

**Community Preservation Committee  
Town of Needham, Massachusetts**

**Report to Town Meeting  
Annual Town Meeting – May 2016**

**Introduction**

In November 2004, the voters of Needham adopted the legislation known as the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act. Since November 2005, the Needham Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has forwarded numerous projects to Town Meeting for final approval, the largest of which is the preservation and reconstruction of Town Hall.

The committee membership is defined by the requirements of the CPA as adopted by Needham. The nine member committee consists of a member of each of the following boards or committees; Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Park Recreation Commission, Historical Commission, Housing Authority, and two members each appointed by the Town Moderator and Board of Selectmen.

A summary of the CPC's FY 2016 activities follows. The members of the CPC welcome input, questions, and attendance at all meetings and public hearings. The Committee generally meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month, and agendas, minutes and the Needham Community Preservation Plan are available on the Town's website at [www.needhamma.gov/CPC](http://www.needhamma.gov/CPC)

**Sources of Available Funds**

**Tax Surcharge Receipts**

Needham residents are currently billed a 2% surcharge on property taxes after the first \$100,000 valuation, as a result of town-wide vote accepting CPA. In FY 2017, it is estimated that Needham will receive \$2,148,000 in property tax surcharges dedicated to CPA, equivalent to the average collected in previous years. The CPA fund also generates revenue from penalties and interest assessed on overdue CPA charges and investment income on the CPA funds in the bank

**State Community Preservation Fund**

Needham receives a distribution from the Massachusetts Community Preservation Fund, and to date, has received \$7,212,254 from this fund. The most recent distribution, in December 2015 was \$579,514, a 29.7% match to local collections. In October 2006 and 2007, Needham received a 100% match to its local collections, with a combined distribution of \$2,557,108. From October 2008 through December 2015, the distributions ranged from a high of 67.62% to a low of 26.64%. In 2014-2016, the Legislature has added funds to the Community Preservation Fund in order to provide additional distributions to communities. The fund has a complex distribution formula

based upon the number of communities participating and their respective local surcharges with 160 communities now participating in CPA.

## **Fund Balances**

State law mandates that, annually, at least 10% of surcharges plus state distribution funds be spent on actual projects, or be allocated for future projects in three specific CPA reserves; Community Housing, Open Space, and Historic Resources. The remainder of the funds, minus funds allocated for administrative expenses, is placed in an Annual Reserve fund, which can only be used for projects in these three areas and/or qualifying recreational projects.

Needham's CPC has elected to target 11% of the estimated receipts for each special reserve. This action is taken to assure that should the MA CPA Trust Fund distribution or the local tax surcharge receipts exceed estimates, Needham remains in compliance with the state mandate.

As a result of previous appropriations, the reserve balances available for appropriation at the May 2016 Annual Town Meeting are as follows:

Community Housing:	\$ 1,237,873
Open Space:	\$ 543,254
Historic Resources:	\$ 15,820
2016 Annual Reserve:	\$ 1,448,606
Free Cash:	\$ 3,447,911 (note this balance closes out at the end of the fiscal year)

The unspent 2016 Annual Reserve, and remaining administrative funds and interest must go through the free cash certification process before being returned to the CPA Fund.

The CPC is recommending appropriation of six (6) projects, to be funded through the existing "buckets" listed above, but one is being withdrawn, as of 4/25/16. After subtracting the appropriations for the final five projects, and adding the FY'17 appropriations from Article 41, the balances in the respective funds would be:

Community Housing:	\$ 1,177,873
Open Space:	\$ 543,254
Historic Resources:	\$ 15,820
2016 Annual Reserve:	\$1,448,606
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,185,553 as of July 1, 2016</b>

Please note the figures above assume that \$82,000 has been appropriated for the FY 2017 administrative expenses. *It does not include the eventual Free Cash funds that will be finalized in late 2016, estimated to be more than \$3,000,000.*

### **Administrative Expenses**

The CPC Administrative Funds may be used to pay for the expenses related to the work of the committee, including office supplies, mailings, legal notices, appraisals, consultant fees, property deposits, as well as the recording secretary's salary and three hours per week for the Staff Liaison's weekly salary. The funds were recently utilized to pay for the addition of conservation restrictions on properties purchased with CPA funds. The Needham CPC is a member of the Massachusetts Community Preservation Coalition and pays annual dues to the association, currently \$4,350. The Coalition provides regular consultation services to the CPC, and monitors and informs member communities on state legislative activity related to the Community Preservation Act.

