



JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

Somerville CPA



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
RESIDENT FEEDBACK ON FY15 PROJECTS
FEBRUARY 4, 2015**

MEMBERS

Michael A. Capuano, Chair
Dick Bauer, Vice Chair
Tanya Cafarella
Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello
Michael Fager
Arn Franzen
Ezra Glenn
Courtney Koslow
Uma Murugan

STAFF

Emily Monea

COMMENTS FROM JANUARY 7TH COMMUNITY MEETING

Heather Heimarck asked what work would be covered in the Prospect Hill Park design fee. Ms. Oliviera said it would include public meetings, design development, and construction documents.

David Dahlbacka spoke in favor of the West Branch Library renovation. He said that he and his wife visit the building frequently. He stated that he grew up visiting a beautiful Carnegie library in Illinois which feel into deep disrepair and that he does not want the same for West Branch Library.

Brandon Wilson testified as a member of the public. She noted that those who grew up in the Davis area used the West Branch Library frequently but that it has lost much of its value because it has fallen into disrepair and is not accessible and therefore cannot offer programming.

Abby Freedman asked what proportion of the requested budget for West Branch Library has to do with accessibility, envelope, systems, and life safety improvements and what proportion has to do with redesigning the interior of the building. Ms. Freedman noted that she was happy to see the City apply for funds for the City Hall project. She asked what proportion of the design funds requested will be used for designing accessibility, envelope, systems, and life safety improvements and what proportion will be used for redesigning the interior of the building. She also asked whether any of the design activities will address whether the building will eventually be repurposed for another use or sold to a private developer for another use.

David Dahlbacka spoke in favor of the City Hall project, noting that he walks by and visits the building frequently and that it is visibly in need of repair. He also spoke against moving City Hall to Union Square.

Barbara Mangum asked for clarification about the magnitude of the West Branch Library request, noting that there is insufficient funding available to cover it. She spoke in favor of the project. She also noted that some of the work does not appear to be historic preservation. While the City should pursue that work, she suggested that it should be done in another way.

COMMENTS FROM JANUARY 12TH COMMUNITY MEETING

Brian Harris stated that many of the City's proposals result from neglect and many request the full project cost be covered by CPA funds. He suggested that the City provide at least provide a match for these projects and urged that CPA funds be used for projects that are over and above what general funds should cover. He noted that the City is well behind its goal of providing open space and that there are no proposals before the CPC for increasing open space. He encouraged the CPC to push to find projects for the creation and acquisition of open space and to be proactive in funding projects that do so, perhaps by submitting a response to the RFP for the Powder House School.

Todd Kaplan, a member of the congregation of Temple B'nai Brith, encouraged the CPC to prioritize projects like the Temple that leverage other funding, have worked hard to raise other funding, and will make a substantial difference in the community.

Dyan Blewett, Treasurer of the Somerville Museum, spoke in favor of the Somerville Museum project. She said the museum had spent years fundraising and the request before the CPC is the last push needed to finish much-needed improvements. She said the elevator will allow the museum to apply for grants by making it ADA accessible and emphasized that their budget is specific and provides exact dollar amounts. She also expressed support for the other projects before the CPC.

Linda Conte seconded Ms. Blewett's comments.

Abby Friedman, Vice Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission, noted that many historic buildings are neglected for a long time. At a certain point, deferred maintenance becomes a preservation and restoration issue rather than a maintenance issue, so these types of projects should be considered eligible for CPA funds.

Helem Brown said that she is a member of the Friends of the Healey School and a volunteer at the Growing Center and Groundwork. As a parent of a child in Winter Hill, she supports anything that can be done to expand or improve open green space and access to it for children.

Frank Valdes noted that the City is working toward expanding open space. The RFP for the Powder House disposition, for example, requires that a minimum of 40% of the property be devoted to open green space. He spoke in favor of the Temple B'nai Brith project, noting that he chose to move to Somerville and join the synagogue because of the unique community and because of the sense of belonging they offer. He noted the tremendous things the temple has done for him and his family.

Josh Safdie spoke to Mr. Harris' point, stating that the purpose of the Healey School to Mystic project is to transform underutilized, inaccessible open space into usable space. He spoke in favor of the Temple B'nai Brith accessibility project, noting that he is not a member of the synagogue but that he is an accessibility professional and has worked with the temple on the project and knows how hard they have

worked to fund the project. He sent a letter to the CPC supporting the project. With regard to the Somerville Museum project, Mr. Safdie noted that if the CPC is only able to fund a portion of it, it should prioritize the only piece that has to do with civil rights, the elevator project.

A member of Temple B'nai Brith (name inaudible) spoke in favor of the Temple B'nai Brith project. He spoke of his family's history with the synagogue and noted the difficulty members of his family have had using the building due to its lack of accessibility. He noted the struggles the congregation has been through to keep the building up and running and encouraged the CPC to fund this project.

An member of Temple B'nai Brith (unidentified) spoke in favor of the Temple B'nai Brith project. She spoke about wanting to bring her parents to the synagogue but being unable to do so because it is inaccessible. She said part of the reason the temple has been unable to fund the project is because of the inclusive nature of the congregation, where individuals are accepted regardless of ability to contribute financially. She noted that as people age, spirituality becomes increasingly important and that she hopes the CPC funds the project to allow the building to be open to individuals of all ages.

Janie Katz-Christy spoke in favor of the Temple B'nai Brith project and her and her family's history with the building. She noted how inclusive, welcoming, and diverse the congregation is and how beautiful and historic the building is.

Susan Chimene spoke in favor of the Temple B'nai Brith project. She noted that her daughter Sara started the earliest iteration of the accessibility project in 2001 at her bat mitzvah when her great-grandmother could not attend the event because of the building's inaccessibility. Sara committed some of her bat mitzvah gifts to the accessibility project. Fourteen years later, Ms. Chimene urged the CPC to provide the funding to complete the project.

Brandon Wilson spoke as a resident and encouraged the CPC to give funding proportional to need and to give funding to each of the projects so they can leverage other funding.

Ellen Stone spoke in favor of the Temple B'nai Brith project. She told a story about when the Temple was offering a program, and a couple came to the synagogue wanting to participate but had to drive back home because the building was inaccessible.

Rabbi Eliana Jacobowitz said that while she would love for the CPC to grant funding to Temple B'nai Brith, she also is aware of the state of the entryway stairs at First Church Somerville. She spoke about how both First Church and Temple B'nai Brith prioritize opening their doors to everyone but that individuals and groups looking for community space often cannot meet at the temple because it is inaccessible. She encouraged the CPC to consider both projects.

Evelyn Battinelli spoke in favor of the Somerville Museum project. She discussed the history of the museum and noted that the museum has always operated almost exclusively through volunteers. Today the museum has about 60 volunteers. She emphasized the extent to which work to the building has been done thanks to member contributions as well as the value of the museum to the community.

Dyan Blewett emphasized how important it is for the Somerville Museum to be ADA compliant. They can no longer host Somerville's Preservation Awards and open the building to the community to the extent they would like. They are also not eligible to apply for many grants. She also emphasized how many treasures the museum has in its collection and how important it is to preserve them.

John Willett, one of the chairs of the Friends of the Healey, spoke in favor of the Healey School to Mystic project. He spoke about his son's experiences at the Healey School. He also spoke to the difficulty of navigating and accessing the areas addressed in the project proposal and the opportunities for improving them.

Mark Niedergang spoke as a resident. He noted that he is involved with and supports the Growing Center, Groundwork Somerville, and the Somerville Museum and urged the CPC to support these organizations. He encouraged the CPC to prioritize projects from the community organizations over projects sponsored by the City, noting the community organizations need this funding more than the City does, which has access to far more resources. He spoke in favor of the Temple B'nai Brith project and noted the extent to which the synagogue has opened its door to the community. He also spoke in favor of the Healey School to Mystic project, noting that the school serves some of the neediest children in the district, the extent to which it leverages parent involvement, and the extensive work put in by parents and teachers to improve the Healey recreational space.

An unidentified woman noted that First Church Somerville works with many organizations and non-profits in Somerville and asked the representatives of the Temple B'nai Brith project what organizations they work with and how they would open their building to the public with the accessibility improvements.

Rabbi Jacobowitz and Ms. Bernhard said that the temple works with a number of community groups including the Welcome Project and Save Our Homes Somerville but that many groups cannot use the building because it is inaccessible. As soon as the elevator is in place they look forward to allowing many more groups to use the building.

Reverend Baskette spoke about the decline of religious organizations in Somerville over the past several decades. She noted that Temple B'nai Brith and First Church are two of the most vibrant congregations left in the city and that there are very few funding streams available to religious organizations. She emphasized that aside from membership contributions, the CPA is the only funding source available to them.

WRITTEN COMMENTS

From: Lynn Weissman

Received: December 19, 2014

To City Community Preservation Act Manager Emily Monea:

I am writing as a working parent in Somerville who has lived here for over 20 years, to submit my comments on the current CPA proposals. As I understand it, the deadline for public comment is 1/31/2015.

I especially support these CPA proposals below, from the City CPA page

<http://www.somervillema.gov/cpa/proposals>

- [Community Growing Center - Upgrade Design/Community Build Planning](#) (recreational land)
- [Healey School to Mystic](#) (recreational land)
- [Mystic Water Works](#) (historic resources)
- [School Garden Classrooms](#) (recreational land)
- [Somerville Museum - Capital Improvements](#) (historic resources)
- [Temple B'nai Brith Fire Safety and Accessibility Project](#) (historic resources)
- [West Branch Library Renovations - Construction Funding](#) (historic resources)

However, I cannot support the West Branch Library renovations unless the ADA accessible entrance is at or near the front of the building. Right now, the accessible entrance is designed at the back of the building. See plans on page 60 of

http://www.somervillema.gov/sites/default/files/West%20Branch%20Library_with%20reports.pdf

People with wheelchairs, canes, and walkers - and elders and others for whom the front steps are just too difficult -- should not have to go all the way around the side and then to the back of the building to enter the Library. This side area of the Library will be more isolated, will take longer to travel, and (because it is so long) will take longer to be cleared of ice and snow than the front of the building.

Differently-abled and vulnerable populations should be considered first and foremost in the re-design of this public Library building, which has always lacked accessibility.

Thank you.

Lynn Weissman

112 Belmont Street

Somerville, MA 02143

Follow-up received January 26, 2014

To City Community Preservation Act Manager Emily Monea:

I am writing about the CPA proposal for the West Branch Library (presentation at <http://www.somervillema.gov/cpa/proposals/> . Looking at the three-dimensional model shown on page 17 of this CPA presentation, I was pleased that the plans seem to have been revised to add front entrance accessibility to the West Branch Library: <http://www.somervillema.gov/sites/default/files/5%20West%20Branch%20Library%20Renovations%20presentation.pdf>

However, much to my chagrin, all of the green space in the front of the West Branch seems to have been eliminated to allow for what seems like an unnecessarily large swath of concrete. I urge that this egregiously large concrete terrace be made much smaller to accommodate some green space (grass, trees, flowers, etc, maybe even community gardens) and still achieve accessibility.

I am pleased by other elements of the plan, including the expanded and windowed childrens's room in the back. I'd like to see some green elements in the plans; this Library is quite exposed, and might be a good candidate for solar roofing.

Thank You Again,
Lynn Weissman

From: Renée Scott
Received: December 21, 2014

Dear Ms. Monea,

I just learned of the City's proposals to the CPA for Prospect Hill Park and to fix the Monument. I am delighted about the proposal to fix the Monument; this has been needed for a long time. However, I am writing to you about the park design. While this park is not cared for as much as it should be, I am concerned that it will be modernized and made not as useful to the people who cherish it. A small history display on the sidewalk or up on the tower would be great, but if we lose usable grass and trees, that will be a shame. Somerville has so little actual grass that is not overly scheduled for sports, and anyone fortunate enough to have a backyard probably has a tiny one, so the park offers a place where you can actually play catch, lie in the grass, make a snowman, play tag, do cartwheels.

An upgrade in maintenance - native plantings, more recycling containers, more frequent litter removal, signs to pick up after your dog - would be wonderful. But please do not take away the daily usefulness of this park.

Thank you.

Renée Scott

From: Tina Simos

Received: December 23, 2014

Emily,

I would like this email to represent a show of support for the City Hall renovation.

I am unsure of how many projects can be supported so I wanted to be sure this one was at the top of at least one citizens list.

I would second the west branch library if there is funding for two projects. thank you,
Tina, of 37 Stone ave.

From: Garrett Laws

Received: December 30, 2015

Emily,

I have a materials twist on the word affordability... I value things that have a track record of being maintainable and lasting a very long time, for instance I have wooden windows that appear to be original to our house ~120 years old!

I'm hoping that we can have materials not only enter the discussions but also begin to specify materials to be used in CPA projects, or at least have a known useful life of 50 years.

Thank you very much,
Garrett Laws

From: Steve Mulder

Received: January 4, 2015

Hi -

I'm writing to provide feedback on all the worthy potential projects that could receive CPA funding.

I believe the most important project is the renovation of Prospect Hill Tower. It's horrible that the most important historical site in Somerville, and perhaps Somerville's most recognized symbol, has had no significant restoration in over 100 years. It's embarrassing that this monument is no longer accessible to the public for safety reasons.

Of all the projects, this one stands out as the most essential for preserving Somerville's history (and providing open space).

I created a website about Prospect Hill some years ago: <http://muldermedia.com/prospecthill/>

Thanks,

Steve Mulder
42 Stone Ave

From: Mary Kelley
Received: January 8, 2015

We are writing in support of allocating Community Preservation funds for this important project [West Branch Library]. We are in our 70's and still in shape to get in and out of the library but as residents, we see many others who cannot access the resources of the library. This is an important community asset which could better serve all of us and our families if it were improved. The building is in terrible shape and raises safety issues as well.

Everyone deserves a good public library in their community. We hope that these funds will be allocated for the West Somerville Library project.

Mary Kelley and Tom Field
20 Willow Avenue, #1
Somerville, MA 02144

mkell397@aol.com

From: Susan Fendell
Received: January 8, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea:

This email is to support the funding of Temple B'nai Brith's accessibility project. Both the community, which has existed since 1904, and the 1922 building are historic. However, to preserve the community, which is multi-generational and has aging members, its home must be made accessible. The beautiful second floor sanctuary currently is an impossible climb for persons with physical disabilities.

Temple B'nai Brith is important to me personally and to Somerville as a whole. The Temple sponsors benefits for Respond and Save Our Homes, as well as making other contributions to the city. Please fund the project of Temple B'nai Brith so the building and the Temple's history of developing community and public spirit can continue into the future with the participation of all ages and capabilities.

Sincerely,

Susan Fendell
39 Simpson Avenue

From: Debra Strick
Received: January 9, 2015

Dear Emily,

I am writing to ask you to help preserve Temple B'nai Brith by helping to fund an elevator.

I've been a member since 1980. At that time there were just a few elders who could manage to attend services--and the rest of the sanctuary was empty. The congregation members with mobility issues just couldn't make it up the stairs. And accessing bathrooms two floors below added other challenges.

Then a wave of us "young people" started to come, including Phil Weiss who began to inspire us all, and eventually became the leader of the congregation. Years later, when his cancer-ridden sister wanted to come hear his sermon, as it turned out, for the last time, she had to be carried up the stairs, because there was no elevator. Could anything be more demoralizing for a dying person?

As we all age, it would be a shame for the congregation not to have access, and to be deprived participation in the community, as happened in years past.

We are a congregation of teachers, social workers, artists, researchers, and other people who contribute greatly to Somerville and beyond, but do not have very deep pockets.

Our spiritual home, we appreciate the beautiful Temple B'nai Brith building and the historic value it brings to the community. Now it is time to increase its functionality and accessibility as an important Somerville resource. We hope you can help.

Thank you for your consideration,

Debra

Debra Strick
strickdebra@yahoo.com

From: Matt Brown
Received: January 9, 2015

Ms. Monea,

I am writing in support of Temple B'nai Brith's application for Community Preservation Act funding. I have been a member of the congregation for about half a year, along with my fiancée. We so quickly felt at home in the B'nai Brith community, that we decided to have our wedding ceremony there. From my experience, most people of my generation don't get married in places of worship, but that is truly how much TBB has meant to the two of us in the short time that we have attended.

We have decided on having our ceremony at TBB despite our concerns over the accessibility for a few of our physically impaired relatives. While workarounds are being planned in case the stairs prove too difficult for them, I do feel regret that they may experience difficulty trying to get inside such a beautiful and historic building. Even though the plans to install an elevator would not come in time for the wedding, I hope that TBB receives the CPA funding so that future life-cycle events--let alone regular, weekly services--do not necessitate the kind of worries and contingencies we are facing.

Temple B'nai Brith has so much to offer, as a physical space and as a spiritual community, to both its members and Somerville at large. I am so grateful to be a part of the TBB family, and I know that with the CPA funding, we can continue to do great things.

Thank you,
Matt Brown
Somerville, MA

From: David Gibbs
Received: January 9, 2015

Hi Emily,

Thank you very much for passing this on to the committee.

I write in my capacity as Executive Director of the Community Action Agency of Somerville. As the designated anti-poverty agency for the City of Somerville, our mission is to reduce poverty among local families and individuals while working to counteract--and whenever possible, eliminate--the societal conditions that cause and perpetuate poverty.

Public libraries are a vital resource for our low-income citizens. By virtue of their role as free repositories of vital information, they make it possible for residents to access assistance, recreation, and knowledge through multiple media and computer access. And unlike the Internet, librarians are on hand to help those who most need it (e.g., new immigrants, speakers of languages other than English, those with mental health issues) to find the information and resources they require. These things are easily accessed by those with the means to pay for them; for those without, a library is one of the few (often the only) location where such assistance can be found.

Moreover, public libraries play a vital role in the education of low-income children, making it possible for parents to take steps to improve their children's educational outcomes in a safe and free setting. For children whose families don't have the resources for home libraries, being able to borrow books in their neighborhood is an important component of literacy support in the home.

On a personal note, I should add that as the parent of two children born in Somerville, the West Branch played an almost daily role in their pre-school lives; I cannot imagine having raised my children without it.

I urge you to work toward the renovation of the West Branch library through whatever means are available.

Sincerely,

David Gibbs

David Gibbs
Executive Director
Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc.
66-70 Union Square, #104
Somerville, MA 02143
617-623-7370 x102
www.caasomerville.org

From: Kathy Foley

Received: January 11, 2015

I am writing in support of the proposal to rehab Somerville City Hall. For many years, I have felt bad at the deteriorated state that City Hall is in. Over time it has continued to get worse. I think the CPC should fund the City Hall proposal. City Hall represents the people of Somerville both to ourselves and to the world. Recently Somerville has attained a lot of visibility in the region and the nation. I think it is embarrassing that our City Hall looks so worn down. It is an important historical and symbolic building. It should represent Somerville at its best.

Kathy Foley

From: Stephanie Hirsch

Received: January 12, 2015

Hi Emily –

[Questions and comments for Ms. Monea removed]

I have general comments, rather than ones on the specific projects. My general comments include:

*It seems like the recreation ones are short money and have a high impact, and there aren't many of them, so I hope they all get funded.

*I'd prioritize the proposals from the City, developed in partnership with City departments, or endorsed by City departments, as they seem to have, on average, community impact.

*I like the Healey one a lot, but I think a planning process like that should be run by the City, with the partners weighing in. Could it somehow be awarded, but with revisions?

[Questions and comments for Ms. Monea removed]

Stephanie
617-512-4847

From: Megan Berkowitz
Received: January 13, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea,

I am writing you in support of the First Church Somerville application for Community Preservation Act funding. My name is Megan Berkowitz and I have been attending the church for a little more than two years, since my 3rd year of undergraduate studies at Tufts. When I first starting attending First Church, I did so as someone looking for a place to go on Sunday mornings for my last couple of years of school; what I have found there has been so incredibly much more. Through First Church, I was able to connect to Somerville and the surrounding community in a way that most Tufts students never do. It was this connection, and the community of people who welcomed me to the church, that played a large part in my and my partner's decision to sink roots in Somerville after we graduated, rather than moving to Seattle or NYC (the other top contenders).

I was introduced to FCS even before attending church, when I coordinated a community service-focused pre-orientation program for incoming Tufts freshmen, called FOCUS. When, as a FOCUS coordinator, I contacted FCS looking for a space for some of our students during the program, the church responded with an emphatic welcome. They allowed roughly 40 of our students to cook, eat, and generally use the church as home base at an extremely reasonable cost. These students spent their program week volunteering with local non-profit organizations. The FOCUS program has a double-edged impact: it mobilizes students for over 10,000 man-hours of community service work during the week of the program itself, helping local organizations to do their good work in the community. beyond that, it introduces Tufts students to the wider Somerville/Medford/Cambridge community from the moment they arrive on campus, helping them to avoid the trap of seeing campus as isolated from its surroundings and to engage as active members of their host communities. Without the welcome of First Church, among other community partners, the program could not exist.

