

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Minutes of Meeting
November 13, 2024**

LOCATION: Hybrid Meeting - Charles River Room, Public Services Administration Building, 500 Dedham Avenue, Needham, and via Zoom

PRESENT: Dave Herer (Chair), Maureen Callahan (Vice Chair), Paul Dawson, Adam Block, Marshall Davis, Jim Rosenbaum, Reginald Foster, Keith LaFace, Betsy Millane

GUEST: Stuart Saginor, Executive Director, Community Preservation Coalition

STAFF: Cecila Simchak (remote), Lauren Spinney

D. Herer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and noted that all Committee members were present except for M. Callahan, who would arrive shortly. Staff members were present as noted above.

COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES

D. Herer welcomed Betsy Millane, the new Select Board appointee to the Committee.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COALITION

D. Herer introduced Stuart Saginor, Executive Director of the Community Preservation Coalition. S. Saginor made a presentation regarding the Community Preservation Act and hosted a question & answer session for the Committee.

FY2026 INITIAL ELIGIBILITY PROJECT APPLICATIONS

D. Herer identified nine initial eligibility project applications received by the Committee for the FY2026 funding cycle, as follows:

FY2026-01 Needham History Center & Museum: Ongoing Collections Storage Upgrades

FY2026-02 Needham Conservation Department & Commission: Trail Signage Improvements

FY2026-03 Charles River Center & Planning Office for Urban Affairs, Inc.: East Militia Heights Development

FY2026-04 Needham Housing Authority: Preservation of Seabeds Way & Captain Robert Cook Drive

FY2026-05 Needham Housing Authority: High Rock Estates Affordable Housing Land Use Study

FY2026-06 Needham Park & Recreation Department: Action Park & Pickleball Courts (Design)

FY2026-07 Needham Park & Recreation Department & Department of Public Works: Eliot School Grounds Renovation (Design)

FY2026-08 Needham Department of Public Works, Parks & Forestry Division: Town of Needham Forestry Management Program

FY2026-09 Needham Department of Public Works, Parks & Forestry Division: Bay Colony Rail Trail Rehabilitation

D. Herer asked Committee members, having had an opportunity to review the nine applications prior to this meeting, if there were questions or issues for discussion with respect to any application before proceeding to the initial eligibility vote.

A. Block asked if FY2026-04: NHA Preservation of Seabeds Way & Captain Robert Cook Drive involved the creation of new housing and/or maintenance. R. Foster explained that this project involves the preservation of community housing. It does not involve maintenance.

Having addressed questions on Initial Eligibility Application Nos. FY2026-02, FY2026-03, FY2026-04, FY2026-05, FY2026-06, FY2026-07, D. Herer moved to deem all six applications eligible for CPA funding pending the opinion of Town Counsel. A. Block seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: D. Herer (aye); M. Callahan (aye); A. Block (aye); M. Davis (aye); R. Foster (aye); P. Dawson (aye); K. LaFace (aye); J. Rosenbaum (aye); B. Millane (aye). Motion carries 9-0.

FY2026-01: Needham History Center & Museum: Ongoing Collections Storage Upgrades

D. Herer stated that this project includes upgrading the storage shelving and providing dehumidifiers to preserve documents. A. Block questioned if dehumidifiers are eligible for CPA funds or if they constitute maintenance. D. Herer suggested that it would be maintenance if they were requesting funds for broken dehumidifiers. In this instance, dehumidifiers are needed to create an environment so that the documents can be preserved. R. Foster shared that in the past, the CPC funded a project to preserve the Town's marriage records by digitization because the physical medium on which they were stored was deteriorating. In that instance, they were restoring the actual artifacts.

A. Block moved to deem FY2026-01: Needham History Center & Museum: Ongoing Collections Storage Upgrades eligible for CPA funding pending the opinion of Town Counsel. K. LaFace seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: D. Herer (aye); M. Callahan (aye); A. Block (aye); M. Davis (aye); R. Foster (aye); P. Dawson (aye); K. LaFace (aye); J. Rosenbaum (aye); B. Millane (aye). Motion carries 9-0.

