, it continues to need substantial work to ensure the building envelope is more habitable. Our proposal requests funding for four key projects, listed as follows (see attachments #1 and #2 for more information):

- #1 Remediate excessive water and moisture situation; includes three sub-projects
- #2 Upgrade electrical systems
- #3 Replace kitchen ceiling
- #4 Replace hot water heater

Newton Community Farm (NCF) intends to contribute to this project by allocating staff time for project and logistical coordination. NCF will also absorb the costs for site preparations (i.e. clear basement of obstructions) and accommodations for the Farmer and his family as-needed during construction.

These projects also show NCF's shift to more environmentally-sustainable practices by pushing to electrify the farmhouse heating system in line with the City of Newton's energy priorities. For example, NCF and the City have recently been notified of a grant award from Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources to install solar panels and a storage system on the barn to provide 99% of the agricultural electric use. (Total system cost is \$61,000.)

NCF manages the farm and its educational, historic, and public access programs via several operating licenses from 2006-2031 with the City of Newton. Since its inception, NCF has established a robust portfolio of programs and has served thousands of Newton residents through its Community Supported Agriculture shares, on-site farmstand, Newton Farmers' Market booth, Produce Donation Program (major partner; Newton Food Pantry), youth and adult educational programs, annual Seedling Sale, and many public events. As with many organizations, NCF had to quickly curtail many in-person programs during this recent pandemic and find other ways to serve the public. NCF successfully pivoted to new ways of delivering services while maintaining the agricultural operations of this historic working farm (see attachment with recent accomplishments). The farm continues to be a 'beloved gem' in the Newton Community.

Financially, NCF is stable most recently due to revenue from non-recurring sources such as PPP loans, earmarked fundraising campaigns (i.e. funds for transition to Exec Director), major gifts, and grants. Most of these sources have restrictions on use so NCF has carefully allocated funds to ensure compliance. NCF hired its first Executive Director in 2019 with the expectation of increased emphasis on securing revenue from corporate sponsors, foundations, major benefactors, and government agencies. Recent successful efforts to secure funds have enabled NCF to buy needed equipment and a used vehicle, build a more modern greenhouse, and rehabilitate the existing greenhouse. All of these uses are critical to the successful operations of the farm. Additionally, sponsorships have enabled NCF to better serve the public by hosting public events, expanding the Seedling Sale, and increasing donations to local food pantries.

NCF's financial situation allows for the organization to cover the costs of its on-going operations and maintenance but it does not provide sufficient funds to complete major capital projects on the farm's buildings. Revenue from farm operations programs (CSAs, Seedling Sale, produce sales) generally provide a revenue stream to cover NCF's baseline expenses but they do not sufficiently cover all the costs of the Farm's labor, education programs, and outreach initiatives. NCF has already identified significant increases in estimated operating costs for 2022 due to supply chain disruptions; maintenance needs in the buildings; inflation for equipment, packaging, etc; and increased labor costs due to labor shortages. NCF will have to find ways to sufficiently increase revenue to cover those expenses. NCF has relied in the past on other sources of funding such as the CPA to restore the farm's major structures and continues to need financial support to complete the current list of critical projects.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. The City of Newton Farm Commission supports this project.

Sincerely,

Michael Goldman
Chair, City of Newton Farm Commission