Others within the First Church community with more knowledge of our building will, I'm sure, speak to why these funds are so necessary right now. I do not know the specifics of the building work, but I do know that FCS could use some help in order to keep our building as vibrantly alive as the community it houses, and that this building and this community make exceptional contributions to life in Somerville.

All best,
Megan Berkowitz

From: Elizabeth Kingfield
Received: January 13, 2015

Dear Emily,

I am writing to support the allocation of funds to First Church Somerville for historic preservation.

I am a 26-year-old recently married Somerville resident. I have lived in Somerville since 2006 when I started at Tufts, and been attending FCS since 2007. FCS has been a big reason why I wanted to stay in Somerville after I graduated. As a college student, I realized that I had no close relationships with people significantly older or younger than me. It had been months since I had seen a child or had a friendly conversation with an adult who wasn't a professor. First Church provided an opportunity for community unlike any other that I have experienced.

One Sunday in 2008, First Church celebrated its 10th anniversary of being Open and Affirming--that is, supportive and accepting of people regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The minister, Laura Ruth, preaching asked some risky questions: "If you identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer, and you feel comfortable being out, please stand." I wasn't expecting this question, but I nervously stood up. I had not come out to anyone in the congregation. I stood, alone in my pew, but looked around the church at the other people--so many people!--standing with me. Laura Ruth continued: "If you love someone who is LGBTQ, will you please stand?" And the rest of the congregation stood up. There was not one person who was sitting. That was a moment for me at which I felt deep, deep love. It was so necessary to my 19-year-old self to feel that kind of love from a faith community.

Since that day, I met my now-wife, Rae, at church, and we got married this summer. I worked for the City of Somerville for three years as the LGBTQ Liaison. We set down roots in Somerville and just got our first studio apartment in Davis Square together. First Church is, for me, an incredible part of what Somerville means. It is a place that celebrates diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, age, and ability, where you can come as you are. We work actively on anti-racism, community engagement, sustainable living (have you seen your vegetable garden?), and social justice. We help each other--where else can you meet someone who will swap you childcare for carpentry, someone to bring you food when you're sick, or someone who host a potluck in your neighborhood? First Church is about building relationships with our neighbors and ever expanding the definition of what neighbor means. We are a community that witnesses each others' joy and pain and makes sure that no one has to endure or celebrate alone.

I sincerely hope that the City can help FCS with historic preservation money. Our building, as I am sure that you know, is very old and very fragile, and our renovations are costing much more than we expected. Though our capital campaign was quite successful, we did not raise enough to finish the siding after we found that there was no foundation when we started to excavate. We hope to finish construction to preserve this building for another 100 years.

Thank you for considering FCS for historic preservation funding.

Best,
Elizabeth Kingfield

From: Nancy Bernhard
Received: January 13, 2015

Dear Emily and members of the CPC,

While I have been shepherding Temple B'nai Brith's application to CPA, I want to also add my voice in support of Groundwork Somerville's school gardens proposal. I served on the GWS board for more than ten years, and know it to be a wonderful, important, and extremely well-run organization. The schoolyard gardens themselves are very special, often the only green space a child will encounter in his or her day.

Groundwork Somerville's school gardens program is recognized at the highest level. Students from the Healey School have been twice invited to the White House to plant and harvest food with First Lady Michelle Obama. It is a national model for teaching natural science, gardening, and nutrition. Thousands of our urban children have benefitted from exposure to the natural world in these gardens.

Not so obvious is that GWS does this exemplary work on the tightest possible budget. The greatest expense of the gardens is salary for staff to create and run the programs, and yet grant makers do not typically fund staff. GWS and its extraordinarily talented Executive Director Chris Mancini make the commitment to find money for these programs each year, but it is not easy. The organization is very lean and efficient, relying on the idealism of young people who devote themselves to this meaningful, transformative work for very little compensation.

By helping GWS to renew the gardens infrastructure, you would help them use these spaces to support more programs, reach more children, grow more food, and fund more and more worthwhile programming.

Thank you so much for your hard work in administering this exciting new CPA program.

All best,
Nancy Bernhard

From: Emily Stone
Received: January 13, 2015

Dear Emily:

I am writing in support of Temple B'nai Brith's application for CPA funding for its Fire Safety and Accessibility project. As the Chair of the congregation's Community Education Committee, I help organize, publicize, and support adult educational offerings intended to appeal to a broad range of people, both within the congregation and in the larger community. We provide several courses each fall and spring. The curriculum ranges from the scholarly to the hands-on. Recent topics have included beginning Hebrew and Yiddish, Exploring Judaism, how to prepare for and celebrate the Jewish holidays, the meaning of Shabbat, Jewish Feminism, Talmud study, death and mourning, yoga, and workshops for making your own tallit (prayer shawl). We publicize our classes on local mailing lists and websites, and have distributed flyers around Somerville and surrounding communities. We welcome everyone, regardless of ability to pay. However, our building's lack of accessibility places a large caveat on that welcome.

Because our classes take place concurrently with other activities, such as Sunday school classes for children, most of our classes are held in the social hall, which is not accessible from the outside to people in wheelchairs, nor to those who cannot climb the front stairs to the building. Also, since the bathrooms are on the lower level, anyone who would have difficulty with the steep stairways down to that level would not be able to access them. These are critical barriers to programming that is intended to be welcoming to all.

Feedback tells us that our classes are meaningful and valuable to the participants. We hope to expand our programming in the future, especially with regard to offerings that would interest the larger community. The proposed accessibility improvements would allow us to extend a truly open invitation to our whole congregation and to the public.

On a personal note, being a member of Temple B'nai Brith, with its warm and inclusive community, has been life-changing for me, bringing me a kind of connection and community that I have never experienced before. TBB is a place where I am supported in my own process of learning and deepening with regard to Judaism. And just recently, my teenage daughter is finding her own connections there - a particularly moving and amazing thing for me to witness. I am incredibly grateful for the existence of this wonderful community

Sincerely,
Emily Stone
Chair of Community Education Committee, Temple B'nai Brith

41 Harvey St.
Cambridge MA 02140
[617 686 7359](tel:6176867359) (cell)

From: Jenna Nackel
Received: January 13, 2015

Dear Community Preservation Committee,

I'm writing in support of First Church Somerville receiving funds from the Community Preservation Act. I've lived in Somerville for the past 5 years, and attended First Church Somerville for the past year. Attending the church has truly enriched my experience of living in Somerville. It has helped me to meet my neighbors and build more of a community in Somerville and connected me with opportunities to volunteer (like cooking a meal for the homeless).

Thank you for the work that you are doing!

Best,
Jenna Nackel

From: Edie Bresler
Received: January 14, 2015

Hello,

I am writing in support of funding the elevator for Temple B'nai Brith on Central Street in Somerville. I moved to Somerville in 1997 as a new parent. After several months of searching and visiting local temples I found and fell in love with TBB. My son and I have spent many lovely holidays and Saturdays there in the company of other neighbors. When he was a bar mitzvah in 2010, we were very nervous about the elderly relatives in our family being able to negotiate the stairs and attend the service. With the help and muscle of other family and friends, we were able to arrange a lot of physical help for them - elderly aunts and uncles. Relieved though we were it would have made the morning a lot less stressful had there been an elevator. My son was so moved by the dilemma his elderly relatives in addition to other elderly congregants face, that he donated all his bar mitzvah money to the temple in the hopes it might help them put in the elevator some day. With increasing costs to maintain and heat our beloved historic building, it doesn't look like that is likely.

However this grant would actually help us meet our goal and provide years of stress-free worshipping to our present day elderly congregants as well as visitors, and let's face it: one day I may well be elderly and in need of assistance. I would love to know that I will still be able to enjoy the company of my neighbors and friends by attending services,. The idea anyone is prevented from this makes me sad. Our congregation has been in existence since 1904 and it seems to me that after more than a hundred years, the historic and important building deserves to be made more accessible to all the members of our community.

Thank you,

Edie Bresler

12 Howard St
Somerville, MA 02144

From: Sara Chimene-Weiss
Received: January 14, 2015

To the Somerville Community Preservation Committee,

I am writing to express my support for the Temple B'nai Brith Fire Safety and Accessibility Project. In 2001, as a seventh grader, I was upset that my great-grandmother, then in her nineties, could not attend my Bat Mitzvah — a day I had worked toward for years. Though her body began to fail, my great-grandmother's mind remained sharp, and she desperately wanted to attend the Bat Mitzvah of her eldest great-grandchild. In an effort to address, this, and so that others would not face the same problem in the future, I donated a portion of my Bat Mitzvah gifts to establish an accessibility fund for the Temple, an idea that I knew had been percolating for years. At my Bat Mitzvah, I asked my friends and family to donate to the fund.

From this seed, Project Aliyah grew into a well thought-out, organized project. Board members have spent years figuring out architectural plans, budgeting, and fundraising toward this goal. I have seen the hard work—and the many, many hours—that community members have devoted to this project. This project has incredibly dedicated leaders who have been committed for the past fourteen years to putting this attractive (but complicated) idea—accessibility for all—realistically into practice.

And to a large degree, they have succeeded: they have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars, nearly half the needed funds, from a congregation that is largely composed of Somerville families without extensive financial resources. However, as I did not realize when I was twelve—elevators are expensive! A grant from the Preservation Committee would allow a historic building to best serve the needs of its community and Somerville as a whole.

Because the Temple is not accessible to those with mobility issues, as people age, they are unable to attend religious services and community events—at a time when such connections become most vital. The same is true of community members recovering from illnesses, or recuperating from surgery, or experiencing limited mobility for a host of reasons.

The Temple is currently used by Somerville community members for meetings and other events, and were it made accessible, it could be used by even more community members.

I write not only as a member of the temple, but also as a lover of historic buildings. The building, built in 1922, is absolutely beautiful, and is an important part of Somerville history at a time when the city is rapidly changing. Opponents of historic preservation so often point to accessibility issues created by old buildings. Making Temple B'nai Brith accessible will demonstrate that it is possible to preserve historic spaces and bring them into the 21st century.

Thank you all for the time you put into this. I've really impressed with and grateful for this program.

Sincerely,

Sara Chimene-Weiss

From: Caroline Chauncey
Received: January 14, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea,

I'm writing in support of Temple B'nai Brith's request for CPA funding to help install an elevator for handicapped access. My family and I have been members of TBB for nearly 20 years, and have celebrated Jewish holidays and life cycle events there. The congregation is an important part of our

lives, as it is for many families in Somerville and nearby communities. The beauty of the historic synagogue building is part of the charm and appeal of this congregation, which has been part of the Somerville community for over a century. It is a source of great distress to us and many other TBB members that the building is not accessible to relatives and friends who have problems with mobility. This is particularly an issue as many longtime members of the congregation are at an age where these issues are becoming more common. We would like to see the congregation continue to serve community members of all ages and abilities and to be able to make the kinds of accommodations that will preserve the historic features of the building.

I hope TBB's application for support from the CPA will be enthusiastically approved.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Caroline Chauncey
36 R.C. Kelley St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

From: Polly Laurelchild-Hertig
Received: January 15, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea and all members of the Somerville Community Preservation Committee,

This is to encourage you to fund the application of First Congregational Church Somerville UCC for the requested amount of \$280,000. It will help to save a hundred-year-old landmark building that serves thousands of Somerville residents both directly and indirectly every year, whether they merely pass by and enjoy knowing such a church exists (rainbow flag! "Black Lives Matter" banner! invitation to one and all to attend services!); or attend worship, eat at the Monday night supper for homeless persons, rehearse community theater productions, or attend AA meetings inside; or are members of the wider community which we support including anti-racism initiatives, working to prevent domestic violence and homelessness, and teaching a new generation of children to be caring, responsible citizens regardless of their color or creed.

About me: My first encounter with Somerville was as a visitor in 1974, a wide-eyed college freshman from the midwest, experiencing the wonders of the original Bertucci's Pizza (bocce in the basement!) and Steve's Ice Cream. Somerville was cheap, funky, and very diverse, home of students, artists, activists, families who'd been there for generations, and a zillion old houses and other ornate old buildings with lots of history and character. Like a baby duck, I guess Somerville "imprinted" on me then at the tender age of 17.

Now in my late 50s, I'm proud to be a longtime resident and voter in Somerville since 1987, and a homeowner/taxpayer since 1993. I earned a graduate degree from Somerville's own Tufts University in 1998. I have been active in community, arts, LGBTQ, anti-racism, and other progressive organizations in Somerville and the greater Boston area for many years; producing and/or stage-managing live music

shows at the Somerville Theater, such as the RESPOND benefit to help victims of domestic violence; a regular election volunteer; and a founding board member of Healthy Tomorrow, a Somerville-based nonprofit anti-FGM organization, to name just a few.

I love the diversity that characterizes Somerville. My neighbors have included many wonderful people of a variety of ages, ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds, and vocations/pursuits, including working people, students, and young families who were happy to find a safe nest in bustling, vibrant, old-and-historic-yet-funky-and-progressive Somerville. This diversity is one of our greatest "soft assets" that makes it such an amazing city to live in.

It's important to keep this diversity alive in Somerville.

This leads me to First Congregational Church Somerville UCC (or First Church Somerville as we usually call it). About ten years ago, my then-housemate James kept telling me about this great church he had found just a few blocks from our house. "Wonderful pastor! Wonderful Molly! Great people! Welcoming to all kinds of LGBTQ people! Nonjudgmental! Great snacks at coffee hour after moving, deeply thoughtful sermons! Diverse congregation! Great church, why don't you come with me this Sunday?"

This all fell on deaf ears -- mine. "James, I don't 'do church.' Church has nothing but icky associations for me. I'll do Sunday brunch with you, but church?! No, thank you," I told him. For several years, he kept inviting me. I kept refusing.

Until he needed volunteers for a live "Drag Gospel" event he was organizing to raise funds for the LGBT Asylum Task Force, an organization that assists LGBTQ persons of any faith, color, or nation of origin whose life is imperiled in their home country because of sexual orientation, to obtain refugee status in the U.S. These young peoples' lives are at stake. Of course I volunteered to help him. The event was held at First Church Somerville, integrated into Sunday morning worship with the fundraiser immediately after services ended.

"What kind of place would have Drag Gospel worship?" I wondered. "And who will come?" The answer: most of the audience was the congregation of First Church. Enthusiastically dressed in their finest glittery/flowery things, and clapping along, and participating -- however awkwardly or shyly -- in what had to be a total departure from their normal style of worship. Drag queens at the altar! The pastor (and most of the congregation) also cross-dressed to show their support!

The event itself blew me away, because while a majority of the congregation are not themselves LGBTQ -- a high percentage are heterosexual married couples with children -- the willingness of this congregation to embrace and support LGBTQ refugees from places such as Uganda and Jamaica, and their loving embrace of other LGBTQ people, made a profound impression on me.

Hmm. Maybe all churches aren't the same after all.

Fast-forward four years. I have now attended many Sunday worship services at First Church Somerville, serve on its Mission and Justice Committee, helped out serving at our Sunday coffee hour -- the "second hour of worship" in which we welcome and feed newcomers, comfort the bereaved, celebrate new

babies, encourage struggling young people, struggling middle-aged people, and struggling older people, try to draw shy persons out of their shells, give hugs, and share in the joys and sorrows of our ever-changing community.

Thanks to First Church Somerville, I now willingly "do church."

First Church Somerville relies heavily on its members' volunteer labor to do the hard stuff, the right stuff, the necessary stuff, the joyful and worshipful stuff, and the fun stuff in and with the Somerville/Davis/Powderhouse community. Along with dozens of other First Church Somerville regulars, old and new, I have scrubbed countertops, polished woodwork, washed toys, and pulled weeds on all-church-service days; marched with our church's incredible musicians and a borrowed donkey down College Avenue into Davis Square on Palm Sunday; gathered on the front lawn for Blessing of the Animals (so much fun, especially for the children); attended showings of films about race and racism, and how white allies can best support people of color and progressive change; and cooked pots of soup. Our Mission & Justice committee supports the efforts of the Somerville Homeless Coalition and other much-needed social services in this area and the wider world.

Why else do I love First Church Somerville? It is so earnest. White people and people of color within our church form committees together to address racism in society and learn how to make FCS and the world as a whole more inclusive and safe for people of color, from our little children to our teen boys to our elders. As a community, we wholeheartedly endorsed and recently mounted a large, proud "Black Lives Matter" banner on our church tower facing College Ave.

At First Church Somerville, all lives matter: there are no requirements to participate in its many free events and services. The sanctuary and the fellowship hall are wheelchair accessible. All are welcome here.

History also matters: First Church has been part of our Somerville history and community for almost 150 years, and the building has stood at 89 College Ave. since 1912.

This historic building is both imposing and seriously funky - with grand architectural elements straight from the Gothic Revival period of American architecture, including the castle-like "battlements" around the big square tower. It's a landmark in the Davis area, though a somewhat down-at-heel and crumbling one. Pick an issue, and we have had it: Wheezing old heating system; ancient mystery wiring; falling-down ceilings; aging and leaking roof; cracking walls, rotting window frames, nonexistent insulation, nonweatherproof "building envelope," and much more. Revs. Molly and Jeff, and Nat May and the others on the Building Committee, and many generous members, including many modest-income and poor ones, have given and given to fix up the building so we can go on "doing church" in the de facto community resource center we call First Church Somerville. Giving a warm welcome to absolutely everyone who walks in the doors, whether they are rich or poor, lifelong Somervillian or wide-eyed college freshman or culture-shocked new immigrant seeking a church community or even just a kindly word.

Have you read my mini-novel thus far, you may wonder is this more about me, one Somerville resident who loves social justice and also loves the Davis/Powderhouse area that's been my home for over two

decades now, and loves First Church Somerville for how it enriches this area and cares about everyone, or about First Church Somerville's need for renovation? The answer is that First Church has lots of stories like mine -- varying in the details and the person, but each one unique, and yet similar. The fact that James and I are both welcome here as LGBTQ people says a lot. Also that the young, heterosexual, married, first-time parents are equally welcome and valued in our community. As is the paralyzed woman in the wheelchair who cannot speak or move on her own, and her loyal husband who still works full time as well as taking care of her at home. As is the lesbian married couple (one in a wheelchair) who have two Caucasian daughters, two little African-American foster daughters, and a tiny little white foster son with autism and behavioral issues, loving all of them and giving them a safe home every day. As is the the older divorced father who has lost his job and in his mid-50s cannot seem to get another one despite his best efforts to do so, or the retired person seeking meaning in a world whose first question always seems to be, "So, what do you do?" And the old lady in her 90s who has been coming here since she was a baby. And the recovering alcoholic, drug addict, or other lost soul looking to get back on a better path. First Church Somerville offers a safe and loving spiritual home for us all.

Why should the Somerville Community Preservation Committee commit \$280,000 to this project? Because it will respect and refurbish the historic appearance of the building, while also adhering to high standards of environmental sustainability, to help Somerville attain needed reductions in fossil-fuel consumption and reduce our carbon footprint; restore the imposing architectural presence on College Ave. that this building has historically had; upgrade the look and feel of this stretch of College Ave.; and provide years more service to the people of Somerville, from Sunday worship, to 12-step meetings and community theater rehearsals, to caring for the poor, the downtrodden, the stranger, and the orphan.

Somerville has a big heart; First Congregational Church Somerville expresses that heart in tangible ways, and makes Somerville a better place to live, work, play, and raise a family.

Thank you for reading this. Thank you for your important work preserving and enhancing Somerville's historic buildings, open space, recreational space, and affordable housing; and thank you in advance for your support of the renovation and preservation of the historic building housing First Congregational Church Somerville at 89 College Ave.

Sincerely,

Polly Laurelchild-Hertig

From: Enid Kumin
Received: January 15, 2015

5 Williams Court
Somerville, MA 02143
January 15, 2015

Emily Monea
Community Preservation Act Coordinator
c/o Somerstat
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

Dear Emily,

I wanted to come and present these comments in person on Monday. Since I was not able to do so, I send this letter to add my support to the request for CPA funding towards an elevator for Temple B'nai Brith. There are many very worthy organizations, buildings, and projects among the proposals for your review. Nonetheless, the request of Temple B'nai Brith is the most compelling. I appreciate your taking a moment to read through why I think this is true and why Temple B'nai Brith, consequently, merits priority award of CPA funding.

