

Town of Canton, Massachusetts
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
Minutes of January 6, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 in Pequitside Tavern, 79 Pleasant Street.

Committee members in attendance: Stacey Gorman, Bob Panico, Lisa Lopez, John McSweeney, George Comeau, David McCarthy, Nichola Gallagher

Motion to allow Josh Cohen to participate in the meeting remotely by B. Panico, seconded by N. Gallagher, approved 7-0-0.

PROJECT STATUS UPDATES

K. Phelps explained that four previously approved projects totaling approximately \$180K are close to completion. The project proponents have been asked to submit notification confirming that the projects were delivered/completed to their satisfaction and that all bills have been paid. To date, correspondence from all applicants is outstanding. Upon receipt of this notice, the CCPC can officially close out these under-budget projects and request that the remaining funds be returned to the accounts from which they were appropriated. S. Gorman noted that there is no guarantee in terms of dollar amount to be recovered, but she is hopeful that this process can be completed in time to include the unexpended funds in the “rollover” figure for Fiscal Year 2021. L. Lopez noted that the return of most or all of these unexpended funds would give the CCPC the approximate “hold-aside” amount maintained in past years.

With respect to proposed projects, G. Comeau stated that he had communicated with a preservation consultant regarding the Memorial Hall restoration project and had received a cost estimate of \$15,000 for the schematic mapping (using aerial lift) of repairs, repointing and generic repainting. He noted that the estimate does not include bid documents and suggested that an affirmative vote on the project be contingent receipt of a written proposal for the study.

REVIEW OF FUND RESERVES AND ESTIMATED FY 2021 FUND AVAILABILITY

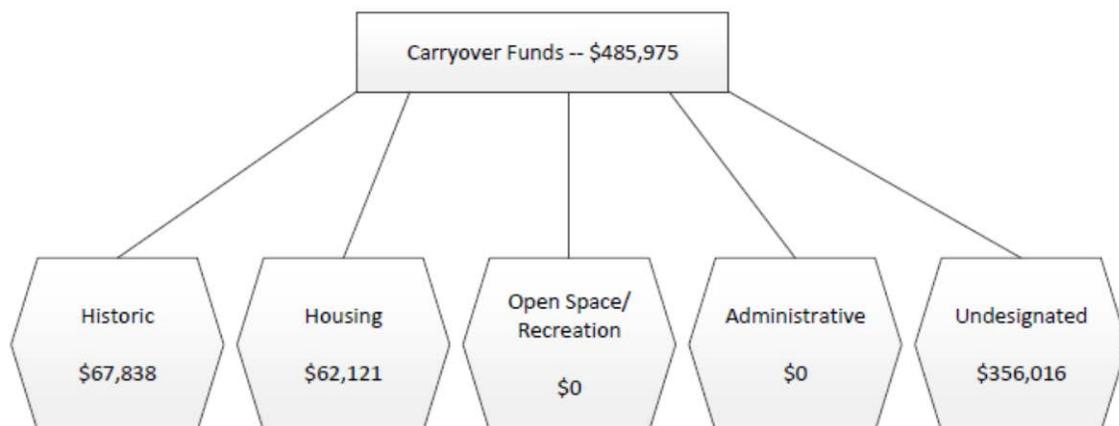
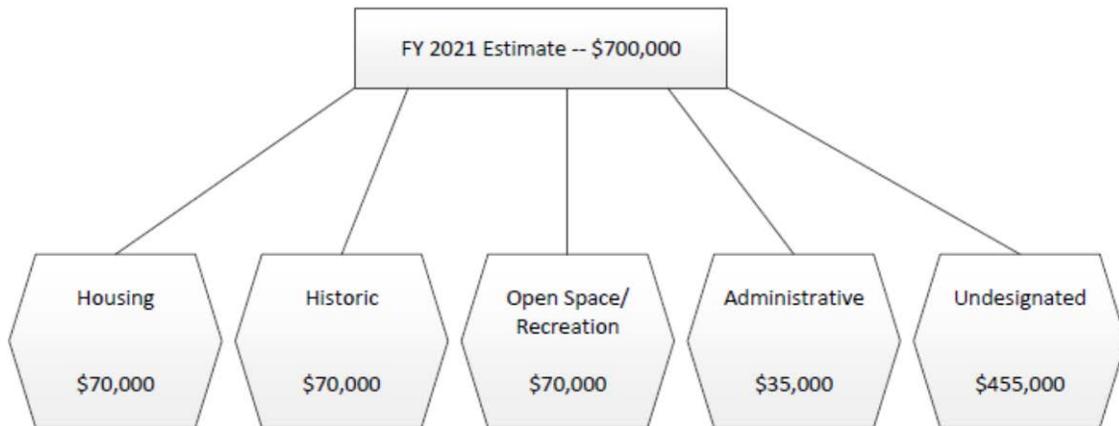
Fiscal Year	Surcharge Revenue	State Grant	Other	Total Revenue
2014	480,994	-	878	481,871
2015	491,960	153,822	5,813	651,594
2016	520,789	145,336	7,341	673,466
2017	545,947	108,001	11,689	665,637
2018	581,952	94,671	25,996	702,619
2019	613,700	110,487	32,524	756,710

