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**Community Preservation Committee
Funding Recommendation for the
Newton Community Farm Farmhouse
Rehabilitation and Restoration Project**

Date: March 14, 2022
From: Community Preservation Committee
To: The Honorable City Council

PROJECT GOALS & ELIGIBILITY This proposal requests \$88,554 in CPA funds, under the category of historic resources, to complete work necessary to preserve the ca. 1855 farmhouse which provides housing for the Newton Community Farm's farm manager. The City acquired the property in 2005 and leases it to the Newton Community Farm (NCF), which oversees the agricultural work and programs on the site and is responsible for managing and maintaining the existing structures. CPA historic resource funding was used in 2006 to complete lead abatement and some window and door replacements on the farmhouse and is requested at this time to make necessary improvements to the farmhouse in order to preserve its useability in the future. The proposed work is limited to the specific elements noted in the proposal which include water and moisture remediation efforts, replacing the outdated electrical system, installing a new water heater, and replacing the kitchen ceiling and lighting. This project is eligible for CPA funding under historic resources as the property has been determined to be locally significant by the Newton Historical Commission.

RECOMMENDED FUNDING At its monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, the Community Preservation Committee unanimously recommended, with a vote of 7 to 0, that \$88,554 in Community Preservation Act funding be appropriated from the FY22 Unrestricted Funds to the control of the Planning & Development Department for a grant to the Newton Community Farm for the rehabilitation and restoration of the ca. 1855 farmhouse including excessive water and moisture remediation, new electrical systems, a new water heater, and a new kitchen ceiling.

Proposed CPA Funding Accounts for the Newton Art Center's Church of the Open Word Restoration			
Account Name	Account Number	Amount Currently Available in Account	Proposed Amount for New Art Center's Restoration Project
FY22 Unrestricted Funds	#58R10498-579000	\$2,462,025	\$88,554
Total Project Funds			\$88,554

www.newtonma.gov/cpa

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SPECIAL ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE CPC

Community Need: The Newton Community Farm is a much loved community resource which hosts educational programs, summer camps, and community events throughout the year in addition to operating a CSA program and farm stand. The property is the last surviving farm in Newton and is listed as both an asset in the City’s Historic Landscape Report and for its ecological connectivity in the Open Space and Recreation Plan (page 135). The property is also included in the City’s Capital Improvement Plan, FY22-26, for its contributions to addressing climate change.

Project Budget: The proposed budget relies heavily on the use of CPA funding for 90% of the proposed work, with the NCF to provide the funding needed to oversee and prepare the site for the work. While the property is municipally owned, the lease agreement with the NCF requires the applicants to oversee and maintain both the site and its existing structures. The NCF’s mission and budget center on the agricultural and educational aspects of the property, leaving little for capital improvements to the farmhouse, which provides the required onsite housing for the farm manager and must remain in good and livable condition. The NCF will continue to maintain the property and plan for future improvements to its structures. The NCF is also working to solicit grants and other funding sources to increase the energy efficiency of the site through the addition of solar panels and other systems.

Historic Significance: The Newton Community Farm is located on the former Angino Farm and is the last remaining intact farmscape in the City of Newton. The site was part of a larger farmstead dating back to the last quarter of the seventeenth century and represents both the early settlement patterns and agricultural roots of southern Newton, an area which remained largely undeveloped well into the twentieth century. Both the ca. 1855 house and ca. 1890s barn have been altered over time but retain their integrity of form and location. A full history of the site and its development is available on the website at:

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/36562/637284108605370000>

Sponsor Finances, Qualifications, and Institutional Support: The Newton Community Farm has managed the site for nearly sixteen years and has overseen previous construction projects including the rehabilitation of the barn and the construction of the farm stand. The organization is also working closely with the Public Buildings Department on both the scope and bids for this project and has volunteers and staff ready to oversee the work once the project is ready to move forward. The project has received eighteen letters of support from City Councilors, neighbors, and local institutions expressing their support for the farm and its contributions to the community. Copies of these letters of support are available on the project’s webpage at

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/81162/637817526339470000>

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS *(funding conditions)*

1. CPA Funding will be used only to complete the work necessary to remediate water and moisture issues, upgrade the electrical system, replace the kitchen ceiling and light fixtures, and replace the hot water heater in the ca. 1855 farmhouse.
2. The Newton Community Farm will provide periodic reports on the status of the project to CPC staff over the course of their work.
3. The Newton Community Farm must provide documentation prior to the release of any CPA historic resource that all of the work to be completed meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation as required by the Community Preservation Act.
4. All studies, plans and designs completed as part of this project must be submitted to the CPC for its files as part of the required final report.

5. All recommended CPA funds should be appropriated by the City Council within 6 months and the project should begin within 1 year of the date of any CPC recommendation. If either deadline cannot be met, the Newton Community Farm may submit a written request for an extension from the CPC, which the CPC may grant at its discretion.
6. The release of CPA funds should be governed by a grant agreement that includes but is not limited to the usual conditions for the phased release of CPA funds for historic resource projects, including a final report to be presented to the CPC at the close of the project.
7. Any CPA funds appropriated but not used for the purposes stated herein should be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.

KEY OUTCOMES

The Community Preservation Committee anticipates that the successful completion of this project will allow the Newton Community Farm to make the improvements necessary to preserve and protect the historic farmhouse from further deterioration and insure its continued habitability as the required on-site housing for the farm manager.

ATTACHMENTS

- Proposal and selected attachments submitted to the CPC for their March 8, 2022 review
- All letters of support received for the project during the review process

Additional information not attached to this recommendation, including petitions and letters of support, are available on the CPC's website at:

<https://www.newtonma.gov/government/planning/community-preservation-program/proposals-projects/farm>