There are any number of Jewish organizations in and around Boston, many connected to the area's colleges and universities. The life of the Jewish community in Somerville, however, revolves around the synagogue building on Central Street. The word "community" is key. Jewish life is not something that happens only at home. It involves gathering – for prayer, for study, for "life events," and more. In other words, Jewish life takes place in community. Thus, a meeting place becomes central to Jewish life. In Somerville, Temple B'nai Brith is that central place, and has been for as long as I can remember.

I grew up in Somerville, at a time when there were few Jewish families living in the city. My parents brought me to the synagogue when I was still a youngster in early elementary school. This was no small contribution to my understanding of Jewish life. In Somerville, I would have had very little exposure to Judaism outside my family if Temple B'nai Brith had not existed. There were perhaps spillover benefits for other students in the classes I attended in Somerville Public Schools. For many of them, I was the only Jewish person they knew. I often answered my friends' questions about Judaism; teachers often asked me to "show and tell" about Jewish holidays. In short, as a result of the existence of Temple B'nai Brith, Somerville gained diversity; it also attracted many individuals and families committed to the welfare of the city.

My parents and other Jews felt comfortable in Somerville, among other reasons, because they had a center where they could practice their religion and raise their children together. The Temple B'nai Brith building, however, has served greater Somerville as well as Somerville's Jewish community. The greater Somerville community has, for example, had occasion to use Temple B'nai Brith for events of general interest (*e.g.*, lectures, "Conversations") sponsored by or at the synagogue.

Access to the Temple B'nai Brith building has been a problem in the past, but in another era, those who could not enter were resigned to their exclusion. To serve everyone in the Somerville Jewish community and the Somerville community at large, Temple B'nai Brith should be ADA compliant. The congregation is reminded of this every time it takes a few strong people and a chair to get a person with compromised mobility up the front stairs and into the building. Unfortunately, this system does not work for everyone who needs building access. The problem of accessibility within the building is exacerbated by the upstairs location of the general hall and main place of worship and the basement location of the only bathrooms.

The congregation has previously attempted adding an elevator to Temple B'nai Brith and has done considerable fund-raising around this effort. The Jewish community in Somerville, however, is still of moderate size and means. The building design -- beautiful, but pre-dating the time when including or allowing for addition of an elevator became common -- has, to date, made the cost of an elevator addition prohibitive. Now, however, advances in elevator design and construction have improved the situation. Another recent consultation with an architect has revealed that adding an elevator to Temple B'nai Brith is technically feasible with less collateral renovation than formerly necessary. With the combination of CPA support, fund-raising from the congregation, and architectural innovations that improve project design and lower cost, an elevator for Temple B'nai Brith is, finally, a realistic option.

To summarize, Temple B'nai Brith is central to the flourishing of Somerville's Jewish community. The Jewish community contributes to Somerville's diversity. The Temple B'nai Brith building itself is part of the historic fiber of the city and an architectural jewel in its own right. Its ADA compliance would be a boon to the Jewish community in Somerville and to the Somerville community at large: ADA compliance would allow greater use of the building for Somerville-wide events. CPA funding would be the incremental assistance that would finally make possible a long-envisioned project for which considerable preliminary legwork has already occurred.

Thank you again for considering my comments in support of CPA funding for the Temple B'nai Brith elevator project.

Sincerely,

Enid Kumin

Enid Kumin

From: Megan Lim
Received: January 15, 2015

Dear Emily Monea,

I am writing to encourage the Community Preservation Committee to give a grant to First Church Somerville.

I am a mom of two girls, a Somerville resident, and a member of First Church. First Church is not only an amazing faith community, it is also a good neighbor that contributes to Somerville and surrounding communities.

First Church hosts a Monday night meal for the homeless, cheaply rents space to community groups and parenting groups, and participates in Somerville events. I sometimes cook for the Monday night homeless meal, and my homeschooling group uses space at the church for a very affordable fee.

Although First Church is filled with energy and love, our building still needs help to survive another 100 years.

Thank you for your consideration of our grant proposal!

-Megan Lim
9 Cedar Street, Unit 1
Somerville MA 02143

From: Sarah Glover
Received: January 16, 2015

Dear Somerville Community Preservation Committee,

My name is Sarah Glover; I am writing to seek your support to invest historic preservation funds in our wonderful First Church Somerville at 89 College Ave, a major Somerville thoroughfare.

We have invested nearly \$1M of our own parishioners money in renovating our church and we seek Somerville's investment to finish some key projects that will visually and physically enhance our presence in the city. We ask you to consider helping us finish the exterior siding of our church, rebuild the front steps and restore and protect the stained glass facing College Ave. These are all things that have a terrific impact on our "curb side appeal" for the community.

Our advanced progress on the renovation project, the high quality of the work, our growing congregation, and our sheer exuberance at being citizens of Somerville make us not only a very safe investment for you, but one that promises to pay dividends for years to come. We are not going anywhere, and we are growing...please visit us to see how many babies our congregation produces!! :)

Our building represents Somerville in ALL its diversity: old school and new school. We're not going anywhere, but we need help. We seek in all things to be an asset to our community, and now we are asking the wider community to be stakeholders in preserving our beautiful historic building for many generations to come. In fact, FCS is the oldest continuously worshipping religious community in Somerville, and one of the few really self-sustaining houses of faith left.

Though I live in East Arlington, I spend significant time in Somerville (including doing all of my grocery shopping as the Stop and Shop on Broadway as it is my closest grocery store). I am a single mom who delights in having Somerville's diversity and eclectic joy as a place for raising my daughter. Who can top the Fluff Fest and Porch Fest after all?

One of the church activities my daughter and I enjoy is coming together with other congregants to cook and deliver dinner once a month to the Somerville Homeless Shelter. We also come to church on Wednesday nights for my daughter to learn knitting from other parishioners. Our church's incredible musicians perform regularly for Somerville events, including Porch Fest.

Thank you for considering this request and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions: 406-579-1817.

Thank you for your service to Somerville!
Sarah Glover

From: Craig O'Donnell
Received: January 16, 2015

Ms. Monea,

I would like to voice my support for the application for funding from the Somerville Community Preservation Committee for the Milk Row Cemetery Rehabilitation and Restoration project. I firmly believe in the historical and cultural value of cemeteries in general, and with the unique nature of this one to the city it seems more than prudent to award such a small amount of CPA grant funding to continue the restoration and conservation project that is ongoing.

While I have no official tie to any group involved in the cemetery's upkeep or public access, I have taken advantage of some of the times that it has been open to the public and I believe it is a great resource for keeping the city's local history intact for future generations.

Most sincerely,
Craig O'Donnell
7 Walter Terrace
Somerville 02145

From: Courtney O'Keefe
Received: January 16, 2015

Dear Emily,

After reviewing the presentations, I would like to see the following projects receive CPA funding:

[First Congregational Church of Somerville UCC Renovation Phase 2](#) (historic resources)

[Somerville Museum - Capital Improvements](#) (historic resources)

[City Hall Renovation - Design and Construction Management](#)(historic resources)

Thank you,

Courtney O'Keefe

Phone: 617.224.8328

Email: Courtney@CourtneyOKeefe.Com

From: Jeanine Farley

Received: January 16, 2015

Hi Emily,

[Questions and comments for Emily Monea removed]

My vote would go to giving the library as much money as possible. Our libraries need to be renovated more than anything else in the city, I believe.

Also, processing the city archives: Does this mean digitizing them to put them online? I think this would be a great idea.

The other items are important, too, but I don't think they are as important, and they could be put on hold for a while longer.

Thanks,

Jeanine Farley

From: Sara Rosenfield

Received: January 17, 2015

Hi Emily,

Thank you for receiving feedback on the applications for this year's funding of CPA money. I have been a Somerville resident and homeowner for over 33 years. I also have been a member of the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission from 1985 to 1995. I am very happy to have supported the CPA when it was on the ballot. I hope the committee focuses on what will be the best for the Community as a whole for this first round of funding. For this reason, I support the following applications.

- **City Hall Renovation - Design and Construction Management** (historic resources)- YES- This is VERY overdue and we need to see City Hall look its best and preserve a significant building in the city.
- **Healey School to Mystic** (recreational land) YES- Will benefit many who live and go to school in the neighborhood.

- **Mystic Water Works** (historic resources) YES- Improve the area by improving a very visible and important building along with creating affordable housing
- **Prospect Hill Tower Renovation** (historic resources)- YES – Need to preserve a very important building/monument
- **West Branch Library Renovations - Construction Funding** (historic resources)- YES- maintaining an important building

[Comments and questions for Emily Monea removed.]

Sara

Sara Rosenfeld

617-939-7277

rosenfeld.sara@gmail.com

From: Gianni Marzilli Ericson

Received: January 17, 2015

Dear Emily,

I'm writing to ask you to support and encourage the allocation of CPA funds to First Church Somerville for its renovation projects.

I moved to Somerville from rural Massachusetts with my fiance when we graduated from college in 2004. For the first several months we lived here, I counted the days until I thought I could leave - I couldn't get used to the city; its anonymity, traffic, and crowds. We'd visited First Church a few times, early on. After we got married, we came back. We were struck by the warmth, love, and welcome we received first from Molly and then from others. We got involved. We made friends. We joined.

Then a funny thing happened: We decided not to move away when my husband was accepted to grad school. Five years later, we decided to stay for the second time, even though my husband was in the midst of a national job search. What mattered to us was staying anchored to the community, friends, justice work, and possibilities right here, in what now feels completely like home.

In 2012 we bought a home less than a mile from church, and in 2013 we welcomed our first child (Francesca...yes, partially after the street). More than ever, I see the value FCS brings to the community: we have drawn support from new parents groups, from having our daughter engaged in a multigenerational, diverse, progressive community. Without First Church, we'd likely spend most of our time with people exactly like us. We would not be involved in LGBTQ activism. I doubt we would have given much money over the years to local organizations and community groups. Our lives would not be nearly as rich. And we would have left a long time ago.

I hope the committee will recognize what a driving force First Church Somerville is for community in Davis Square, how very many lives it has changed, supported, and even saved. The list is endless: raising money for local community partners like Respond, SHC, Centro Presente, inspiring activism and political engagement, supporting families, people in recovery, community arts groups, and local schools...Somerville would certainly benefit from its continued, stable, physical existence.

I know this first as a member of the church. But as the moderator of FCS, I also know this is true for countless other members and friends in the greater Somerville community, who are struggling with everything from single parenthood to remaining sober after years of addiction. First Church does something magical with people - it connects them to each other and to this community; it makes this feel like home.

Thanks so much for reading.
Gianna Ericson

--

Gianna Marzilli Ericson
g.m.ericson@gmail.com

From: Linda Conte
Received: January 17, 2015

Regarding which projects are most deserving, my votes first go with the Somerville Museum and the Milk Row Cemetery. They are the most fitting (especially for low money!) of all because they preserve things that are so valuable to Somerville history and art for the most generalized population. My next thought is that we'd get a lot of bang for the buck funding accessibility for all the facilities that provide good public service here because those like the museum, the library, the church and the temple would be in line for further funding from other places if they were accessible. (You'd have to verify that for yourself, but it seems likely). I also feel that the windows at First Church are worthy for all (like myself) who walk or drive by frequently and have to look at the eyesores that are the cloudy coverings over the lovely stained glass. Beyond that, I'm pro-greenspace and the Healey project seems worthy. Thanks for asking!

From: Union Square Neighbors
Received: January 19, 2015

January 19, 2015

Somerville Community Preservation Committee
c/o Emily Monea
Somerville City Hall
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143
emonea@somervillema.gov

Dear Members of the Community Preservation Committee,

Thank you for your efforts to solicit community feedback to inform your review of project applications for FY15 Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding. Union Square Neighbors (USN) understands that the CPC received 15 applications totaling over \$8.8 million for projects associated with historic resources and open space/recreation. We also understand that you will be making recommendations for roughly \$2.5 million in CPA funds to be allocated among open space and recreation (\$735,000), historic resources (\$735,000), and undesignated project funding (\$1.05 million), which you will allocate to any of the CPA funding categories (affordable housing, open space/recreation, and historic resources). Several proposals in the Union Square area stand out to us as meeting the CPA's goals, and we wish to express our support for the following projects currently under your review:

UNION SQUARE NEIGHBORS PRIORITIES FOR CPA FUNDING

1. Prospect Hill Tower Renovation: \$500,000

2. Prospect Hill Park Design Services: \$89,000

During the most recent New Year's Day commemoration of the first raising of the Grant Union Flag, USN was excited to hear Mayor Curtatone enthusiastically endorse repair and restoration of the Prospect Hill tower and park. Dating back to 1902, the tower commemorates the fortifications built on the hill during the Revolutionary War and is the site of the first raising of the Grand Union Flag on January 1, 1776. The tower is a highly visible historic landmark and is in need of repair and restoration. Whereas it used to be open to the public as certain occasions during the year, it is now permanently closed due to structural issues. Additionally, the sidewalks leading to the tower contain uneven and missing pavers, which pose a safety hazard for those who face mobility challenges. Repair and restoration of the Prospect Hill tower and park aligns with the CPC's goals to prioritize projects that address longstanding needs in Somerville's historic landmarks and rehabilitate and restore existing recreational land. In addition to being a popular gathering spot for local neighbors, the tower and park tell the story of Somerville's history and are important assets to Union Square's overall character. Many members of USN participate in the annual New Year's Day commemoration of the raising of the Grant Union Flag, and we would love to see the tower and park preserved for future generations.

3. Milk Row Cemetery Rehabilitation & Restoration: \$17,500

The western side of Union Square is home to the historic Milk Row Cemetery. It is the first and only pre-20th century burial ground in Somerville. While the City of Somerville routinely budgets funding to continue to implement improvements consistent with the cemetery's master plan, the rehabilitation of this site requires further funding for restoration. This modest amount of funding will be used as local match dollars when applying for the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund. Given the limited amount of green space in Somerville and the historical significance of the cemetery, USN believes this is a fitting use of CPA dollars.

4. American Tube Works Complex - National Register Nomination: \$7,000

USN strongly supports the City of Somerville's efforts to prepare a nomination to place the American Tube Works Complex on the National Register of Historic Places. The American Tube Works Complex provides an important link to Somerville's industrial past and is the present-day home to a variety of commercial and industrial uses. Listing the complex on the National Register would place no obligations on Tube Works' owners and would create no additional restrictions on the use, treatment, transfer or

disposition of the property. Importantly, however, the National Register listing would make the property eligible to access historic tax credit options, federal preservation grants for rehabilitation, and preservation easements—all of which could prove to be critical tools in helping to ensure the complex is preserved for the future, particularly as development pressures continue to increase in Union Square.

5. Somerville Community Growing Center Upgrade: \$52,090

The Community Growing Center on Vinal Avenue near Union Square is a wonderful educational and recreational resource for Somerville residents and families. It provides a unique and active space for young children and engages our local arts community. The Friends of the Community Growing Center have applied for CPA funds to assist in completion of a comprehensive community design process for the space. CPA funds would also help the organization prepare and complete construction documents necessary for other funding requests and support related experiential/education events to engage the community in the planning process. USN believes this is a smart use of CPA dollars because it has the potential to leverage other funding sources to preserve and enhance the Community Growing Center.

6. School Garden Classrooms: \$45,373

Another project which USN supports is the School Garden Classrooms initiative submitted by Groundwork Somerville. Groundwork Somerville proposes rehabilitation and improvement of the eight school garden classrooms around the city, housed at each public elementary school. The project will include restoring existing spaces in disrepair, and the creation of new infrastructure to create vibrant, year-round educational and recreational spaces for the benefit of school and neighborhood communities. USN believes this is a creative and unique project that will benefit our students and public schools and provide important educational opportunities to teach sustainability.

7. 56 Bow Street: Exterior Restoration: \$15,000

USN wishes to express support for the proposed historic exterior restoration project at 56 Bow Street. Our understanding of the proposed work is that it is intended to restore the original look of the building as indicated in historic photographs, and that existing historic elements will be retained. Given the changes that are anticipated around the Union Square neighborhood in the years to come, it is important to balance the new with conservation of a sense of the historic neighborhood where appropriate and where possible. Bow Street is an excellent place to apply this principle, both because it is designated as the Bow Street Historic District and because it is set apart from the designated redevelopment areas. Much of Bow Street has already been restored over the past decade, and this project is an opportunity to continue this process towards completion. The owners, one of whom has participated in USN meetings, have also expressed their intent that the property will not only serve as their residence but their small business as well, something we support and encourage which and gives this project additional merit.

CONCLUSION

As the CPC considers projects and investments that CPA funding can support, USN urges approval of the above projects, which we believe are in alignment with the goals of the voter-approved CPA funding. We look forward to hearing your budget recommendations and will convey our thoughts to the Board of Alderman. We thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.

Sincerely,

Rob Buchanan, Secretary
Union Square Neighbors
usnsomerville@gmail.com

CC:

Joseph A. Curtatone, Mayor, City of Somerville (mayor@somervillema.gov)
Somerville Board of Alderman (BoardofAldermen@somervillema.gov)
Lisa Brukilacchio, Friends of the Community Growing Center (lisa.bruk@gmail.com)
Chris Mancini, Groundwork Somerville (chris@groundworksomerville.org)
J. Brandon Wilson, City of Somerville (bwilson@somervillema.gov)
Erik Neu, Owner of 56 Bow Street (novus1@gmail.com)

From: Peter James

Received: January 20, 2015

Dear Emily and members of the CPC,

I am writing to confirm my support of Groundwork Somerville's school gardens proposal. I have served on the Groundwork Somerville board for four years, and I have seen firsthand that the organization is a vital part of our community. The schoolyard gardens themselves are unique, and often may be the only green space a child will encounter in his or her day.

Groundwork Somerville's school gardens program has been recognized at the highest level. Students from the Healey School have been twice invited to the White House to plant and harvest food with First Lady Michelle Obama. It is a national model for teaching natural science, gardening, and nutrition. Thousands of our urban children have benefited from exposure to the natural world in these gardens.

Not so obvious is that Groundwork Somerville does this exemplary work on the tightest possible budget. The greatest expense of the gardens is salary for staff to create and run the programs, and yet grant makers do not typically fund staff. Groundwork Somerville and its extraordinarily talented Executive Director Chris Mancini make the commitment to find money for these programs each year, but it is not easy. The organization is very lean and efficient, relying on the idealism of young people who devote themselves to this meaningful, transformative work for very little compensation.

By helping Groundwork Somerville to renew the gardens infrastructure, you would help them use these spaces to support more programs, reach more children, grow more food, and fund more and more worthwhile programming.

Thank you so much for your hard work in administering this exciting new CPA program.

Sincerely,

Peter James

--

Peter James, ScD
Postdoctoral Fellow
Department of Epidemiology
Harvard School of Public Health
pjames@hsph.harvard.edu

From: Carol Reiman
Received: January 20, 2015

Dear Emily Monea,

As a current resident of Somerville, and a resident of East Boston before that, I have been a participant in Temple B'nai Brith's activities for close to 15 years. Introduced by a friend, I began to experience, explore, and enjoy more of my Jewish roots as I attended services and became involved in other activities at this synagogue. My involvement developed into a number of volunteer areas-- helping put out food for the light meal following services, helping maintain an alternative Saturday service, chairing the ritual committee, serving on the board, participating in a number of small projects, and so forth. Temple B'nai Brith has come to mean a great deal to me. Along with spiritual solace and enrichment and a new attachment to Judaism, I have found my closest friends, engaged in stimulating discussion, learned history and culture and language, picked up skills that served me well in my work and personal life. Not so much a joiner or group person, I have found this congregation to be the first organization where I have felt comfortable.

Life brings changes to all of us, sometimes more so as we age physically. This past summer I was diagnosed with osteoarthritis in my right knee. While I am fortunate to be able to walk and climb stairs when I keep up with my exercises, getting about now has more challenges. I know that there are many other congregants who now find the stairs at our beloved building more arduous. I have always missed the presence of those of the older generation who are no longer able to make it up the stairs.

I would like to see Temple B'nai Brith receive funds so that we can make the building accessible to all. We are an unaffiliated progressive egalitarian congregation which has much to offer. We welcome all who are interested in participating. We have many interfaith families. We have had lively, stimulating, and respectful panels on topics that spread across the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faiths. We have people involved in a number of social action projects. We would like to attract and serve larger numbers in the community so that we can keep both congregation and community vibrant.

Please add my voice of support to the many others advocating for CPA funding so that Temple B'nai Brith can move ahead into Somerville's future.