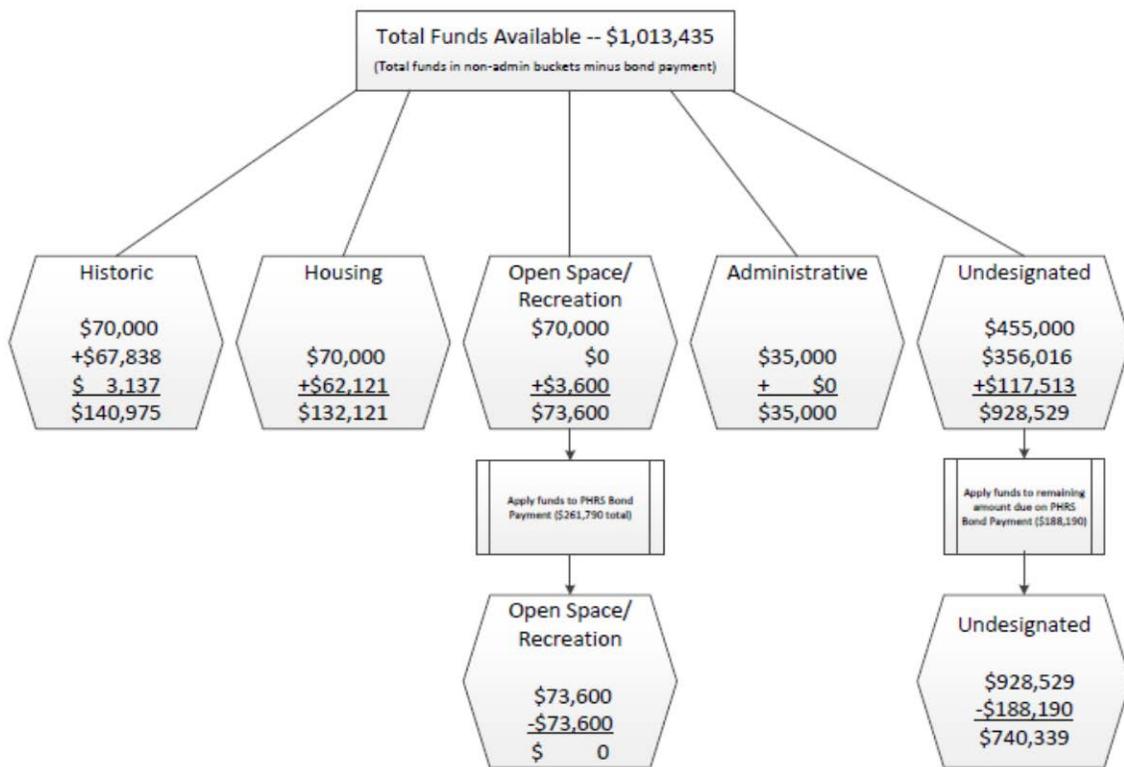
- Finance Department anticipates Surcharge Revenue to be approximately \$650,000 in FY2021
- State match never below 15% and expect state match to continue to exceed 10%.
- “Other” revenue continues to grow (interest on funds in account, interest on delinquent taxes).
- Based on these factors and Finance Department’s recommendation, propose increase the estimated amount from \$650,000 to \$700,000.

S. Gorman stated that she and K. Phelps met with new Finance Director, Randy Scollins. Based on review of projected surcharge revenue and developments with the state CPA Fund, he is comfortable with an estimated revenue amount of \$700K. Surcharge revenue alone in FY 19 was \$613 and will likely exceed \$650K in FY20 . The state match has been shored up and other revenue sources continue to grow. L. Lopez noted that \$700K was very conservative number and added that potential funding to be returned would only add to the conservative approach. N. Gallagher asked whether there was any reason to go with a higher estimated revenue figure and D. McCarthy inquired about philosophy on “banking” funds for future. Discussion about the historic approach to spending versus reserving funds and the pros/cons of keeping funds in reserve followed.

Motion to increase estimated revenue projections for FY 21 to \$700K by J. McSweeney, seconded by G. Comeau, approved 8-0-0.