## **Requested Project Funding**

### **Article 35: Appropriate for Community Housing Specialist**

The Town Manager and the Director of Planning and Community Development are requesting \$60,000 as part of a three year plan to assist with funding a part-time Community Housing Specialist. This position has been funded for the past three years through a combination of CPA funds and general fund. This position provides technical and administrative support related to affordable housing issues, supporting various Town boards and departments, coordinates with state agencies, and assists in the implementation of the Town's Community Housing Plan.

### **Article 36: Appropriate for Memorial Field Drain Improvements**

DPW Parks and Forestry Division, in conjunction with the Trustees of Memorial Park, requests \$310,000 to make drainage improvements at the base of the Memorial Park hill, to decrease the amount of run-off that reaches the park and athletic fields. The design was completed with CPA funds. The original request was for \$490,500, but the request was decreased due to additional efforts on design. Once the work is completed, conditions will be monitored to see if an additional phase of work is needed.

### **Article 37: Appropriate for Trail Improvements – Student Conservation Association**

The Conservation Department is requesting \$25,000 to bring the MA Student Conservation Association to Needham to make trail improvements over the next two summers at various locations, possibly including Ridge Hill Reservation, Farley Pond Conservation, and Rosemary Lake trails. The funds will cover the fee for the group, in ten day project segments, plus materials needed for the projects. The Town will provide a location for the team to camp while working on the projects. With an appropriation from the CPA, this organization successfully completed several projects at Ridge Hill during the Summer of 2015.

**Article 38: Appropriate Transfer to Conservation Fund**

*As of 4/25/16, this article will be withdrawn so that the Conservation Commission can undertake further study.* The Conservation Commission is requesting \$25,000 to be transferred to the Conservation Fund. This fund was established in 1963, under MGL Ch. 40, Sec. 8C to provide financial resources for the purchase of open space. CPA funds, totaling \$75,000 have been transferred to the Conservation Fund in 2008 and 2009. The additional \$25,000 would create a \$100,000 fund available for preliminary costs when considering the purchase or protection of property. The Conservation Commission also has about \$125,000 from other sources for projects, easements or costs related to purchases. The original request was for \$50,000.

**Article 39: Appropriate for Rosemary Lake Sediment Removal Design**

The DPW and Town Engineer are requesting \$118,000 to design the process for the removal of sediment in Rosemary Lake. The Town has been completing projects along Rosemary Brook, improving the quality of water that leads into Rosemary Lake. The next step is to remove the sediment from Rosemary Lake, all which will lead to better water quality downstream, as Rosemary Brook continues through Needham Heights, eventually meeting the Wellesley water lands and then the Charles River. The construction funds would be requested in May 2017.

**Article 40: Appropriate for Rosemary Recreation Complex Design**

The Park and Recreation Commission, in conjunction with the Permanent Public Building Committee and Town Manager, is requesting Phase 2 Design Funds of \$550,000 to finalize the design documents and move the project through various permitting agencies. The concept is to build two smaller pools within the current pool, providing summer recreational swim as well as a fitness/competitive pool. The building would be partially re-used, with an addition to meet the requirements for the outdoor pool, and to have year-round use on the new second floor for Park and Recreation programming space and offices for the Park and Recreation Department and the Health Department. Only the portions of the project related to outdoor recreation are eligible for CPA funding.

**Article 41: Appropriate to Community Preservation Fund**

This article appropriates the estimated FY 2017 CPA receipts.

Administration	\$ 82,000
Annual Reserve	\$1,537,037
Community Housing Reserve	\$ 292,700
Historic Resources Reserve*	\$ 0
Open Space Reserve	\$ 292,700

\* The required annual funding or appropriation for Historic Resources is the \$456,313 payment of the debt service, voted on within Article 12.

## **Conclusion**

Needham is fortunate to have the use of CPA funds which have funded numerous successful projects for the community. Appreciation is extended to the citizens of Needham and specifically Needham's Town Meeting members for their support. The Committee thanks Mike Retzky for his service. The Committee looks forward to FY 2017 and new requests and interest from the residents of the community.

Gary Crossen, Chairman  
Lita Young, Vice Chairman  
Paul Alpert  
Robert Boder  
Reg Foster

Ron Furman  
Chris Gerstel  
Mark Gluesing  
Peter Oehlkers