Sincerely,
Carol C. Reiman

From: Margaret Jaques-Lesli
Received: January 20, 2015

Dear Somerville Community Preservation Committee,

My name is Margaret Jaques-Leslie, and I am writing to seek your support to invest historic preservation funds in First Church Somerville at 89 College Ave. I moved to the area from the Midwest in 2009, and First Church Somerville has become an additional home for me, one from which I've learned about opportunities in the City of Somerville for volunteering, for jobs, and one that has provided respite for me and countless other newcomers to the area, seeking to find homes and build lives in Somerville.

Through First Church Somerville, I first learned of Artbeat, where I helped plan for our interactive booth activities. Through First Church Somerville, I ran in the Somerville Homeless Coalition 5K and attended their gala at the Armory. Through First Church Somerville, I personally invited our neighbors along College Ave, Francesca Ave, and Hall Ave to attend our yearly Block Party, a time for us to celebrate our physical presence in the community and invite newcomers. Through First Church Somerville, I invited my family from far and wide to share a rehearsal dinner meal prior to our wedding in the church basement, catered by Guru the Caterer. While I live in North Cambridge, these experiences with First Church Somerville have increased my personal and financial investment in the City of Somerville, as I continue to bank, spend money, and participate in the local community.

We have invested nearly \$1M of our own parishioners money in renovating our church and we seek Somerville's investment to finish some key projects that will visually and physically enhance our presence in the city. As church clerk, I helped shepherd our loan process through the United Church of Christ, and have been proud of the responsible, transparent, diligent process we've pursued throughout our financial planning and our renovation. We ask you to consider helping us finish the exterior siding of our church, rebuild the front steps and restore and protect the stained glass facing College Ave. These are all things that have a terrific impact on our "curb side appeal" for the community.

Our building represents Somerville in ALL its diversity: old school and new school. We're not going anywhere, but we need help. We seek in all things to be an asset to our community, and now we are asking the wider community to be stakeholders in preserving our beautiful historic building for many generations to come. In fact, FCS is the oldest continuously worshipping religious community in Somerville, and one of the few really self-sustaining houses of faith left.

Thank you for considering this request and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions: 612-202-0957.

Thank you for your service to Somerville!

All best,
Margaret

From: Kellian Adams Pletcher
Received: January 21, 2015

Hi Emily,

My name is Kellian. I'm 37 and I love my home, Davis Square. I've lived here with my husband for 7 years, ever since I returned to America from Shanghai, China. I had gone straight from college in NH to Shanghai and 5 years later, had to come back to America with no job, no neighborhood, no friends and no roots in Boston. I had to pick a neighborhood out of thin air and after trawling around Boston for a few weeks, I decided that Davis was the place for me. It's one of the best decisions I've ever made!

Since then, I went to grad school, met my husband at HONK.. and got engaged at HONK 3 years later, got married, became a game designer and started my own tech company right here in Davis. I also started swing dancing and began the Boston Lindy Bomb Squad, a swing dance troop that has danced in festivals, movies, commercials, parks, subways (the square in front of JP licks is one of our favorites. Sometimes we'll get our friend, Amy Kucharik to show up with her band).

I've run zombie games here in Davis, been a volunteer in the East Somerville Community Schools and found every geocache in a mile radius. My husband and I staunchly defend our territory from the Enlightened on Ingress (a location-based game that's popular here!) But 1st Church Somerville is what made me realize that Davis doesn't just have to be that place where you hang out when you're "young". There I met people in all different stages of their Davis life: from college kids to Rev. Molly with her young family right up to Dibby at 93 years old. These are people who have called Davis their lifetime home and that's where I decided that I didn't have to hit a certain age and run to the burbs: my home is here!

There are a few places in Davis that define it for me: Diesel cafe, Somerville Theater and 1st church. It's a place that loans me their hall for free every Friday so that I can teach the "Jr. Bomb Squad", a swing dance team for teenagers between 14 and 16. You can see their performance last year at the Dance for World Community festival: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KzXY2Fh6t8>. (they were so proud!)

First Church waves its rainbow flag at the front door like a bat signal to show cars driving by that everyone is welcome here. Now they have a massive banner that says "black lives matter" to express how life and equality matter to us. They have a beautiful garden with a sign that says "please take what you need... but be fair!" The church sign out front says "building the beloved community". Everything about first church expresses what I love about Davis: Inclusive, welcoming, warm and a little quirky. I hope that the city of Somerville can see what First Church means to its residents and that it will support it as it continues its work, "Building the beloved community"!

Sincerely,
Kellian Adams Pletcher
20 Grove St, #51
Somerville MA 02144

From: Anna Doherty
Received: January 22, 2015

Dear Emily,

I write to document what I just called to discuss with you about the Community Preservation Act applicants. Through recent community meetings and in reviewing the proposals, it has come to my attention that there are several funding requests from groups whose work supports the SomerPromise mission. As we agreed that it makes sense for me to share with the committee the ways in which applicants and SomerPromise mutually support shared goals, below is an outline of how we do just that.

Specifically:

Community Growing Center - Upgrade Design/Community Build Planning (recreational land)

and

Healey School to Mystic (recreational land)

Both the Growing Center and the area between Healey School and Mystic housing are areas well known to SomerPromise. Both provide accessible green space for diverse residents, particularly children and youth, to be involved in experiential learning, creative play, and outdoor activity. Both have longtime supporters who have also been longtime advocates of SomerPromise's work. To the extent that we have been able to, SomerPromise has worked in concert with ongoing efforts to increase participation and enhance the resources in these areas.

More recently:

School Garden Classrooms (recreational land)

As SomerPromise engages more in collaborations that assess and then work to improve the physical environments in our city where students learn and spend their time (a current undertaking with our both our early childhood and out of school time work), we are, again, interested in opportunities where kids can be learning and creating in safe, interesting, outdoor settings. As a co-host to the PEP grant which is aimed at increasing health, fitness, and nutrition among all of our K-8 students, SomerPromise certainly supports stronger garden programming.

More generally:

Prospect Hill Park Design Services (recreational land/historic resources)

West Branch Library Renovations - Construction Funding (historic resources)

While it could be argued that virtually all applicants' proposals have some connection to the outcomes that SomerPromise ultimately seeks, these two proposals specifically support parks and libraries, which are certainly aligned with SomerPromise's goals of increasing accessible, equitable, quality places and experiences for children, youth, and families as means to support educational outcomes and life success.

With a variety of proposed projects on the list, it is exciting to see the Community Preservation Act's funding about to put to so many good uses. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to how some of those uses can be in direct service to Somerville's students and their families.

Sincerely,
Anna Fox Doherty

SomerPromise Director
City of Somerville
adoherty@somervillema.gov
617-625-6600 x 2341
<https://www.facebook.com/SomerPromise>

From: Erin Baumgartner
Received: January 22, 2015

Dear Emily,

I am writing to the Community Preservation Committee to share a bit about my love of Somerville and my love of First Church Somerville (FCS), which is in great need of some essential structural repair.

I have been a resident of Somerville for 12 years. I find it to be a beautiful, thriving city that still maintains some of its grit. I am proud to call it home.

My husband and I live on Highland Ave and try to immerse ourselves in the patchwork of Somerville as much as possible. A lot of that involvement has come through involvement at First Church Somerville which has a deep and sustained commitment to the community and to giving back.

Through Church I volunteer to cook for the Somerville homeless coalition and also for a shelter that is across the street from our own church.

I pledge a monthly amount to FCS because I believe strongly in the mission to be engaged in the community and to help all citizens of Somerville. Our church is a true potpourri of humanity: young and old, black, white and brown, gay and straight, rich and poor. Everyone can find a home and be welcome at First Church Somerville.

Outside of Church I volunteer weekly at The Little Sisters of the Poor on Highland Ave and have been doing so for 3 years. Its an amazing place full of beautiful people and lots of love. What I hear and learn at Church carries me through the more difficult times of being at the Little Sisters, and makes me a better volunteer.

I also am a member of CrossFit Somerville and have worked on Urban Agriculture projects there and am a part of our volunteering services for the Ruby Rogers Center.

Finally, for three years I played on the Boston Militia, the women's full tackle football team that plays at Dilboy stadium. We won three national titles in 2010, 2011 and 2014. We were received by the mayor after our first victory, it was amazing to be honored our city.

Its been 12 years of living here and I never plan to leave. Somerville is a beautiful place to call home because of its values, dedication to all people and its commitment to growing. The work of First Church Somerville is essential and necessary to so many people, not just within our pews but in the community as a whole.

Thank you for your time and for considering our Church as a part of Community Preservation.

Best,
Erin Baumgartner

From: Jeff Mansfield
Received: January 22, 2015

Dear Community Preservation Committee,

My name is Jeff Mansfield - I'm a Somerville resident and the Associate Pastor at First Church Somerville - and I'm writing to support our church's application for Community Preservation funds.

Our church building houses our growing spiritual community - a vibrant and diverse community open to and inclusive of all kinds of people for worship, face-to-face local socializing, spiritual searching, religious education, and neighborhood engagement. In fact, our marvelous Lead Pastor, Rev. Molly Baskette, recently published a book called [Real Good Church](#) all about how we turned around this once-dwindling community church in Somerville and made it thrive again. It's getting a lot of good attention and reviews!

Besides housing this spiritual community, one of our commitments to Somerville has always been maintaining a safe, clean, accessible, and attractive building that can house numerous groups, meetings, and activities that would otherwise not be able to find a home in Somerville. Our property now houses a sober house for young women, a local artist's studio space, numerous support and recovery groups, playgroups for home schooled kids, the Somerville Yogurt Making Coop, a soup kitchen for those in need, rehearsal and performance space for local theater and chorus groups, a community garden that provides fresh produce to the Somerville Homeless Coalition, meeting space for the Somerville Mental Health Association, floor space for a youth swing dancing group, kitchen space and band housing for the Honk Festival, and space for special events at Tufts. Our kitchen and fellowship hall have held many celebrations and fund raisers for local residents and groups like SEIU, the Somerville Open Air Circus, the Second Line Social Aid & Pleasure Society Brass Band, and the Duhamel Education Initiative. We've hosted wedding ceremonies, funerals, memorial services, and worship services for all kinds of local folks of many different religious and non-religious backgrounds.

The capital campaign we began in 2012 and the extensive renovations to our building that have been ongoing since 2013 will ensure that this 100+-year-old building will still be standing - God willing - into the 22nd century. At this critical moment we are trying to decide how many of the dreamed-of improvements to the boiler and the bathrooms and the meeting spaces we can actually afford to complete and complete well. And as we look to finish the exterior of the building in an aesthetically pleasing way, we are considering what sorts of compromises we will have to make to our vision of a building that reflects back to our neighborhood the physical beauty that surrounds us.

This is THE moment at which every dollar of a Community Preservation Grant would be poured into this good work - maintaining and uplifting our building to make it the best and most useful space it can be for Somerville. At this moment, every dollar will count, bringing greater accessibility to our neighbors and a more unified, beautiful finished exterior that Somerville will take pride in.

Please, don't hesitate to be in touch with me if you have any questions.

Thank you for all of your work!

Rev. Jeff Mansfield
Associate Pastor
First Church Somerville UCC
89 College Avenue by Davis Square
www.firstchurchsomerville.org
Building the Beloved Community

From: Sarah Stockwell

Received: January 22, 2015

Dear Emily,

I'm writing to request Community Preservation Act funds for our church, First Church Somerville. Our church could very much benefit from the historic preservation funds being made to Somerville buildings. Here's why we would love these resources:

My husband and I started going to First Church Somerville 10 years ago this April. I was pregnant with our first daughter, and we were looking for a way to reconnect to our spiritual selves. I had lost my father to brain cancer the prior July, and I wanted to feel more connected to him as our family grew. We lived in Powderhouse Circle, and so First Church Somerville (FCS) was an obvious choice. At our first morning at FCS, we heard Reverend Molly Baskette speak, we met new friends, we felt welcomed and connected, and so we decided to make FCS our spiritual home.

A lot has happened since we first walked through those doors almost 10 years ago. Early on, I found FCS to be a resting place for me as a new young parent. My husband worked long hours, and was studying for his MBA on the weekends. I came to church with two young girls, and while they were in nursery or Sunday school, I could renew my spiritual self for just that one hour on Sunday. As they grew, despite

never wanting to leave Somerville, with two kids we ended up in Arlington, just three miles down the road, but close enough to still come to FCS. Our girls have grown up in this Church. They love their Church friends. At seven- and nine-years-old, they feel safe, loved, welcomed, and at home at FCS. Just this past Sunday at dinner, we did our "Bud, Rose, and Thorn" activity that our older daughter brought home from Sunday school at FCS. The idea is that everyone shares something they're looking forward to (bud), something they really enjoyed about today (rose), and something they're concerned about (thorn). Immediately, our youngest daughter said "My rose was going to Church today - I got to see my friends." She feels so at home and really her true self in this community.

By joining FCS, I feel more connected to my spiritual life. Even when our family moved to Beijing, China for 1.5 year with my husband's work, I was still connected to my FCS community. Through emails I felt the support from even that far away. Every week, I have a place to go where I can put life in perspective, be reminded of all the good and hardships of this world. And also know every week I can come to this safe place and connect with this community and feel accepted for just who I am.

I'm so proud to bring visitors who get to hear Rev. Molly say "Welcome if you are young or old, or a little bit of each. Welcome if you are gay or straight, or a little bit of each. Welcome if you are male or female, or a little bit of each". This church welcomes people from all walks of life, no matter how you identify or what labels you may wear in other places.

My husband regularly attends his recovery program meeting at this Church. He has met many people who've supported him in this journey, and who have helped him stay sober. He has been able to meet new people who he has in return helped. This community as a Church, as well as a meeting place, has given our family so much.

I truly can't think of a better place to receive some funding for the historic preservation in Somerville. Churches are transient places that offer people a home when so much else is going on in their lives. While in our early 30s we started coming to FCS. We are now in our early 40s and only one town over in Arlington, and we won't move further away, because we love our Church.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Kind regards,
Sarah Stockwell

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Sarah Stockwell
[781-648-0415](tel:781-648-0415) (home)
[617-564-2431](tel:617-564-2431) (cell)

The Arlington Education Foundation
Supporting students and teachers in Arlington for over 20 years
www.arlingtoneducationfoundationma.org

From: Frances Fisher
Received: January 22, 2015

Emily,

I would like to express support for two of the projects vying for CPA funds this year.

The Temple B'nai Brith(TBB) Fire Safety and Accessibility Project will allow a unique historic structure within our community to continue to be used for the purpose in which it is designed for not only the Jewish community, but for the broader Somerville community. While maintenance of a shell of a historic building is better than having it torn down, re-use of buildings for purposes entirely different than their original construction separates the physical form from the era and community for which it was built. By supporting work on Somerville's only synagogue, the City will allow this community structure to stay one. While the Jewish population of Somerville is growing, changes to the broader social structure of makes maintaining physical communities of worship harder than ever. Use of CPA funds would provide an opportunity to make this beautiful building safe and accessible for more of the community. I have participated in a number of activities at the synagogue that have catered to primarily non-synagogue members and even non-jews, including infant support discussions, classes and community fundraisers. TBB serves not only their members but the broader community and these improvements would allow the congregation to be more inviting to the broader Somerville community.

I'm also in favor of improvements to the West branch of the Somerville library. While recent work has made the children's room less/non-toxic, the space is still in need of significant improvement. West Somerville has very few indoor community spaces in which to gather as a community and the library could be a major gathering place for formal and informal activity.

I believe that CPA funds should be used to benefit as broad a spectrum of the community as possible, but believe that there needs to be a balance between spending the funds on city-owned/identified projects and other projects that enhance the diversity and vitality of the City of Somerville.

I will also send a letter to my State Rep and Senator to express my support for the CPA program and continuing funding.

Sincerely,
Frances Fisher
56 Ossipee Rd.

From: Andrea Ranger
Received: January 22, 2015

Hi! A fellow congregant of mine had mentioned contacting the Somerville Community Preservation Committee to seek historic preservation funds for the First Church Somerville building.

As I'm sure you're well aware, First Church Somerville is located at 89 College Ave, and has been undergoing a major facelift, foundation lift and roof lift among other things.

We have invested nearly \$1M of our own money in renovating the church which feels like an impossibility given that nine years ago, when I joined the church, there were only 40 active members. While we've tackled the structural issues, re-roofed, and renovated an outdated sanctuary, we are not quite able to properly finish the College and Francesca Street exteriors and encase the stained glass windows. As with many renovations, there are so many "discoveries" that occur along the way that have required additional investment.

The congregation and pastors have worked and worked to grow membership in the church, and at a time when many churches are become condo conversions, ours is attracting, young, diverse, typically church-shy hipsters! And still growing. Frankly, both the City of Somerville's community engagement and the home base that First Church has provided me encourages me to stay in Somerville many years. Heck, it's already been 15 years. I feel like it will be another 15 at least.

As you consider investments for Historic Preservation, I encourage you to consider First Church. It has been an integral part of my life the last 9 years and an upstanding Somerville citizen - participating in ArtBeat, Porch Fest, Honk Fest (am I missing any fests?), as well as contributing to the Somerville Homeless Coalition and providing grocery cards to the many needy people who seek us out all year long.

Thank you for your consideration - I'm a local at 25 Munroe Street in Somerville (Prospect Hill); please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have.

With best regards,
Andrea Ranger

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Andrea Ranger
25 Munroe St, #2
Somerville, MA 02143
Ph. (617) 233-0348
Email: andrearanger@gmail.com

From: Megan Mueller
Received: January 23, 2015

Dear Somerville Community Preservation Committee,

I am writing to enthusiastically support First Church Somerville UCC's application for funds from the Community Preservation Act. As a professor at Tufts University, I am well aware of the importance of strengthening the Somerville community, and I strongly believe that First Church Somerville exemplifies the type of organization we should be actively fostering.

In addition to being a prominent, visible landmark in the Somerville area with a high level of foot traffic to and from Davis Square, First Church Somerville is home to many community groups and organizations, and provides a welcoming worship space for a diverse population of Somerville residents. The church is an accessible location for community members to engage in active citizenship and volunteer work, as well as to develop social networks, particularly for those of us with young and growing families.

Furthermore, I am confident that an investment in First Church Somerville is a unique opportunity to capitalize on the over \$1 million we have committed in our recent capital campaign to improving the functionality and visual presence of our church. The goal of our renovation project is to preserve the historical features of our building, while providing a functional, accessible space that serves as a prominent asset to the community. As church Treasurer, I can attest to the high level of oversight and thoughtfulness that is devoted to maximizing our building resources in an effective way to support sustainable practices and design in the future.

Investing in First Church Somerville would capitalize on an exceptional opportunity to leverage the funding the congregants have already committed to the improvement of the building, and foster the improvement of a visual landmark in the Somerville area.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and for all the work you do to improve the Somerville Community.

Best wishes,
Megan Mueller

From: Kimberly Ardolino
Received: January 23, 2015

January 22, 2015
Community Preservation Committee
Attention: Emily Monea
Dear Emily,

My name is Kimberly Ardolino and I'm a life-long resident of Somerville and Member of First Church Somerville. When I say life-long, I mean that for 59 years I have been living in the same house that my grandparents purchased in 1910, and upon their passing, my parents took over the mortgage in the 1940's. I now proudly own it and pay taxes to a city I adore! I am a Somerville schools graduate, my grown children are graduates of the Somerville School system, and have gone on to be successful adults in healthcare and community service. My son is a Somerville Firefighter and my daughter is an RN, and they both succeeded in Somerville Schools while attending First Church Somerville.

My husband and I are fixtures in this city, and have witnessed the changes between our "old Somerville" and it's beloved 2 family homes, to the most recent conversions to condos and new apartments everywhere. It saddens me to see my old city disappear into a city of condos with modern architectural design. I feel very strongly that our historic homes and buildings with their amazing architectural detail,

need to be preserved and cherished forever. This brings me to my church which we are trying so hard to restore.

My church has been the “constant” in my life, where I know I can go for worship, friendship, love, support, and service to the community. We call ourselves “The Beloved Community” not only in reference to our deep love and support to one another, but because we are like a community center in concept, where recovery groups, Monday night suppers for the homeless, cooking for the homeless, mom’s groups, support groups, and the Duhamel Educational Initiative all meet. We are and always will be a welcoming center for our city.

Now our church building needs us, it’s people, to help support it. After years of patch this, put a band-aid on that, we undertook a capital campaign that was highly successful with our own parishioners. Unfortunately, we need much more money to complete the restoration to make it a safe, community available, safe and loving house of worship that it’s people and generations to come deserve. We are anxious to complete our vision of a restored building that honors the design and majesty that our beautiful building still holds.