FY2026-08: Needham Department of Public Works, Parks & Forestry Division: Town of Needham Forestry Management Program

D. Herer felt that the initial application was not specific enough about where trees would be planted

and suggested we refer it back to the applicant for more information after we receive Town Counsel's opinion. M. Davis pointed out that part of the request was for tree removal which constitutes maintenance and is not allowed under the CPA.

A. Block does not believe the application is eligible. M. Callahan agrees as the request seems to be for maintenance. M. Davis questioned if the comprehensive tree inventory portion of the application would qualify under the Open Space category. R. Foster also suggested we refer the application back for clarification on the scope of the request. If the application involves trees on recreation or conservation land, it may be eligible.

M. Davis moved to defer a decision on eligibility with respect to FY2026-08: Needham Department of Public Works, Parks & Forestry Division: Town of Needham Forestry Management Program pending clarification from the applicant and the opinion of Town Counsel. K. LaFace seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: D. Herer (aye); M. Callahan (aye); A. Block (aye); M. Davis (aye); R. Foster (aye); P. Dawson (aye); K. LaFace (aye); J. Rosenbaum (aye); B. Millane (aye). Motion carries 9-0.

FY2026-09: Needham Department of Public Works, Parks & Forestry Division: Bay Colony Rail Trail Rehabilitation

J. Rosenbaum and A. Block stated that this project appears to be rehabilitation of a recreation asset. R. Foster suggested that this might be a right-of-way owned by the state under a rail trail agreement. A. Block questioned if we have control of the land and if it is designated as recreation.

K. LaFace moved to deem FY2026-09: Needham Department of Public Works, Parks & Forestry Division: Bay Colony Rail Trail Rehabilitation eligible for CPA funding pending the opinion of Town Counsel. A. Block seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: D. Herer (aye); M. Callahan (aye); A. Block (aye); M. Davis (aye); R. Foster (aye); P. Dawson (aye); K. LaFace (aye); J. Rosenbaum (aye); B. Millane (aye). Motion carries 9-0.

PROJECT LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

FY2026-01: Needham History Center & Museum (*J. Rosenbaum*)

FY2026-02: Needham Conservation Dept Trail Signage Improvements (*R. Foster & M. Davis*)

FY2026-03: Charles River Center East Militia Heights Development (*M. Callahan & B. Millane*)

FY2026-04: NHA Preservation of Seabeds Way & Robert Cook Drive (*D. Herer, A. Block*)

FY2026-05: NHA High Rock Estates Affordable Housing Land Use Study (*D. Herer, A. Block*)

FY2026-06: Park & Recreation Action Park & Pickleball Courts (*K. LaFace, P. Dawson, A. Block*)

FY2026-07: Park & Recreation Eliot School Grounds Renovation (*K. LaFace, P. Dawson*)

FY2026-08: Needham DPW Forestry Management Program (*R. Foster & M. Davis*)

FY2026-09: Needham DPW Bay Colony Rail Trail Rehabilitation (*R. Foster & M. Davis*)

MEETING MINUTES

A. Block moved to adopt the meeting minutes of September 18, 2024. M. Davis seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: D. Herer (aye); M. Callahan (aye); A. Block (aye); M. Davis (aye); R. Foster (aye); P. Dawson (aye); K. LaFace (aye); J. Rosenbaum (aye); B. Millane (aye). Motion carries 9-0.

MATTERS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE:

D. Herer shared that there will be a rededication ceremony of the Emery Grover building this Saturday, November 16. D. Herer will be out of town, but M. Callahan and R. Foster will speak on behalf of the CPC.

ADJOURNMENT

A. Block moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 p.m. The motion was seconded by K. LaFace. The vote was as follows: D. Herer (aye); M. Callahan (aye); A. Block (aye); M. Davis (aye); J. Rosenbaum (aye); R. Foster (aye); P. Dawson (aye); K. LaFace (aye); B. Millane (aye). Motion carries 9-0.

For more information, the meeting materials are available at:

<https://needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx?AMID=&Type=&ADID=13283>

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Spinney
Administrative Coordinator