S. Gorman reviewed the breakdown of funds in each of the Reserve Fund accounts and the Committee reviewed the post- recommendation funding levels as summarized in the following slides:





HISTORIC
FUNDS IN "HISTORIC" BUCKET - \$140,975 AMOUNT RECOMMENDED: \$465,000
1) TILDEN HOUSE - \$450,000 2) STUDY OF MEMORIAL HALL EXTERIOR RENOVATIONS - \$15,000
HISTORIC BUCKET - \$140,975 UNDESIGNATED - \$342,025

OPEN SPACE/RECREATION
FUNDS IN "OS/R" BUCKET - \$0 AMOUNT SOUGHT - \$390,827
1) SCHOOL COMMITTEE - GMS BASKETBALL COURTS - \$35,097 2) PARKS & RECREATION - PEQUITSIDE TENNIS/PICKLEBALL COURT - \$116,600 3) CONSERVATION COMMISSION - NEWHOUSE WATERFRONT - \$239,130

HOUSING
AVAILABLE FUNDS - \$132,121 AMOUNT SOUGHT - \$80,000
1) HEMINGWAY FIRE ALARMS- \$80,000
HOUSING BUCKET - \$80,000

UNDESIGNATED
AVAILABLE FUNDS - \$740,339
FOR HISTORIC PROJECTS: \$342,025 FOR OS/R PROJECT: \$390,827
TOTAL: \$732,852

CONSIDERATION OF FY21 CPA APPLICATIONS

S. Gorman suggested reviewing projects by funding category and voting on recommendations after reviewing the full slate of proposed projects.

HOUSING

Hemenway Housing Complex Alarms

S. Gorman stated that there is sufficient funding within the Fund Reserve for Community Housing to cover this \$80K project. L. Lopez supported the application, noting that the Canton Housing Authority has acted prudently in presenting priority projects and has completed past projects efficiently (and on occasion under budget). B. Panico noted his support and added that this preservation project fell within the purview of CPA.

HISTORIC

Memorial Hall

G. Comeau suggested that the Committee consider funding a \$15K study rather than the \$1.84 million request for project implementation noting that the Committee had been supportive of studies in advance of other major projects . He added that the applicant had been asked to pursue funding for the necessary work without sufficient direction and that without a study, the restoration work would be pushed back by at least a year. B. Panico expressed his support for the change in scope, but wondered how the Town made decisions as to which requests would be funneled to the CCPC versus going through the capital funding process.

L. Lopez expressed concern with the proposal in that a revised application with written cost estimates has not been received. Furthermore, it is her feeling that the Town should be responsible for maintenance of town buildings and the use of CPA funds should be reserved for activities that wouldn't be funded but for CPA. N. Gallagher and D. McCarthy both expressed support for revised approach, but feel while CPA funding is appropriate for the design study, an alternative funding approach should be sought for the restoration work.

Noting the lack of board/department support for this project, S. Gorman and N. Gallagher both questioned who would advance the project following completion of a study. Debate over historic preservation vs. maintenance and full vs. partial funding of an eventual rehabilitation project followed.

Motion to consider a \$15K Design Study (rather than full funding of restoration) for Memorial Hall by J. McSweeney, seconded by B. Panico, approved 6-2-0 (S. Gorman and L. Lopez opposed)

L. Lopez suggested that a positive recommendation for a design study for the restoration of Memorial Hall be accompanied by conditions governing the grant (e.g. submittal of scope of study, who is responsible, etc.).

Memorial Hall Granite Stairs

S Gorman stated that the Public Facilities Department is seeking \$20K to restore the granite stairs in front of Memorial Hall (not the staircase leading into building). G. Comeau expressed support for the project but feels that other money should have been contributed. N. Gallagher questioned what made the stairs “historic” and whether aging infrastructure is more appropriately funded through capital. D. McCarthy questioned how the project could be considered anything but maintenance and further discussion of the distinction followed. B. Panico noted that this project was low on the list of priorities in the plan submitted to the Capital Planning Committee. S. Gorman expressed concern about whether the requested amount would be sufficient and who would cover any expenses over the budgeted amount. L. Lopez stated that CCPC could fund the stairs as an historic project, but doesn’t feel they should.

Tilden House Phase II

S. Gorman stated the Historical Society is seeking \$450K for Phase II restoration work at the Tilden House. She reviewed the email from the applicant which explained the way the project could be further divided to push certain activities out to a future year. L. Lopez stated her preference for funding at the full request, noting that splitting the work over multiple years could increase expenses. She added that there was an appetite in town to finish the project and to open the building for use and concluded that there is a benefit to being able to report to Town Meeting that this will be the last installment of CPA funds for this project. Several members applauded the work done at Tilden to date. Discussion about whether to fund at the lower amount followed. S. Gorman reminded the Committee of demonstrated public support for Tilden and expressed concern that further phasing of the restoration work might threaten completion. B. Panico supported moving forward at the full funding request and the Committee discussed the impacts this approach would have on overall project funding for FY21.