I respectfully ask your consideration in allocating a part of the Somerville Historical Committee’s available funds to help restore a beautiful part of “old Somerville,” my beloved church!

Sincerely,
Kimberly Ardolino

From: Peter Clemons
Received: January 24, 2015

As 35 year residents of Kidder Ave in Somerville we know how important it is to have our library open and in good repair. This is the most important facility in Davis Square. It services everyone from young children to seniors. The building is beautiful architecture but it needs serious attention if it is to remain open. Please please please find the funds to do the necessary work. It will be money well invested. Thanks, Peter Clemons and Marianne Benson.

From: Doris McDaniel
Received: January 24, 2015

FIRST CHURCH SOMERVILLE

I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK ABOUT THE AFFILIATION the Duhamel Education Initiative (DEI) has with First Church Somerville :(FCS)

In order to do that, a little background information is necessary. Paul Duhamel was an exceptional man! He was an active member in both the FCS and City of Somerville communities. It didn't matter where his physical being was; he was always working to help the needy. He was a School Committeeman who worked tirelessly for the improvement of education for all children in the Somerville public schools. He also worked at the Fernald State School in Waltham as Director of Constituent Relations. His ongoing mission was to make life for the mentally challenged better. He was

a strong advocate for the underprivileged (he started "Project Soup" - a supper program for the homeless in Somerville which was the first of its kind). Integrity, courage, energy, intelligence, dedication, caring, loving, committed are all words that describe Paul.

On April 21, 1996 Paul died after his third bout with cancer. Some of his friends decided that they would like to do something in his memory. A good education was something Paul wanted for all students, and so the Duhamel Education Initiative was established. Nineteen years have passed, and we continue to raise awareness and funds for special projects to benefit the students in the Somerville Public Schools. We hold two fundraisers every year (a pancake breakfast in the spring and a spaghetti supper in the fall) and, from the very beginning FCS has been a huge support. After dedicating their fellowship hall to "Duhamel Hall", it became clear that this was the venue for our fundraisers. This is how our relationship began. Even though members of the DEI are not members of FCS it is our "home". At our last fundraiser someone said, "I love coming to Duhamel fundraisers here at this church. It always feels like a family reunion." FCS is a vital part of why we continue to do the work we do and to be the success we are. FCS still exudes the love we felt when Paul was with us.

Doris McDaniel
DEI Board Member

From: Patricia Morgan
Received: January 24, 2015

Hello Emily,

I would like to add a few words in support of consideration of the West Branch Library for Community Preservation funds. Since my retirement 11 years ago, I have taken advantage of having the library branch within walking distance of my home at least once weekly. The building facade is beautiful and should be preserved, but the inside is in desperate need of upgrades.

I would love to have a variety of services available at the branch, i.e., lectures by visiting authors, community group meetings, occasional viewings of art, craft lessons, etc. Also, having the branch accessible to the handicapped would open new opportunities for those afflicted with restrictions.

I have reviewed the consultant's options in the CPA application and hope that the funds are made available for this worthy project.

Regards,

Patricia Morgan
46 Francesca Ave.
Somerville, MA 02144

From: Missy Sturtevant
Received: January 25, 2015

Dear Community Preservation Committee,
I wanted to let you know how important First Church Somerville has been to me and my engagement with the larger Somerville community. Our church makes an effort to be involve with other churches and communities within Somerville to be a meeting space and support other efforts. Our church would live to better serve the community by improving our facilities. We would love your help with this.

Thanks for your time,
Missy Sturtevant
22 Houghton St. Somerville

From: Jesse Stansfield
Received: January 25, 2015

Dear Emily and the community preservation committee,
My wife and I attend church at First Church Somerville, and I just wanted to reach out to tell you how much it means to me to be a part of this community. We live in Wakefield, but we used to live in Somerville, and we feel like we belong here.

That's it, I just wanted to express to you how important this place is to me.

Thank you.
Jesse Stansfield

From: Tom Scholfield
Received: January 25, 2015

Hi Emily,

I just wanted to write to you and tell you how important First Church Somerville is to my family. We having been members since 2005 and our community continues to grow exponentially every year.

It is a church we are proud to say supports many programs in the Somerville. We are also so thankful to be raising our daughter and future son in the church. It's a church we are proud of and has become a vital part of or lives.

Thanks,
Tom Scholfield
617-237-0866

From: Ellen O'Donnell

Received: January 25, 2015

To The Somerville Community Preservation Committee:

I am writing as a 10 year member of First Church Somerville to ask that First Church be awarded preservation money to support ongoing renovations. I was a homeowner and resident of Somerville for more than five years before moving to Concord in 2009. While we come back to Somerville for all sorts of things including haircuts and restaurants, it is First Church that has kept us truly committed to and involved in the Somerville Community. This is not a unique story. First Church serves Somerville in numerous direct and indirect ways. One of the most important in my opinion is by keeping civic and justice minded people in and involved in Somerville. Members of First Church are universally good stewards of our own community, the larger community and of our building. The last has been one of the greatest challenges of the past decade and money from the preservation committee will be enormously helpful in allowing us to continue doing the good work we do.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,
Ellen O'Donnell, Ph.D

From: Alexandra Doody
Received: January 25, 2015

Hello,

I am writing to lend my support for the City of Somerville to support First Church Somerville's attempt to restore its building so that it can continue to serve the community in the myriad ways it supports not only its members, but also the social justice causes it champions, including homelessness in Somerville, equal marriage rights, and recovery from substance abuse.

Thank you,
Alex Doody

From: Cathy Campaigne
Received: January 25, 2015

Dear Ms Monea,

I'm currently sitting in the beautiful rennovated sanctuary of First Church Somerville. We have all given so much to reach this point but we need your help to make the outside of our church as beautiful as the inside. As a single parent of a toddler I want to share how important this community is for me to raise her. It is a diverse and conscious community that will be essential to forming her values, teaching her to

live in community, and teaching her to take active part in our political process. Although we live in north cambridge, we walk to church and love to take part in the vibrancy of Davis Square. This church is a great asset to Somerville and I truly hope you will support it.

Thanks,
Cathy Campaigne
(Mom to Aleah, 16 months)

From: Michael Molla
Received: January 25, 2015

Dear Community Preservation Committee,

It is my understanding that First Church Somerville is up for consideration for community preservation funds. I am writing in support of this funding, as this church has been important to me personally as well as the community at-large.

Thank you,

Michael Molla

From: Mary Sypek
Received: January 25, 2015

Dear Community Preservation Committee,

I am writing as a member of First Church Somerville, in support of my church's application for Community Preservation Act Funding. I have been attending this church for 2 years since graduating from Tufts University in 2013, and it has been a stabilizing, guiding presence for me and for so many of my fellow community members in Somerville. As someone who has been working to become part of community in my time since college, this church has been crucial to my being known and feeling welcomed in Somerville. I have built relationships and grown here in ways I never would have imagined 2 years ago. I know that I am just one small piece of what this church provides for Somerville : recovery meetings, community events, space for volunteer organizations to meet and collaborate, and more.

Please carefully review First Church Somerville's application for Community Preservation Funding. This money will help our church further live into our vision and mission to be a welcoming space in Somerville, and to continue to serve this community.

Best,
Mary Sypek
High School Teacher

Somerville Resident
Member, First Church Somerville

From: Tessa Ritchie

Received: January 25, 2015

Hello, my name is Tessa Ritchie. I am writing on behalf of first church somerville. This church has been a home away from home to me. I first came to FCS when I was a first-year grad student in 2012, 3000 miles away from home. To be honest it didn't look like too much from the outside. The cracked ceilings, the old structure, and the drafty space didn't necessarily make me feel confident in the church, especially coming from a mega church in California that was constantly being updated. However, if FCS has taught me one thing it is to not judge a book by it's cover. This church has given me back so much since the moment I walked in the doors. The mega church back home was pretty and pristine, but it had nothing on the genuine, compassionate, loving church that I found in Fcs. I found a home in this church despite it's outward appearance, but I worry that others might be deterred. The church recently got some work done and now it is starting to project it's inner beauty, but there is still a lot more work to be done. Having the opportunity to help secure this church for future "firsties" would be a dream come true. Please help us continue to preserve this historic structure and create a welcome and supportive place for people to come to be their full selves. Thank you for your time, Tessa Ritchie

From: Christy Zuzelo

Received: January 25, 2015

Hello,

My name is Christy Zuzelo and I am a proud 10 year member of First Church Somerville, UCC.

I found this spiritual and emotional home at a time in my life that when I truly needed it. Over the following 10 years, i could not imaging going tthrough life with out my church hime. In fact, even though seven years ago my family and I moved more that 20 miles away from Somerville, I still return home every Sunday and often on weekdeays.

My children were baptized into this church, I have found a vocation in children's ministry here honoring our children present and future.

While First Curch may seem like just a building, to me it is a life saving, life giving place of love and inclusion and a foundation of my spiritual and emotional life.

I ask that you consider supporting our renovations and beautification our building so that we can be here for long time.

Thank you,

Christy Zuzelo
First Church Somerville member
Needham, MA

From: Marianne Benson
Received: January 25, 2015

Dear Emily Monea-

I am writing you to as a longtime resident of Davis square to strongly urge the powers that be to consider our west branch library for Community Preservation Funds.

I can think of no other facility in this part of Somerville that is more in need of help of all sorts than this beautiful but terribly neglected building. This situation is all the more troubling since a local library does and should serve a vital central role in the life of a community for residents of all ages and incomes.

I retired recently from a busy arts education career and began thinking of ways that I could become more involved in my local community. The west branch library was my first thought. I stopped in to check it out , exploring every nook and cranny, and finding each space more tired, decrepit and depressing than the next. I was totally discouraged and could not imagine spending any amount of time there in such a dreary environment.

But what potential! And how on earth did such a historically significant and important building fall into such disrepair? And what can we do about it now?

I'm thrilled to learn now that there might be some hope on the horizon. Please don't let us miss the opportunity to save this treasure.

Thank you-

Marianne Benson
15 kidder ave
Somerville

From: The Duhamel Family
Received: January 25, 2015

To the Community Preservation Committee,

Our family has lived in Somerville for more than forty years. My father, Paul Duhamel, was active in the community, helping people in need and laying the groundwork to some of the strength and vitality Somerville is known for today.

First Church Somerville (FCS) was where my father called his home church; and for the past dozen years or so, First Church had become our home church as well.

As the Duhamel Education Initiative (DEI) was getting started 20 years ago following my father's death, FCS made their hall (Duhamel Hall) available for use in DEI fundraising efforts. The annual pancake

breakfasts and infamous Ham and Bean suppers not only raise funds to support the DEI programs in the Somerville Public Schools, but serves as a place for the community to come together. These events have always been a time for people of the community to come together and reconnect, to discuss the latest activities in Somerville, and to dream about what Somerville could become.

FCS has been building the Beloved Community both internally as a community of faith and externally as an active supporter of life in Somerville. FCS is a faith community where all are welcome and valued, regardless of any of the preconceived and traditional notions of worth. FCS has effectively been rebuilding the type and the kind of community that existed many years ago in Somerville; a place in which you want to raise your family, build lasting friendships, and be part of the greater community.

FCS actively works to be present in the community: reaching out to those in need, actively participating in the joyful life of Somerville through Art Beat and Honkfest, hosting a neighborhood block party, partnering with community service groups such as Respond and the Somerville Homeless Coalition, cooking for the soup kitchen, and making space for 12-step programs.

When it was time for our family to seek a new faith community many years ago, we quickly settled into FCS. We have built many friendships here. FCS opened us up to a more active life in our city. Sadly, a work opportunity has taken us away from our hometown of Somerville and this Beloved Community.

We are writing this note in support of FCS to receive preservation funds for the building at 89 College Ave. As a 100 year old building, it is in need of preservation work to help ensure that the FCS community has a landmark building in which FCS can continue strengthening the community of Somerville.

Sincerely,
The Duhamel Family
Tim, Deb, Josh & Nick

From: Thomas OConnor
Received: January 26, 2015

Dear Emily and the Somerville community preservation committee,

As a resident of Somerville for the past 15 years I've seen some fantastic change for the better during that time and look forward to the changes to come.

Some are small in nature like potting plants and painting medians in the roadways, and some are large scale like the assembly row development.

I've taken a role recently to help shape the future on the board of directors for the boys and girls clubs of middlesex county. I look forward to my service and what great change I can help bring.

As a voice in the community I'd like to take a minute to share that my family and I believe strongly in the great social work that the UCC of Somerville on college Ave does both locally and regionally for the benefit of all races creeds and cultures. Truly ALL are welcome and supported by our church.

We are told there are some funds available for historic renovations and I employ you to consider the first church of Somerville for whatever funds are appropriate and available. The support seen in recent years to renovate, improve and restore the church have been impressive and would only be helped positively by more financial support.

Thanks for your consideration,

Tom OConnor
30 Browning Rd
Winterhill - Somerville

From: Michael Chiu

Received: January 26, 2015

Emily,

I'd like to offer some brief feedback and support of the CPA application to renovate the West Branch Library. I have many interests and perspectives on this building;

- I have lived in the neighborhood for 20+ years and have used and admired the library in my daily life.
- I have 3 children (12, 9 and 6) who are occasional users of the library, though the facility, resources and condition of the building are impediments to their enjoyment of this resource.
- I have a background in architecture and am familiar with the legacy of Carnegie Libraries and am very interested in seeing this preserved in some form as a historic, civic and artistic community asset.

In general, I think that the library has tremendous potential but is shamefully underutilized. There are a number of reasons for this, not the least of which is ADA compliance which limits the creative uses of the space. More broadly, I think that the conception of a library has changed in the 100+ years since Andrew Carnegie donated the building and we need to rethink how this facility can be best used to support the spirit of his generosity. To me, this includes the traditional services of a lending library, children's programs, access to the resources of a librarian and the internet. I would also like to see the facility used for broader community programs, clubs, general meeting space, artistic venues, lectures and even purely social activities. To me, the city has too few public/community/social/gathering spaces and the library is well situated to support this type of positive activity.

I briefly reviewed the plans in the CPA and generally support what is proposed. I understand and agree that ADA access is a key issue, the rear/glass entrance looks like a nice solution. A few more constructive thoughts on what might be done:

- I'd like to see more use of the open space behind and around the building. The current gardens are pretty, but it seems to me that some of this space could support more active use (reading space, coffee, sitting).
- The third floor is grossly underutilized. It could make a great meeting or performance space.
- Though this may not be addressed in the CPA application, the collections held at the library and programs supported are very limited; I know of many families in the neighborhood who would benefit from expansion in this area.

I'm very excited about the prospect of a renovated library and thank you for your efforts on this project. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help support this effort.

Best,

Michael Chiu
17 Kidder Avenue

From: Jennifer Ferguson
Received: January 26, 2015

Hello Emily,

I have learned that the West Branch Library is a candidate for CPA funding from the City and I want to express my strong support for their application. I've lived within a few blocks or so of the West Branch Library for 20 years and consider it an invaluable resource, particularly since I've had children. It would make me so happy to see the physical building updated and have it become a true community gathering space. The building and location have such potential to become a vibrant resource and point of pride for all Somerville residents.

I hope you will take my support into consideration as the Committee assesses which applications to fund.

With kind regards,
Jennifer Ferguson

30 Francesca Ave
Somerville, MA 02144
617-417-8040

From: Allison Lund
Received: January 27, 2015

I am writing to support the rehab of the West Branch Library. I live in Davis Square, and love walking past the beautiful building on my jaunts. I also use the library, primarily for videos and books on tape; though I have to admit with embarrassment that I haven't recently. I love the idea of holding small events at the library. I host a film group in my house, and think that doing it at a community space could be really interesting. I would enjoy being on a mailing list for events there, and imagine I might attend quite frequently. I believe that libraries are a cornerstone of public education and democracy, and I am glad that I was sent this email to remind me to use the wonderful resource more often. Thank you!!!

Allison Lund

From: Jeffrey Myers

Received: January 27, 2015

Greetings,

I am writing to provide comments on the Community Preservation Act proposals as a Somerville citizen. I apologize if any of these comments are redundant or misinformed based on the discussions held at the community meetings of the 7th and the 12th, as I did not attend (although I would have liked to - I did not hear of these meetings until afterwards despite being subscribed to the CPA news mailing list). My comments are based solely on reading the project proposals and presentations from this website: <http://www.somervillema.gov/cpa/proposals>

First, the recreational land proposals all seem worthy and capable of being funded with the allotted funds, so I will not spend time commenting on them.

Obviously the area needing discussion is how to expend the funds for the historic resources projects. Towards this goal, I'm strongly in favor of the projects that are the most heavily oriented to be focused on historic preservation - where the primary purpose of the project is to preserve, protect and make available historic resources to the Somerville community. Several of the proposed projects appear to be tangentially related to historic preservation, and propose to use the preservation funds for apparently non-historic preservation purposes. As this is the first round of projects to be approved by the committee, I believe that caution is in order for precedent setting, as well as maintaining good faith with the community that the funds gathered in their taxes are being put to use in accordance with the goals and purposes conveyed to the citizens when the CPA was passed with such a wide majority in the city.

The following are my comments related to the individual historic preservation project proposals:

Prospect Hill Tower Renovation

Milk Row Cemetery Rehabilitation & Restoration

I strongly support these two projects, as they will help preserve and protect two of the most historic sites in our city. The Prospect Hill Tower is an important symbol of our city, and very dearly needs preservation. It will be a great benefit to the community to restore access to the tower. The Milk Row project is modest in size, and will continue the city's great work restoring and maintaining this historic

site. I believe these projects, in particular the Prospect Hill Tower, can be used as a good benchmark for the effectiveness of the city's use of CPA funds for future proposals.

Somerville Museum Capital Improvements

I strongly support the Somerville Museum's proposal for use of CPA historic preservation funds to improve the accessibility and environmental protection of the museum and its collections. Like the Prospect Hill Tower and Milk Row Cemetery, the Somerville Museum is a treasure of a historic resource for our community. It houses a remarkably important collection of Somerville's history, as well as provides a great venue for many important cultural events in the city. It is remarkable how long this organization has served the community while only relying on membership dues, donations, and grants. The requested funds are modest compared to many of the other project requests, and the proposal is much more specific about how the funds will be used to directly affect the historic preservation and accessibility of the museum building. In my opinion, using the community's funds to invest in the Somerville Museum will have a great, direct impact on the preservation of Somerville's historical resources. However for this project, I am biased, as I have been volunteering at the Somerville Museum for the past year to help organize, catalog, digitize, and protect the museum's collections.

American Tube Works Complex National Register Nomination

I support the use of CPA funds to nominate the American Tube Works Complex to the National Register. These buildings are an important part of the mostly-gone industrial core of Somerville along Somerville Avenue. They also provide a distinct architectural resource to Union Square, that could be easily lost as development in Union Square increases if not protected by inclusion on the National Register. This project request is relatively small, but important for the city.

City of Somerville Archives - Processing Contractor

I support this project, as I believe digitizing and making the contents of the City of Somerville Archives available to the public will have great benefits to the community. The city's archivist already has an excellent track record of making available portions of the archive. I believe making accessible the historic items in the archives is a very good use of the historic preservation funds.

56 Bow St: Exterior Restoration

I support this project, as it will improve the historic quality of one of the city's most prominent historic districts. The house is in a highly visible, highly trafficked location in the city, and the project will greatly improve the appearance of Bow St. The amount requested is modest and strictly focused on the visible preservation aspects of a much larger, self-funded project. I am also in favor of the project due to the fact that it is the only project proposed by individual private citizens of the city, and a successful funding and execution of the project can act as encouragement for other citizens to make proposals in future years.

Mystic Water Works

I believe the restoration and reuse of the Mystic Water Works building is a very worthy goal and the project itself will be a great benefit to the community. However, the large amount of funds requested do not appear to be specifically targeted to historic preservation aspects of the project. Rather from my reading of the proposal, it seems the money will be used as a supplement for the entire project. I would much rather have the requested funds used more specifically for the historic preservation aspects of the project. If the project wanted more general use funds to complete the primary purpose of the project, the creation of affordable senior housing, I'd assume they could apply for funds from the Affordable Housing portion of the CPA funds.

First Congregational Church of Somerville UCC Renovation Phase 2
Temple B'nai Brith Fire Safety and Accessibility Project

As a private citizen of Somerville, I am reluctant to recommend using taxpayer dollars to support private religious institutions. Of the two proposals, I am more in favor of First Congregational Church of Somerville's, which is more modest in size, uses less CPA funds relative to the total project cost, and focuses on the exterior rehabilitation of its historic building. I also find the application from First Congregational Church of Somerville more compelling as a general resource for the wider community than the application from Temple B'nai Brith.

City Hall Renovation - Design and Construction Management
West Branch Library Renovations - Construction Funding

The City's requests for CPA funds under historic preservation for the City Hall and West Branch Library renovations are both large (exceedingly so in the case of the West Branch Library), and only tangentially related to historic preservation in my opinion. While both of these projects are worthwhile, I don't believe they're good uses of the limited CPA funds we have to devote to historic preservation. I think we'd be much better served if the city funded these projects using a standard capital fundraising process like municipal bonds rather than making use of our limited resource of CPA funds.

To summarize, here is my personal rank ordering of how I believe the historic preservation projects should be funded/awarded:

1. Prospect Hill Tower Renovation
2. Milk Row Cemetery Rehabilitation & Restoration
3. Somerville Museum Capital Improvements
4. American Tube Works Complex National Register Nomination
5. City of Somerville Archives - Processing Contractor
6. 56 Bow St: Exterior Restoration
7. Mystic Water Works
8. First Congregational Church of Somerville UCC Renovation Phase 2
9. Temple B'nai Brith Fire Safety and Accessibility Project
10. City Hall Renovation - Design and Construction Management
11. West Branch Library Renovations - Construction Funding

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Myers
60 Burnside Ave
Somerville, MA 02144

From: Susan Chimene
Received: January 27, 2015

January 27, 2015

To the Somerville Community Preservation Committee,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to approve the application for funding by the Temple B'nai Brith Fire Safety and Accessibility Project. I attended the public hearing held on January 12 and spoke in support of the synagogue's funding request but want to reiterate the importance of this project to our community and to the City of Somerville.

My daughter, Sara Chimene-Weiss, was instrumental in helping to inspire this project. Like most cultures, Judaism places great importance on passing on its values and traditions. The words "l'dor v'dor, from generation to generation" appear over and over in our prayers. At the time of Sara's bat mitzvah in 2001, my grandmother was in failing health but sharp of mind and determined to attend the bat mitzvah of her eldest great grandchild. Sadly, we realized that she would not be able to manage the three steep flights of stairs and she was unable to be there for what would have been one of her proudest moments. She died just before my daughter Aliza's bat mitzvah in 2002, but in the meantime, Sara set aside some of her bat mitzvah gift money and started an accessibility fund to raise money for an elevator. I, along with many other many members of the congregation, have worked diligently for many years to try to make this dream of making our building accessible a reality.

This project presents a unique opportunity to preserve a beautiful, historic building that is so much more than a structure—a duality that is expressed by our two names: Temple B'nai Brith and Congregation B'nai Brith. As the only synagogue in Somerville, our building contains not only the proud history of this city's Jewish community but also the living, breathing present life of a vibrant, diverse, and inclusive congregation that is part of the essential fabric of this vibrant, diverse, and inclusive city. Beautiful abandoned synagogues—empty or sold by communities without the means to maintain and update nineteenth or early twentieth century buildings— are all too common features of the American landscape. Worse still are tragedies such as the fire that destroyed the Gloucester synagogue.

CPA funding would help Congregation B'nai Brith bring our building into the twenty-first century and allow us to fulfill our commitment to being a safe, welcoming, and inclusive part of the Somerville community for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Susan Chimene

From: Tom Zamagni

Received: January 27, 2015

Dear Emily,

My name is Tom Zamagni and I am a member of First Congregational Church of Somerville UCC or as we like to call it First Church Somerville(FCS) at 89 College Ave Somerville, MA . I have been attending the church since 3/12 and it is truly an amazing place. All people are welcome at FCS no matter there age, race, color or sexual orientation. It is a very warm welcoming place and is deeply rooted in god's love, fellowship and community. We call ourselves the beloved community for a reason. It is a very special place with incredible people. Rev Molly Baskette and Rev Jeff Mansfield are both amazingly gifted and loving pastors. The church is involved in so many different things in the Somerville community. We share our space with several AA groups, a yogurt making coop, several theatre groups that rehearse there , the Monday night supper for Project SOUP which is part of the Somerville Homeless Coalition and Saint Meows which is a kitten adoption program. I would really like to see First Church Somerville benefit in a tangible way from the Community Preservation Committee program for all it means and does for the Somerville community.

Thank you,

Tom Zamagni

From: Lauren Hanley

Received: January 27, 2015

Hi

I am a west somerville resident and would like to see more investment into the west branch library. I would like to see the 3rd floor renovated and utilized as a public space for meetings and lectures and more investment into the library itself so that my kids may use it as an after school study space.

It is a historic building that deserves attention. We could be doing so much more with that space if we put some time and money toward it.

Thank you in advance,

Lauren Hanley

80 Bay State Avenue

Somerville

Ward 6

From: Jennifer Dorsen

Received: January 27, 2015

Hello Ms. Monea -

I am writing about the West Branch Library and its worthiness as a recipient of funds from the Community Preservation Act funds through the city.

Public libraries were initially funded to be center of a vibrant, democratic, engaged city. They, perhaps more than any other civic contribution, helped to give people a chance to learn and take advantage of opportunities that would be hard or difficult otherwise.

Since their founding, books have become cheap and knowledge is at our fingertips via the internet and easy ordering via on line retailers. Perhaps libraries are not useful any longer.

No so! More than ever we need libraries to continue to provide the things that are expensive to our neighbors: access to community and knowledge; space for meeting and discussing; an introduction for children into the world of books and learning; and a commitment to the same democratic ideals that they supported at their founding.

I hope the city will allocate some of the funds to the West branch library to address its "deferred maintenance" issues and set the stage for the next hundred year's of servicing Somerville's residents with the resources that it has over the years.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Dorsen
83 Josephine Avenue
Somerville, MA 02144

From: Abbey Eisenhower
Received: January 27, 2015

Dear Emily,

I'm writing to express my strong support for the application for the Somerville West branch library to receive community preservation act funds. I visit this library often with my children, but I see us using it so much more if it were renovated. It could be ideal for meeting spaces for groups, and could stimulate even better use of library related activities if it had more common spaces and study rooms.

Thank you for your time! Best,
Abbey Eisenhower
22 Hawthorne St apt 2

From: Dai Ellis
Received: January 27, 2015

Dear Emily,

I wanted to write to express my strong support for the West Branch Library as a priority recipient for Community Preservation Funds. We have lived in Davis Square for the last five years and have used the library extensively. We would use it even more if the building were renovated and suitable for a wider variety of community activities.

It is such a treasure for everyone in the community. But it is falling into disrepair disturbingly quickly. If the CPA Committee steers funds toward its renovation, it will be money very well spent to continue moving Somerville in the right direction.

Best,
Dai Ellis

From: Ethan Gilsdorf
Received: January 28, 2015

Dear Emily Monea:

I'm writing in support to have my neighborhood library, the West Branch Library, be considered for Community Preservation Funds. The West Branch Library has amazing potential as a public building in a neighborhood that much needs it. I want the city to make sure this renovation is priority and that the renovation can happen.

Please support this project.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ethan Gilsdorf
185 Morrison Ave apt 102
Somerville

From: Jeffrey Banks
Received: January 28, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea and the Somerville Community Preservation Committee:

It is with great excitement, gratitude and humility I write this email to you in support of First Church Somerville (89 College Ave) to receive historic preservation funds.

I am a 43-year old Somerville resident currently living on Summer Street. I have lived in Somerville and paid taxes since April 1, 2006 and have been attending First Church Somerville since August

2007. Somerville and First Church have both become a mainstay in my life and I plan on remaining here, raising children and sending them to the public schools in Somerville. While I am a teacher in Boston, I am very impressed with Somerville's public schools and what the entire city offers its youth. Thank you!

First Church Somerville represents a highly visible landmark and I believe is the oldest continuously worshipping religious community in Somerville. We are one of the few really self-sustaining houses of faith left and our congregation and people who use our building represent Somerville in ALL its diversity.

Honestly, First Church Somerville is not going anywhere, but we need help. We seek in all things to be an asset to our community, and now we are asking the wider community to be stakeholders in preserving our beautiful historic building for many generations to come. It is our goal as a faith community to remain active not only in the lives of our members but also in the lives of our Somerville community, as evident by the various outreach opportunities we host in the neighborhood as a way to build community amongst Somervillians.

First Church Somerville has become a center of recovery from drugs and alcohol. For example, I attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings at First Church Somerville on Thursday nights. I have seen the membership of this group grow over the years as many local Somerville members come to First Church for meetings as well as seeking recovery and creating a life away from drugs and alcohol. In addition, First Church is a venue used by the Somerville Duhamel Educational Initiative, food is cooked here weekly for the Somerville Homeless Coalition shelter, the Monday Night Suppers are held, and local parenting and Moms groups use the building to hold their meetings and gatherings.

First Church Somerville has become and remains an integral part of the Somerville Community. I appreciate your willingness to read this email and to consider us for historic preservation funding.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at jeffreybanks71@gmail.com or 917-441-7904.

With Warmest Wishes,

Jeffrey Banks
289 Summer Street, #3

From: James S. Adam
Received: January 28, 2015

Dear Community Preservation Committee,

My name is James S. Adams. I'm 50 years old. I've been a member of First Church Somerville for nearly ten years. My first year was as a resident of Somerville. I now live in the Beacon Hill area of Boston. However, if I'm not in Boston, I'm frequently in Davis Square Somerville at First Church Somerville as an active member and volunteer for the church and its mission. I'm also attend recovery

meetings there. Our congregation has been invited to appeal to you about what our church means to us in hopes of securing a grant to renovate our church building.

It's hard to put into a nutshell what First Church means to me. First, it's important to say that it is more than a "church" or a building. We call it a Beloved Community. For me, it's been a surrogate home and family through some of the hardest times in my life. At times like when my father died, when I couldn't afford to eat, when I was homeless, when I was in the hospital, when I was a defendant in court, when I thought suicide was the only way out, First Church Somerville was my anchor that got me through all these things. These are just a few things First Church has done for me. I owe so much of who I am now as a person to the love and acceptance I've received there as a gay male minority in this world. In this open and affirming church for LGBTQ people, I've been able to reclaim things I had been maligned from for 20 years. I've been able to reclaim things like the notion of church. I've been able to reclaim God, Jesus, Prayer, the bible and all the things government aren't supposed to fund.

But please let me tell you why it is my hope and prayer that you provide as much funding as possible for First Church Somerville's building renovation. Apart from religion or religious politics, First Church Somerville gives back to Davis Square and the city of Somerville in so many secular and interfaith ways.

- 1) Artists, actors, musicians have a place to create at First Church Somerville.
- 2) People in recovery find a path to health and sanity from substance abuse at First Church Somerville.
- 3) LGBTQ, and even drag queens like me, are embraced fully and equally at First Church Somerville.
- 4) Children and families enjoy community and peer support at First Church Somerville.
- 5) Homeless and impoverished people are fed and clothed through the partnership of Somerville Homeless Coalition and in our kitchen at First Church Somerville.
- 6) Any harvest from our urban garden is free to the public.
- 7) Many people from a wide range of organizations, interest groups and other churches have found a place to be at First Church Somerville.
- 8) Low income workers, oppressed populations (domestically and abroad), as well as victims of natural disasters and disease have found advocacy, financial support and justice from the Mission & Justice Committee of First Church Somerville.
- 9) People like me looking for an opportunity to do humanitarian work through volunteer projects like Drag Gospel Festival find it at First church Somerville.

If I didn't have First Church Somerville I would probably have no church at all. Nothing compares to it. Whether you are a Christian or not, person of faith or not, First Church Somerville offers a strong foundation for anyone seeking connection and help through some of life's hardest challenges and a celebration for all of its victories. God bless First Church Somerville!

Sincerely,

James S. Adams
60 Joy Street, #406
Boston, MA 02114

From: Dore Penn

Received: January 28, 2015

January 28, 2015

Community Preservation Committee
City of Somerville
City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue
Somerville MA 02143

I am writing on behalf of Temple B'nai Brith's request for funding to make our synagogue safe and accessible.

My wife and I have been members since 1988; our son grew up in the shul and celebrated his becoming a bar mitzvah in 2006. I served on the Board of Directors for 13 years between 2001 and 2013, 6 of those years on the Executive Committee. I currently co-lead our support of Family Table, a food pantry and grocery delivery project of Jewish Family and Children's Service. Each month our congregants contribute food stuffs that are distributed to over 180 families in the greater metropolitan Boston area.

I was also a member of the original development committee for the accessibility project. As has been presented in other testimony, we are a growing, but not affluent community. As a member of the board and active in the accessibility effort, it has been difficult to have undertaken repeated attempts to bring this project to fruition. The stories of grandparents and friends who could not attend tender and important life cycle events at our synagogue because of its lack of accessibility has been personally painful. The synagogue is also a resource to the entire Somerville community, hosting events open to all including dances, films and lecture series. I hate that we always have to add the phrase "We regret that Temple B'nai Brith is not yet wheel chair accessible." Our inability to include those with disabilities contradicts the values of Judaism and the ethos of inclusion that has distinguished us as an institution. Long before other synagogues welcomed interfaith families, gays and lesbians, and non-traditional families, our doors were open and welcoming to all Jews and those who loved them.

Other letters have spoken to Congregation B'nai Brith's involvement in the community life and support of organizations in Somerville: Respond, the Somerville Homeless Coalition, Community Action Agency of Somerville, Somerville Community Corporation and Community Cooks.

More personally, I have now developed difficulties with my knees and am, at 64, experiencing first hand the challenges of making it up those many stairs referenced in other testimony. I fear for the future and a day when, having formed a deep connection, love and commitment to the temple, to its life and activities, I may no longer be able to attend.

In 2004 I was asked to write something about "Why I go to TBB" for our synagogue newsletter. I have attached that document as part of this testimony. It expresses why the synagogue is so important to me, how unique a community we have and seek to preserve.

I thank you for your consideration and urge your support of our application for funding.

Respectfully,



Isidore Penn
Congregant

Why I go to Temple B'nai Brith

Dore Penn

It was 1988. My wife and I had lived in Somerville for many years and had been “shul shopping” for what seemed like forever. We were not drawn to the traditional synagogues (and couldn’t afford most of their dues) and didn’t find enough “heart” in some of the “new age” approaches to Judaism. We were poised on the brink of giving up when we ran into a common friend who said “something was happening” at the shul on Central St. – the shul we’d each passed dozens of times in our lives in Somerville. The shul that was dying...only maybe not. We came for Kol Nidre. We were greeted at the door by an older couple – the man looked for all the world like every Jewish uncle in my family – slight, a bit stooped, stringy hair on a balding pate, the glint of wit and intelligence in the eye (and as I couldn’t know at the time but learned later, a penchant for white fish salad and hard boiled eggs). At his side stood a rather diminutive red haired woman who I would learn quickly had a stature of spirit, intelligence and tenacity that rendered completely irrelevant the size of her physical frame. These were, of course, Morrie and Ada Kleiman. They greeted us and warmly welcomed us and talked with us about how important it was for the shul to continue and how it was important for the next generation to make it their own and how they knew that things had to change but for the shul to survive change was a good thing and how the worst thing that could happen was for the shul to be sold and turned into condominiums (this was all the rage in the area at the time.

I noticed other septuagenarians who had been hanging in – waiting for the next generation to arrive: Saul Zidel, the only man I’ve ever known who made sure that his “kippah” (skull cap) and socks matched. Later I’d get to know Izzy Interest, Reba Kraft, and Lucille Mabel through conversations I no longer remember. Saul, Izzy and Reba have passed, but Lucille lives in Milton and has learned how to use the internet!

I also noticed folks from progressive causes on which I’d worked who I hadn’t seen in years. There were gay and lesbians in attendance who I also knew. There was a cordial and relaxed atmosphere – so different than the synagogues of my youth. It did seem, indeed, that “something was happening” here.

And then there was the sermon. This was the night of Phil’s famous (to me, at least) “This Old Shul” sermon. This was years before the Windows and Walls campaign when our beautiful sanctuary featured peeling paint and water stains around the windows (which led Phil to describe the windows as “weeping”) and long before the seats in the sanctuary were refurbished thanks to Ada so that one no longer took the varnish of the back of the seats home on one’s clothing on those 90 degree High Holy Days. There was the message of the “TOS” sermon which moved us beyond words because Phil simply

said that to save the building and the spirit that was Congregation B'nai Brith meant opening the doors to all kinds of Jews: singles, couples, traditional and non-traditional families, weekly to annual shul attendees, gays and lesbians, interfaith couples, et al. In 1988 this openness was startling and compelling. These days many shuls are "inclusive" but back then this was a big deal.

This may have even been the night that Isaiah, Phil & Nomi's oldest (perhaps 4 at this time), decided he had to speak with his father in the midst of, arguably, the most important sermon of the year. No matter. Isaiah had something to take up with Phil and proceeded to pull on Phil's pants mid-syllable. Phil simply stopped, bent over to talk with Isaiah, apparently answered the question satisfactorily as Isaiah then left the bimah (pulpit), and Phil went on with the sermon as if being interrupted by the pulling of pants mid-syllable was the most natural of things. Well, for Phil, and for Congregation B'nai Brith, it was.

We thought that maybe we'd found our place right there in Somerville, where we had lived for many years. Then, later that year, in November, a tragedy struck an entire community of people when two well-known psychotherapists were murdered while on vacation just around Thanksgiving. There was a weekend between a gathering organized by other therapists and a memorial service at the Old Cambridge Baptist Church. We'd only been to TBB for Kol Nidre and Yom Kippur. So basically with no real connection to anyone, I approached folks at TBB about using the synagogue for some kind of service if I organized it for that "in between" weekend. Of course was their answer. I asked Phil if he'd be willing to come to the service, even for just a little while, to offer some words of comfort. Of course was his answer.

That was it. We will never leave.

From: Melissa St. John

Received: January 28, 2015

Dear Ms Monea,

I hope this letter finds you doing well. I am writing regarding First Church Somerville. I have been attending this church for as long as I have been living in Somerville. I moved to Somerville from rural CT in September of 2001. I was nervous about living in a city and the events of Sept 11th made it even worse. I had determined that I would live in Somerville for one year, and then move to a more rural area after my lease expired. My partner and I began to attend First Church Somerville the Sunday before Sept 11th. We were so happy to have a place to go on that horrible day. We were so scared and felt so alone in a city where we did not know people. First Church made us feel comfortable and gave us a place to process our feelings about the events with others. We began to attend more regularly and we slowly made relationships in the community.

One year later, we decided to renew our lease and stay in Somerville for "one more year". Eight years later, we were still very involved in First Church and still living in Somerville. When my partner and I began looking to buy a house, we decided that we wanted to live close to our church community. So, we are now home owners in Somerville with 2 children and cannot imagine living somewhere else. First Church gave us a place where we could belong. Belonging to First Church, helped us to feel like we belong in Somerville. This church is so valuable to the community and to our family.

Sincerely,

Melissa St. John
Sunset Rd, Somerville

From: Mark Alston-Follansbee

Received: January 28, 2015

Dear Emily and the Community Preservation Committee:

I am writing in support of First Church Somerville's proposal for their historic building on College Avenue. While I don't know much (anything) about historic preservation or renovations, I can speak to what an important community partner First Church is for the Somerville Homeless Coalition and many other agencies and members of our community.

While we are never certain when this started, First Church has hosted our Monday evening community supper put on by Project SOUP for over 30 years. They are among our largest financial supporters and they are one of the lead sponsors for the Save Our Homes Walk to prevent homelessness for Somerville families and individuals. They allow us to use their Church for meetings and join us at the State House to advocate for housing for all our clients.

From our perspective, First Church provides the caring, loving support we treasure and that allows us to do our work. I'm happy to answer any questions in support of their proposal and I hope that you will all support First Church with CPA funds. Sincerely, Mark

--

Mark Alston-Follansbee

Executive Director

Somerville Homeless Coalition

617-623-6111

maf@shcinc.org

"Working to put ourselves out of business since 1985"

From: Alex Lessin

Received: January 28, 2015

I support the B'nai Brith project and the City Archives project. If this allows city departments to use space more wisely and allows the public access to historic information, all the better.

Alex Lessin

From: Liam Seward

Received: January 28, 2015

Ms. Monea:

My name is Liam Seward and I'm writing on behalf of First Church's request for funding through the Community Preservation Act. My wife Kathleen and I have been homeowners in Union Square for over seven years and we have three children ages 6, 4 and 2 who are in the Somerville School system. I served for a number of years as the Clerk of Union Square Main Streets and my wife and I are members of First Church where I serve as the Chair of the Family Ministry Committee.