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

Transfer to Conservation Fund

L. Lopez stated the Conservation Fund has not been used for land acquisition in the past ten years and that the Conservation Commission currently controls/manages 73 properties and nearly 400 acres. With no clear direction in terms of urgency or need, she feels that there are more pressing requests this year. Several members agreed with this assessment. S. Gorman added that she appreciates that the Commission is seeking interns to study existing open space parcels and added that she would be willing to consider future requests to contribute to the Conservation Fund.

Newhouse Waterfront Improvements

S. Gorman noted that full funding of the proposed project relied upon a 50/50 split with Board of Selectmen, and that the CPA appropriation of \$230K would be contingent upon passage of the sister article for the same amount sponsored by the BOS. L. Lopez noted that the applicants planned to pursue outside grant funding and that the CCPC could condition their recommendation to require that any grant funding received would be reimbursed to CPA. D. McCarthy stated he would welcome completion of Newhouse project and would prioritize this over the other open space and recreation projects. L. Lopez highlighted the resources committed to the Newhouse to date and the multiple opportunities for public input throughout the planning process. Several members commented that the site presents an ideal opportunity for extensive public use.

Tennis and Pickleball Courts at Pequitside

G. Comeau stated that he finds this project compelling, in part because it restores the prior recreational use of the property. L. Lopez noted that the CCPC has recommended several recreational projects aimed at young users (playgrounds, fields), but this is the first time the senior community came with a specific ask. N. Gallagher informed the Committee that the schools added striping for pickleball at the High School and an indoor court is available for pickleball at the Pappas Center. G. Comeau reminded members that there are limitations on use of courts on school property during the school day. S. Gorman asked whether there could be public private partnership to accomplish the full buildout proposed. G. Comeau explained that donations could be accepted towards the project, but the procurement process would still apply. Discussion about funding the proposal at an amount under the \$116,600 requested followed.

VOTE ON RECOMMENDATIONS TO ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

G. Comeau recused himself from the vote on the Tilden House Phase II project.

Motion to recommend funding for the Tilden House Phase II restoration project in the amount of \$450,000 with the understanding that this second round of funding is expected to complete the project by L. Lopez, seconded by N. Gallagher, approved 7-0-0.

Motion to recommend funding for the Memorial Hall Restoration Design Study in the amount of \$15,000 by D. McCarthy, seconded by L. Lopez, approved 8-0-0.

Motion to withhold recommendation to fund the Memorial Hall Granite Stairs project by G. Comeau, seconded by L. Lopez, approved 7-1-0 (B. Panico opposed).

Motion to recommend funding for the Hemenway Alarm System project in the amount of \$80,000 by G. Comeau, seconded by N. Gallagher, approved 8-0-0.

Motion to indefinitely postpone recommendation for the Conservation Fund transfer by G. Comeau, seconded by B. Panico, approved 8-0-0.

Motion to recommend funding for the Earl Newhouse Waterfront Improvement project in the amount of \$239,130 contingent upon the full funding of the project (through BOS article requesting same amount) and provided that any grant funding received be reimbursed to CPA by D. McCarthy, seconded by N. Gallagher, approved 8-0-0.

G. Comeau noted that the noted contingencies are not just a housekeeping matter, but must be included in the Town Meeting motion recommending approval of this project.

Motion to recommend funding for the Galvin Middle School Basketball Court rehabilitation project in the amount of \$35,075 by N. Gallagher, seconded by D. McCarthy approved 8-0-0.

CCPC members agreed that they are supportive of the tennis/pickleball courts but are choosing to postpone action on this recommendation until their next meeting when the return of unexpended funds can be considered. The Committee agreed to a follow-up meeting on **January 13, 2020 at 6:45 pm in Town Hall** to address these items.

OTHER BUSINESS

Letter to Mass Cultural Council

L. Lopez explained that the PRHS museum is looking to raise money and was pursuing a grant from the Mass Cultural Council for \$35,000. The application is strengthened by letters of support, and while CPA funding cannot support the design activities proposed in the grant, it is possible to note overall support of the proposal. With consent from the CCPC, S. Gorman stated that she would sign and submit a letter of support.

Master Plan

S. Gorman noted that the Town's Master Plan had been distributed to Town boards and committees with a request to review the designated action items. She noted that there was a single item assigned to CCPC relating to support of the Canton Housing Authority. She suggested that the CCPC consider whether this action item should be edited and/or if there are any other pieces that should be added. G. Comeau noted that a Housing Trust is an item that CCPC has expressly supported in the past.

Motion to adjourn at 9:07 p.m. by B. Panico, seconded by L. Lopez, approved 8-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Kristen Phelps

**Kristen Phelps
CCPC Administrator**