First Church has served as a spiritual home for Somerville residents for over 100 years. Although membership has waxed and waned over the years the church is currently undergoing something of a rebirth with over 70 children enrolled in its Sunday School and robust programming happening throughout the week. In order to maintain our historical structure the church has recently gone through a three year capital campaign that has raised over \$600,000 toward repairs and restoration of our building. Funds from the CPA would greatly help to augment our own funding in order for us to preserve our historic church building.

While our church building houses our worship service on Sundays, I think my second favorite day of the week at First Church is Thursdays. On that night our church is host to a cat adoption program, a 12 step program, a yogurt co-op and a diverse group of people who regularly cook and serve meals at the Somerville Homeless Coalitions shelter across the street. These activities speak to First Church's role in serving the needs of our wider community.

I thank you for your time. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Yours,

Liam Seward
617-821-9529

From: Shanna Garvey

Received: January 28, 2015

Hi Emily,

I'm writing to let you know how I found First Church and why they deserve funds. Please read my story and consider my church as your number one candidate!

My young son and I were arguing one [Sunday morning](#) and it was during a moment's breath that my eyes met the clock on our microwave - [9:00 am](#). Oh my god, I thought, we have 12 more hours until bedtime. I'm never going to make it. We're never going to make it alone in this house for another 12

hours. Well, just a few minutes later, a friend of mine from Dorchester sent me a message and mentioned she'd check her texts again after church. Church. Church! That's what I needed! I needed salvation. I needed to throw my ragged stress down before something bigger than me, bigger than my weary body and heart. It was the safety of a church I needed that morning. Years ago, I'd noticed the rainbow flag flying above the door of First Church and had wanted to stop in for mass someday. I'd wanted to see what this church in Davis flying the LGBT flag was doing - what were they preaching? Years ago, I'd actually looked up their Sunday service hours. That Sunday, the morning my son and I had been arguing, I double checked the time on their website and saw an [11 am](#) mass. It was meant to be, to save me that morning. To save my son and me.

That mass saved us. It saved our relationship. I sat with quiet tears streaming down my face. My vulnerabilities laid down in front of me. Out there in the open and set free as they ran from my eyes down my cheeks. God, I thought, these people love me for who I am and there's a chance no one even noticed me, this stranger, here. These people are okay in their vulnerability. And they love the regulars along with whoever the wind blows through the doors.

I went to church looking for something that could save me from my anger and stress, from my frustrations and incompetence, from my insensitivity and impatience. My church is teaching me to accept my humanness. That we're each broken and while at the same time. And through acceptance, the love that has emerged is so huge, so unstoppable.

First Church is a source of life-giving support to our city. We support the Coalition for Homelessness, we support those struggling with alcohol and drug addictions, we support those struggling with depression and suicide, those grieving losses, people who are sick, people who are victims of abuse and violence, people who have been rejected. The list goes on. First Church agitates us and challenges us to think of our neighbors, to connect to each other and offer our help. The good times are easy - it's during the hard times when we really need to be connected to one another.

This church and its members are deeply woven into the lives of people living and struggling in Somerville. They've inspired us to begin weaving our threads into the lives of others. Every week, we buy extra groceries to donate to the food pantry. My husband helps cook meals for the homeless when he is able. We support a foster care agency just over the line in Medford. We have been selling our excessive belongings on Craigslist for the past year to fuel a box full of money to freely donate to charitable causes.

Years ago, my husband and I moved to Somerville for shorter commutes to our offices. We discovered an incredibly delicious foodie and beer scene. The music scene was great. We thought the diversity in the city was cool, too. Cool from our privileged perch over in Ten Hills. But we never thought we'd raise our kids here, not in the city. We thought, there's nothing here for our kids.

That attitude changed when My family and I became a part of First Church. My desperation brought me to a church that cares so deeply about everyone. My husband doesn't believe in God and doesn't buy into most of the Bible stories. But that isn't what he seeks to get out of worship at First Church. With completely opposing beliefs in God, we take away the same message: we need each other; everyone in

our community, our city, our world, needs each other to survive. Running away from the city when our kids are school-aged doesn't make sense to us anymore.

Last Easter, I made a resolution which brought me closer to my community in this city. I clearly remember the moment I decided to consciously dedicate the money I normally spend on impulse shopping to people who don't have as much. This was my Easter resolution - to do something different, something that would bring me closer to God. I discovered deeper love in my heart, richer love, more ability to give than I could have ever imagined. It was that moment that I began to grow a relationship of love for the people of this city. I realized then that this is the place I want to be and the place where my kids should grow up, where they needed to grow up.

To me, Somerville is a community rich in the big draws that I appreciated so much prior to discovering First Church - art, music, food, writers, small business, farmers market, etc. But now, the big draws have changed from not just the great strengths of the city to the people - the people creating and offering their talents and to the people suffering, the people who struggle, the people who don't have enough to eat or to wear or to keep themselves sheltered and warm, the people who don't fit in. I respect so deeply the organizations in this city that help the disadvantaged and the people who have no voice.

First Church is one of the organizations that extends its talents, time and money to the disadvantaged, to those struggling and to those who have no voice. Our city needs First Church. This church connects people in ways that are difficult to describe. Its pastors work so hard to connect us to the community, to make change and to make life better and happier for people who live in Somerville. Without this church, my family would have never started walking down the path of change we found that morning after my son and I were fighting. Without discovering First Church, that church flying that beautiful rainbow flag, right now we would be thinking about whether we should sell or start renting out our place so we could move to the suburbs.

Please consider how invaluable First Church is to the lives of people in Somerville. I hope that you will consider dedicating funds from the Community Preservation Act to support our church as a life-giving institution in our city.

Thank you for reading my story.

Shanna Forgit-Garvey
Somerville, MA

From: Marin Chiu
Received: January 29, 2015

I am writing in response to the request for community input on the use of the CPA funds.

I would like to see the West Branch Library project funded. I think it is a shame that we have a beautiful community building in our neighborhood that is not ADA complaint. . How can it be, that in the year 2015, this building still does not have an elevator? My 89 year old mother-in-law carries her rolling

walker up the front steps of the library! It is certainly not safe for her, but she wants to go to her neighborhood library, and I don't blame her. Libraries can and should be more than a place to borrow books. My kids should be able to go to programs at our local library, but this is not possible because of the lack of ADA compliance. This building has so much potential to become a vibrant community space. Please help make that happen!

Best,
Maren Chiu
617-623-3497
17 Kidder Ave
Somerville, MA 02144

From: Alison Mitchell
Received: January 29, 2015

To Whom it May Concern:

Please consider the West Branch Library for Community Preservation Act funds.

The West Branch is an historic building that has the potential to reach a wide range of Somerville residents. Located conveniently in Davis Square, with ample space both indoors and outside, it is easy to imagine the library as a vibrant community center. However, due primarily to the fact that the building is not ADA-accessible, the library remains underutilized and inaccessible to many in our community. Community Preservation Act funds would allow the library to come into compliance with important regulations, and become accessible to all.

My young children and I are regular patrons at the West Branch. We love the building and the librarians. However, there are many areas in need of improvement. First and foremost, is lack of a ramp or other access for strollers, wheelchairs and others with mobility issues. More than once, I have seen young parents arrive at the library for the first time, only to turn around and leave when they realize they can't access the building with their sleeping child in a stroller. How sad! I also know of an elderly resident who would love to browse the collection on the 3rd floor, but can't manage the steps. It's unfortunate that much of the library is inaccessible to members of our community.

Another crucial issue is the bathroom. The only bathroom in the library -- indeed, the only public bathroom in Davis Square -- is in the Children's Room. This means that members of the public often walk through the Children's Room to use the bathroom. Often, these people are not using the bathroom purely for going to the bathroom -- not long ago, a member of the public nearly died of a drug overdose outside the bathroom while young children watched. Typically, libraries have a dedicated bathroom for children and their caregivers. An additional bathroom on the main floor of the library for general use would greatly improve the safety and security of the library for all.

Somerville residents value our library. The West Branch has the potential to be a vibrant community center. With resources from the Community Preservation Act, this could become reality. Please consider this important, historic building as you allocate resources from the CPA.

Many thanks,

Alison Mitchell
124 Orchard Street #2, Somerville

From: Linda Burnett
Received: January 29, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea,

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter of support for the installation of elevators at Temple B'nai Brith on Central Street.

This beautiful 1922 building and the congregation that fills it have become quite important to me in the two years that I have been attending services here. When I see some of our more fragile and less mobile members struggling to get to the sanctuary, it breaks my heart, and also gets me very nervous, watching them on the stairs.

I am only 61 now, and am looking forward to aging in the community, and attending services in this historic building. B'nai Brith has been in continuous operation since 1904 -- certainly a longevity record in the area!

Thank you for taking all these factors into account when weighing the importance of the many important projects currently competing for funding in your fair city.

Most sincerely yours,

Linda Burnett

Linda Burnett, Realtor®
Keller Williams Realty/Boston-Metro
(617) 335-2824 Mobile phone
(617) 325-7129 Home office
(617) 399-1392 E-fax
<http://www.GreatHomesInBoston.com>
Linda@LindaBurnett.com

From: Norman Fine

Received: January 29, 2015

Norman Fine Catering

Distinctive Catering For All Occasions

To: Emily Monea and Marilynn Sager
Regarding: The Community Preservation Act

To whom it may concern,

The Temple is a small pot of Gold.

A thriving or even the attempt at thriving of a Jewish connective tissue is wonderful thing to have found in Somerville. I remember seeing the building for the first time driving by.

I could not take my eyes off this "real" live temple in the middle of (what was for me at that time) nowhere. The city was new and I just a babe. And there stood my childhood. Of the neighborhood from whence I was a kid. Some comfort and disbelief. And wonderful that a "life" was/is still here, where a group of Jews had the wherewithal to create this building and a community realized..

I was part of the original group of people who met for countless years in order to realize for themselves a legal mixed use environment for artists. The Brickbottom Artists Building/Community. Another unique event that is now part of a mix in one of the most diverse cities that I know of. It's exciting.

Temple Bnai Brith is a gift to Somerville. History beautifully preserved for as long as time will permit. It would be so cool if they could finish this project with the help of your assistance.

Thanks for listening to my blabber,

Norman Fine

From: Alex Des Forges

Received: January 29, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea,

I would like to register my support for the Friends of Healey and Mystic Housing Authority's Open Space Proposal.

Thank you!

Alex Des Forges
80 Wallace Street

From: Susan Turner

Received: January 30, 2015

Hello,

I'm so impressed with the commitment of my church to the community of Somerville. We hold an interfaith service on Easter morning at the Powderhouse park, bringing together people from several different church communities in the area. Our ministers meet weekly with congregants in the Diesel Cafe - bringing business to this gathering place. We join the Honk parade every year, and bring people from all surrounding towns to celebrate with us. In 2014 we moved back into our main sanctuary after almost a year of services in the basement of the church, while major renovations were made above. We have been able to do this because of the wonderful growth of the church over the past 10 years. However we are stretched now to finish the last stages of the renovations which will make more of the rooms in the church more accessible to disabled and elderly. We need to expand the reach of the current elevator to access rooms which are not being used at present. We also have hopes to utilize the space in our tower, which presently displays our Black Lives Matter sign. With that sign we hope to express our support for the movement, and to encourage people of color to see what we are about, and come to a service. Our services seek to reach people of every color, sexual identification, and age - and the friendly and accepting nature of the congregation helps everyone to feel welcome. We feel an investment in our church will be a strong investment in the well being of the town of Somerville for years to come as we grow and reach out to the community.

Thank you,
Susan Turner
182 Magazine St.
Cambridge Ma

A Cambridge resident, but strong supporter of the church!

From: Norma Fajardo-Huard

Received: January 30, 2015

January 30, 2015

Emily Monea
c/o Somerstat
93 Highland Ave.
Somerville MA 02143

Dear Community Preservation Committee,

I am writing to you in support of First Congregational Church of Somerville UCC application for funding for its Phase 2 renovations.

I have been a resident of Somerville for over 6 years and have worked in the community for almost ten years. My son goes to school in Somerville and is part of several sports programs in this city. Somerville is our home and we are staying here for a long time to come.

After many years of being away from church, I felt a pull to return last year and after searching out a good fit for me in a church I decided to walk into First Church after walking by hundreds of times over the years.

As a single, Latina mother raised in a strict Roman Catholic home in Boston, I did not know what to expect. When I first walked into First Church, I was immediately welcomed by someone at the door and so many people smiled and greeted me and although I was noticeably nervous I stayed after service for coffee hour where I met some of the most amazing people. Rev. Molly and Rev. Jeff have been so kind to me and my son and everyone at the church has been friendly and kind.

When I moved out of a bad situation with my ex boyfriend this past fall, so many people reached out and offered furniture and home items. When I reached out about my son's fears in the new apartment, Rev. Jeff was willing to come and bless our new home to help my son's fears.

First Congregational Church of Somerville UCC is not just a church it is a community. This community is open to all. Please help this church and community partner with the funds needed for renovations to a building that houses so much love and caring for so many.

I apologize if this letter is more emotional a plea than technical or professional but being part of this church community has been a very uplifting and positive experience in my life and it would be amazing to have First Church receive the funds needed to restore this beautiful building.

Sincerely,

Norma Fajardo-Huard

From: Tai Dinnan

Received: January 31, 2015

Dear Emily,

I'm writing in support of The Somerville Community Growing Center's CPA proposal.

I spent my childhood in Vermont. My family didn't have much money, but I felt rich. When I went outside to play, I chose from a backyard with a climbing tree and several gardens, forest land filled with fort building materials, and a river whose banks I shared with beavers, otters, minks, and herons.

Living in Somerville helped me grow appreciative of my environment growing up. It also, however, taught me that very small spaces can provide rich natural experiences, especially for children. The Growing Center embodies this sentiment.

I worked in Somerville school gardens and at the Growing Center with school groups for four years. How amazing is was to be able to walk through Union square, safely cross two streets, and arrive

at the gates of the Growing Center with my after school Garden Club from Argenziano School. There we would play tag, climb trees, plant seeds, pull weeds, compost them (and of course, get side tracked as we found all sorts of compost critters), and grow silent observing our bird and animal visitors. Through free play and more structured activities in a safe outdoor space, we learned about plants, nature, ecosystems, and ourselves.

The Friends of the Somerville Community Growing Center have sustained the space and continued to run engaging programming for a diverse group of Somerville residents for more than twenty years. Thousands visit the site each year. However, their modest budget can't keep up with the sorts of major infrastructure improvements that are needed after 20 years of wear and tear. In an age when more and more people are valuing time spent in nature, use of the Growing Center remains strong.

The Growing Center's grassroots history and ecologically rich site needs an infusion of resources. With city support, the site and volunteers will be equipped to sustain the Growing Center's growth and maintenance for decades to come. The Growing Center is an amazing asset for the City of Somerville. I hope that the CPA funding will be awarded so that the resourceful "Friends" and volunteers can realize their hopes and dreams for the site.

Thank you,

-Tai Dinnan

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Tai Dinnan

<http://taidinnan.wordpress.com/>

Blogging @ <http://growingstories.wordpress.com>

From: Kristen Strezo

Received: February 1, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea,

I am writing you in the hope that you will grant **Temple B'Nai Brith an updated fire alarm system and elevator.**

An elevator is needed more than ever and I have seen the need last Fall during Rosh Hashannah services. I personally witnessed an elderly woman attempting to climb the stairs to the second floor, the steep, slippery 1922-designed wooden stairs.

The elderly woman easily looked to be in her eighties and she was dressed in her very best, including a pair of high heeled shoes. It was at a lull in the lobby when she arrived and began to climb the stairs, congregants were already in the sanctuary on the second floor.

I held my breath as I saw her grip the banister tight on the first few steps up. She wanted to walk up the stairs herself, but I gently insisted on walking behind her should she lose her balance and fall backwards.

Later, I had to leave services before she did, and it frightened me to think that she would climb the stairs back down.

I was praying that it was not alone, her clutching the banister in heels.

Temple B'nai Brith has been a pillar for Somerville's Jewish community for many generations now, since 1904. And while the building itself is gorgeous, historic, unique, it is in desperate need of an elevator to serve its handicapped, elderly and limited mobility members.

I hope that you can help make these updates possible for our congregants.

I'd be glad to talk about it in further detail by email or my cell phone 773-519-0279. Please feel free to contact me.

I thank you very much for your consideration.

All best,

Kristen Strezo

Assembly Row, Somerville

STREZO!

Kristen Strezo

kristen0227@gmail.com

From: Beth Fischer

Received: February 2, 2015

As a member of temple bnai brith I am writing concerning the community preservation act and the dire need to make the synagogue handicap accessible by building an elevator. This project has been in the works for many years, however we are a poor synagogue and we are scraping by as it is. The sanctuary is up a flight of stairs, and the chapel is down a flight of stairs. We are a warm and inviting community and we would like to make our synagogue available to everyone. I myself have had times of difficulty with climbing the stairs and, without an elevator we are excluding people that cannot climb stairs. Temple bnai brith has contributed a lot to the town of Somerville through such things as the walk for the homeless and the family table (food collection for the poor). I am asking you to please support bnai brith by awarding us the funds available through the community preservation act so that we can build an elevator. Thank you for your consideration.

Beth Fischer

From: Robert Filippo

Received: February 2, 2015

Good day Ms. Monea,

Please consider choosing Temple B'nai Brith to receive funding so that they may update their fire alarm system and install an elevator.

They've been saving for the updates since 2007. Now, in 2015, still have not reached their goal. But the need of an updated fire system and elevator never goes away.

Temple B'nai Brith is a quiet, yet steady community in Somerville. Congregants have been attending services for decades, some for several generations, we're proud to say.

Our community needs you.

Our building is old and it is imperative that we update our fire alarm system as soon as possible.

Please help us fund this need in our cherished and vibrant community.

Thank you for your time.

-Robert Filippo

From: Laura Marshall

Received: February 2, 2015

I am a major user of the West Branch Library - at least once a week , often more. It is such a wonderful building and long neglected. It would be a wonderful thing to see some restoration happen. The upper floor would be a great resource for the community if fixed up. Let me know how I can support such a project.

-Laura Marshall

From: Barbara Mangum

Received: February 2, 2015

Comments on the Prioritization of the FY15 Applications for Funding Using CPA Funds

February 2, 2015

Barbara Mangum

As this is the first year of the awarding of CPA funds for historic preservation, it is very important to set good precedents for the following years. These are some thoughts I have had about the process and the applications that have been submitted to date.

The Process:

First, I saw very few instances where applicants presented two estimates for a project's costs. Perhaps it is better to ask the application how the costs were derived and how they are justified...

Public Benefit:

I feel that the public benefit for exterior restoration or rehabilitation work needs to be solidified by an agreement between the owner and the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission ensuring that they

will become listed as an historic district by the end of the project. The final funds for the project should not be given out to the awardee until this is complete. The owner receives the benefit of the funds and the public receives the benefit of enjoying the historic appearance of the resource from the street-way.

For owners receiving substantial funding (over \$10,000?) for an exterior building project, the public should be assured through a preservation restriction that the owner will “repair, maintain, and administer the premises so as to preserve the historical integrity of the features, materials, appearance, workmanship, and setting that made the property eligible as a local historic resource” and further, that the title to the property is encumbered with a covenant requiring this for an agreed upon period of time (perhaps 5 years for every \$10,000 awarded up to a maximum of 100 years?)

For projects that are awarded funds by the CPC for interior rehabilitation, restoration or stabilization, for protection of the interior through the installation of fire suppression systems or other means, or for ADA access, further requirements of the owner should be made regarding public access. The public should be able to access the historically important spaces by appointment and through regularly scheduled and advertised open hours. A minimum would be 12 days per year during the period of the preservation easement. (This was the minimum required by the Save America’s Treasures grant of private or nonprofit organizations).

Disclaimer:

Let me be the first to note that I am the President of the Somerville Museum, an applicant, and am therefore bias toward funding the Somerville Museum project in any event.

As an art conservator and President of Historic Somerville, I urge funding of the MRC tombs and more if funds are available.

Project Comments:

I am not addressing the projects that are involved with open space acquisition or recreation/gardening as there appears to be plenty of funds to fund these.

For the next year of funding, I would hope that the CPC would vote to increase the Historic Preservation portion to 20% with the Open Space/Recreation space allotment going to 10%. This would only affect 2015-2016 and thereafter could be once again adjusted based on the number and amount of funds being asked for in each round.

Priority of Funding

1. [Prospect Hill Tower Renovation](#) (historic resources)

I believe this project should be the highest priority of the committee. This is the second most important historic resource in the City, with the Powder House being the first. The work to be addressed is not deferred maintenance – settling of the ground requires periodic resetting of stones. Mortar is meant to be sacrificial to ensure the preservation of the masonry and stone blocks. Repointing should be done every 20-25 years depending on the condition of the mortar. Resetting of the stones is expensive as the stone is heavy and can be dangerous.

TBA estimated the total construction costs for the Prospect Hill Tower project including a 10% contingency fee as \$469,000. *The City has added another 10% contingency fee on top of this to*

cover increases in construction prices at the time of the bid. Since the bid is occurring within 6 months of the estimate by TBA, this does not seem warranted . Given the many excellent projects, which are requesting CPA funds, could the CPC verify with the City that this is not a mistake and is needed? **It would reduce the amount of the CPA award for this project to the figure given by TBA of \$469,000 , making another \$31,000 available for another project.** (\$500,000 requested)

2. **Somerville Museum ADA and Environmental Improvements:**

I urge funding of this project.

3. **Milk Row Cemetery Rehabilitation & Restoration** (historic resources) This is a great project and the cemetery tombs are in urgent need of attention. Although the funds will not be enough to complete the project, it will allow the worst tomb to be addressed.

Given that the CPC may offer an applicant a reduced amount of funds for a particular reduced project scope, is it possible for the CPC to offer an applicant a greater amount of funds if the end result is a better, more efficient use of funds? The restoration of one tomb will require having skilled preservationists, materials, and equipment on site. It would be most efficient, if all of the remaining 6 tombs that need to be restored could be addressed at the same time. The amount estimated by the City's preservation consultant to undertake all 6 tombs was \$90,000 plus 10% contingency = \$99,000. If further funds are available, the project could include conservation of the grave markers and the conservation of the 1863 monument as well. (Amount available on request)

4. **American Tube Works Complex National Register Nomination** (historic resources) A good use of funds

5. **City of Somerville Archives - Processing Contractor** (historic resources)
A good use of funds

6. **First Congregational Church of Somerville UCC Renovation Phase 2** (historic resources)
The stained glass conservation and the entryway restoration will make the church building an asset to the community, as it is prominently located on College Ave. The Church also did a good job in their application of separating out what costs were historic preservation-related and which were not. (They are not asking for funds for other alterations of their basement, for example – although they include it as a matching cost of sorts.)
The restoration of the stucco could be a good project if the SHPC is involved. I suggest full funding provided the SHPC is satisfied. Formal public access should become part of the agreement with the SHPC and the Church, and if it is not already a local historic district, it should be required to become one.

7. **Temple B'nai Brith Fire Safety and Accessibility Project (historic resources)**

The request would add a fire safety sprinkler system and ADA elevator to the Temple. ADA access will allow more of the general public to visit and take part in the temple as an historically

significant place of worship. Formal public access should become part of the agreement with the SHPC and the Temple, if it is not already a local historic district, should become one.

Budget Cost Review:

I have some concerns about the way the costs were tabulated. The Dellbrook construction estimate of \$539,000 includes a construction contingency of \$35,000. I believe this amount was derived by totaling the construction costs without the contractors' general conditions included, or fees, etc., and *using a 10.5% contingency multiplier.*

That's fine, but *there is also a 15% contingency multiplier added to the whole project equal to \$86,850.* It is stated to be derived from the construction cost, but appears to come from Dellbrook's figure of \$539,000 + \$40,000 in architectural fees, as the total for a 15% contingency on \$86,850 is \$579,000. Is this additional contingency fee as mistake? Why is it needed? Also, 10% is a more commonly cited number for a contingency. Are there more unknowns in this project given that certain parts of the design are still to be done according to the application?. If so, should the applicant come back to the CPC next year with their request tightened? Construction work is slated to begin in the Spring of 2016 according to the Temple's request form. Therefore, this could be done without changing the Temple's timetable for construction, yes?

There are some other problems when I look for an explanation of the basement demolition/reconfiguration costs.

-There is money included in Dellbrook's construction estimate for the elevator for demolition, drywall, electrical, etc. and it is unclear whether this isn't the same work described as requiring \$46,000 for the basement demolition, drywall and electrical.

- There is no separate budget or estimate provided by a contractor that I could find to substantiate the \$46,000 request for the basement work, although it is noted in the application as being necessary for egress.

- The letter by Ed Gordon talks about the interior, including the basement, being historically significant in its layout. It is unclear how the demolition and reconfiguration of the basement will occur in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, as this work has not been well described in the application. As the interior was determined to be significant by the SHPC, it seems that the basement reconfiguration will need to go before the commission with the proposed changes. This may take some time to work out.

- A small detail, but the permit cost appears to use the figure of \$20/\$1000 cost of construction. When I last looked, it was \$19/\$1000.

Unless there is a good reason to use the 15% contingency figure over the included 10% contingency or in lieu of a total contingency of 10%, I would ask the applicant if they could subtract out \$35,000 in contingency fees from the Dellbrook estimate, reducing it to \$539,000-\$35,000=\$504,000 and then add all the construction associated costs together (with the

exception of the building permit fee, which is a known value)), and multiply it all by a 10% contingency fee. The permit fee should be recalculated at the \$19/\$1000 construction cost level and added to the total. This brings the grand total of the project to \$667,496. Subtracting out the Temple's contribution of \$277,185 leaves a **balance of \$390,311**. This still leaves all projects intact as described and gives a 10% contingency overall.

8. **56 Bow Street: Exterior Restoration** (historic resources)
56 Bow Street: exterior restoration (siding): \$15,000 to use cedar clapboard instead of composite board. A positive award here would encourage other private citizens of Somerville to ask for funds to make up the difference between non-historic and historic materials. This could encourage individuals to have their property listed as historic with the SHPC. I'm fine with this as long as there is an historic preservation restriction on the property as a result and it is listed with the SHPC.
9. **Mystic Water Works** (historic resources) A good project, though it appears that the construction company has significant resources at hand that it could apply toward this project. Send it back for clear detailing and justification of the costs requested.
10. **Somerville City Hall Renovation (Design and Construction Management)**: \$600,000
Funds to restore exterior building elements, upgrade mechanical systems, upgrade life safety, and handicapped accessibility.
This project – at least the exterior painting, clock repair, and the ADA aspects are clearly needed (or in the case of the clock –desirable). However, it is difficult to determine whether the remaining code upgrades and aspects of the project are historic preservation projects, or deferred maintenance. This should be sent back for details on the costs required to undertake truly historic preservation portions of the project.
11. **West Branch Library Renovations - Construction Funding** (historic resources)
This could be a great project, but it is not really fundable as submitted. Send it back to have the City work out what is preservation and what is not as a first step. I don't believe the people of Somerville would be very happy to know that the CPA funding has been tied up for 20 years of payments for a bond at the level of \$500,000 or so in order to fund repairs and alterations of a public building. This ties the hands of the future CPC too much and funding of the renovation of the libraries should be a normal municipal undertaking. Are there funds available at the state level as well for the reconstruction of libraries?

From: Stephanie Hirsch
Received: February 3, 2015

Hello Community Preservation Act Committee -

I would like to submit comments in support of the Community Growing Center's proposal to receive CPA funding for upgrade design and community build planning. I can't think of any place or proposal that

better suits, in my mind, the purposes for which CPA funding has been set aside. I and my kids love the place, and specifically, support the application for these reasons:

History of Community Contribution: The Growing Center has been an oasis of learning, free-play, enjoyment of nature, learning about food, gatherings of friends and not-yet-friends for many, many children and adults in the City. The Growing Center's extraordinary history of contributions indicates to me their likely success with continuing and expanding their work.

Model that Leverages Volunteer Support and Partnerships: An exceptionally successful component of the Growing Center has been their ability to leverage volunteers to make the space open and to create interesting programming. This community support shows the sense of ownership within the community – it is public space in the best sense of the word that gets shared by so many, creating a maximum amount of fun and community benefit per square foot. Furthermore, the Growing Center has been amazing at building partnerships with other community organizations that increase its usage. Those partners include childcare centers, the Arts Council, and many other organizations.

Model that is Open: My favorite part of the Growing Center is that it is open to the public. Many community gardens are lovely, but they only allow entry to plot owners (and in some cases are even only visible to plot owners). The Growing Center invites volunteers to use the space with the requirement that they open the space to the public. I hope that this model is not just sustained, but studied as a possible model for other spaces. In Somerville where so many of us don't have back yards or big living rooms, spaces that are a bit more sheltered than public parks, but are still completely open to the public, are very much needed. I would love to see a Growing Center in every corner of the City.

Thank you in advance for your Committee's work on this first year of CPA proposals. I look forward to seeing the projects get underway!

Stephanie Hirsch
17 Fremont Ave

From: Chelsea Clarke
Received: February 3, 2015

Dear Community Preservation Committee,

I'm taking a minute **here in Togo, West Africa** to write in regards to the current CPA Project Proposals. I am a 4-year long Somerville resident serving in the Peace Corps. News can be a little slow in getting here, but thanks to Juno it looks like I have the opportunity to speak about something that matters deeply to me.

I love the city of Somerville. I worked for **Groundwork Somerville**, first on the summer Green Team program for teens, and afterward as a full-time community organizer on the **Community Corridor Planning**. I also worked at Sherman Cafe in Union Square and served on **SCATV as a Board Member** for one year.

Speaking as an LGBTQ Christian who was alienated from the community I was raised in. In First Church Somerville I found an accepting community, full of peers and mentors who believed I could be gay AND a Christian, who were interested in my strengths, my sorrows, my joys, and my spiritual development. **The experience has been transformative.**

But in addition to finding personal satisfaction, what I love about First Church Somerville is its **involvement in the community and commitment to social justice.** Because of my church, I've gotten out and about in Somerville to participate in the Somerville Homeless Coalition 5K run, labeling at ArtBeat, marching in HONK!, meeting countless neighbors, and organizing with some of them to do good in our city.

I started attending First Church Somerville in 2009, and **it remains one of my great anchors to the city.** My service in Africa is about to draw to a close and I am at a time in my young life where I am presented with graduate schools and opportunities around the world. But it is First Church Somerville that has the biggest tug on my heart and is causing me to prioritize universities in the Greater Boston Area.

Before I wrote this note of support, I went online and read the First Church Somerville proposal as well as some of the other proposals pending before the Committee. There are many worthy projects. Amongst them, I encourage you to consider First Church Somerville for its historic value, and the living memorial to the past it represents. **Our storage is full of records of historic value,** photos, letters, church ledgers and more, evidence of people in days past who found their local identity rooted in their church, as I do today. **I wouldn't urge your support unless I was willing to give it to myself;** I dug into my own not-so-deep community organizer pockets and pledged \$728 toward the church's first phase of renovation. I've never donated that much to any one cause before, and when I reflect on it, I feel very happy, and also confident that I made the right decision. If you decide to fund First Church Somerville, I know you will feel the same.

Thanks for your consideration and also for the comprehensive webpage with the proposals and projects! It means a lot to still be connected to my home community during this hiatus in another culture, and I look forward to returning to Somerville in the coming months.

Sincerely,
Chelsea Clarke
Environmental Action and Food Security
Peace Corps Togo 2013-2015

From: Lauren Bell
Received: February 3, 2015

Hello,

I'm writing to express my support for a few projects that have been submitted for CPA funding.

The one that is of highest priority to me is the Growing Center upgrade design/community build planning. I have been a volunteer at the Growing Center for the past 8 years. It is a space that we have used frequently and love dearly. It serves us as a "backyard" (as we have none), a play space, a place to relax, an educational center, a gathering place, and a place to make new friends. Although it has a large group of dedicated volunteers, it could definitely benefit from renovation. It has been well-loved into disrepair due to heavy use. It is a gem of our community.

Next, I would support renovation of the Prospect Hill Tower. This is such an important piece of history and a blessing to belong to our city. It is a shame that it has seen such neglect over time and it is a terrible idea to neglect it further. Let's please improve this building and value it as our city deserves to.

Lastly, I am a neighbor to City Hall. I witnessed the last renovation many years ago, and have seen how weathering over time has brought it to its current state. It would be wonderful to receive this funding instead of just taxing all the citizens to complete necessary repairs. It has to be done, as a matter of civic responsibility and pride.

Thanks for your time,

Lauren Bell
8 Madison St.

From: Laura Saunders
Received: February 3, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea,
I would just like to respond to the CPA proposals and forward my strong support for the renovations of the West branch of the Somerville Public Library.
Thank you,
Laura.

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Laura Saunders
Assistant Professor
Simmons College, SLIS
laura.saunders@simmons.edu

From: Natalie Berland
Received: February 3, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the B'nai Brith application for funding to the Community Preservation Act (CPA). B'nai Brith has been part of the Somerville community since 1904 and is a dynamic organization that deserves CPA's support.

In Somerville terms I am a relative newcomer, having only lived here for 3 years. I've lived in 5 different states in the last 10 years and have really found an amazing community in Somerville where I'd like to put down roots. In the last few years I have gotten to know B'nai Brith as a center for education, spirituality and community that I have not found in other cities I have lived in. In addition, the building that they are housed in is a unique and beautiful space with a lot of history.

My experience with their current application for money to fund accessibility stems from attending their High Holiday services. Last October when I came for Yom Kippur there was an elderly woman in the front foyer who had been transported to the synagogue to pray. Yom Kippur being the holiest of days, she wanted to attend. Unfortunately because of the layout of the synagogue she was not able to climb the stairs to the main sanctuary. I overheard a volunteer telling her apologetically that it would be difficult to participate if she could not climb the stairs.

This synagogue is the most diverse I have ever been to counting diverse races, sexual orientations, and family structures, all apparent in the sanctuary. It is a shame that a synagogue that is so diverse with a mantra of "come as you are" should have to turn away the anyone much less the elderly.

Please consider funding the application of B'nai Brith so it can continue being a gathering place for diverse people from Somerville and beyond.

Sincerely,
Natalie Berland

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Natalie Berland
M.A. International Environmental Policy

From: Toni Snow

Received: February 4, 2015

Dear Community Preservation Committee Members:

I am writing to support the application for CPA funds for my church, First Church Somerville, United Church of Christ, at 89 College Avenue. As a member of FCS for nearly 8 years I have seen our diverse group grow from 40 to nearly 200 members. I was not intentionally seeking a faith community when I wandered into FCS - indeed, in 50 years I had only occasionally attended church. But I was immediately attracted to the vibrant FCS community and within a few weeks I knew I had found a home. And what an exciting home it is! At FCS I worship with artists, engineers, teachers, therapists, scientists, students, believers and non-believers, families, children, young adults, and single parents. Our church has a

strong social justice component and I have had the opportunity to help feed Somerville's Homeless citizens and to contribute to the well-being of Somerville's ever changing immigrant community. Because I have a gay son, it was a bonus for me to learn that FCS is an "Open and Affirming" community, welcoming gay and straight members alike. As a community, we reflect the younger side of Somerville. Many of our elders have passed away over the years and I, at 66, am happily poised to step into their shoes for awhile.

Several years ago I participated as a committee member to help the FCS community raise nearly \$700,000 through its "Defying Gravity" capital campaign. Despite our resounding success at meeting our fundraising goal, the funds raised were simply not enough to repair and update the entirety of our 100 year old building. While important improvements were made to the interior of our beloved building, the exterior remains largely in disrepair.

This support letter would not be complete without adding a few observations about the remarkable and unwavering leadership of FCS. In eight years I have seen our church blossom under the direction of senior minister Reverend Molly Baskette. Budgets have been consistently balanced, staff have been hired, a successful capital campaign is nearing its conclusion, remodeling of the interior has been completed - with zero disruption in church operations, and multiple fundraisers have been held, including one for victims of the Haiti typhoon and several for an orphanage we support in Colima, Mexico. All of this activity is in addition to the actual business of ministering to a congregation with many needs: couples have married, babies have been born (too many to count anymore!) and christened, sick people have been visited, elders have been memorialized and buried, and many of us, myself included, have received counseling and support during life crises. Somehow, Reverend Molly uses her considerable gifts to make it all work, even (or perhaps especially) when it's not easy.

We appreciate your consideration of our proposal. The CPA funds requested will enable us to repair and preserve the exterior of our building, so that the face we present to the Somerville community on College Avenue can truly reflect extraordinary work going on inside.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Toni L. Snow
109 Clay Street
Cambridge, MA 02140

From: Lai Ying Yu
Received: February 4, 2015

Hi Emily,

I'd like to voice strong support for the West Branch Library renovations; it's a much used community space and desperately needs physical upgrades to continue to serve the community. Making it

accessible to all is also important. I would also like to support the community garden center proposal as well as the Healey Mystic open space proposal.

Thanks for your attention!

-Lai Ying

From: Luanne Gilbertson

Received: February 4, 2015

Dear Community Preservation Committee,

I am writing to request that funds made available through your committee efforts be granted to First Church Somerville, UCC. I am a recent transplant to Somerville from the Midwest. As someone more in the "middle stages" of life, I found First Church Somerville after a year of looking for a faith-based community. At first Somerville felt very young and my husband and I were not able to find many welcoming communities in the city. I am now proud to say that First Church has become my community. As the oldest continuously worshipping religious community in Somerville, I found a multi-generational community of welcoming people. I believe that the members represent the best of Somerville. I am constantly amazed by the services that this church provides to the community of Somerville at large. The space inside the church has been made available for many groups and groups within the church serve the Somerville homeless, those recovering from chemical dependencies, the LGBT community and others.

What brought me to First Church? The church itself sits very prominently on a corner near Davis Square. I passed the building as it was undergoing major renovations. The building is beautiful and the signage certainly indicated that it has an open and welcoming atmosphere. After attending, I learned that members had committed to some major renovations that have recently improved the church greatly. But there is more to be done! First Church would love to be well-maintained building and a jewel on the historical roster of Somerville. Funds from the Preservation Committee would greatly increase our personal commitment to the building and community.

Please thoughtfully consider the full proposal of First Church Somerville for \$280,000 to help us give the exterior projects a major face-lift.

Thank you for your consideration,

Luanne Gilbertson

Somerville Homeowner (Winter Hill area, Ward 4)

From: Curt Ackley

Received: February 4, 2015

In the year 1853, eleven years after the founding of the spunky little town of Somerville, Massachusetts, the First Church of Somerville (also known as the Franklin Street Church) was founded. It was one year after the first high school had been built, and it was the same year that gas came to the town, eventually to light the streets.

Churches were central to towns in New England. Without them, the core of the community was poorly served, and with them, the town had roots. Church buildings were used for public meetings, for volunteer gatherings, for opportunities to serve.

Today, First Church Somerville echoes with the voices of a new generation of young people who carry on the faithful joy of being a beloved community. Their greatest desire is to give away the love they have received, and they seek to welcome all people, "wherever you are on life's journey." The church isn't about putting periods at the end of God's sentences. They believe in commas, awaiting more opportunities to come their way.

But as a congregation, they are respectful of the past, their "family story," that brought them to this place. Far from a monied congregation, they have stepped out boldly to preserve the beautiful architecture in the building where they meet. The resonance of the voices of those who have worshipped there for more than a century joins with their voices, as they seek to extend the welcome of their ancestors. As was written about this church almost 120 years ago, "No one need ever feel the world is cold or life is dreary who enters this comfortable Christian atmosphere."
—*from Somerville, Past and Present: An Illustrated Historical Souvenir (1897)*

It is in the hands of this fine congregation, bubbling over with growth and hope, that we find the spirit of the original townspeople. I heartily commend them, and their creative pastor, to your committee for a Grant. I firmly believe it will allow this church to bring past and present together, into a powerful and meaningful future.

-Curtis S. Ackley, UCC Pastor and Church Executive, retired.

From: Rick Silberman

Received: February 4, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea,

Thank you for the opportunity to write in support of the proposal from Temple B'nai Brith. As a longtime Temple B'nai Brith member (and Somerville resident), I want to affirm the importance of the proposed project to the synagogue and, more broadly, to the future of Jewish life in Somerville. Temple B'nai Brith embodies a crucial dimension of Somerville's continuing evolution as a city. It is a synagogue established by immigrants who found a home in Somerville and put down roots here. It thrived over the middle decades of the 20th century, and then its fortunes began to ebb, as prosperity drew a new generation of Jews to the suburbs. Membership dwindled, but a hearty few kept the synagogue alive, refusing to believe that Jewish life in Somerville was coming to an end. Over the past three decades, their confidence – their faith – has been vindicated, as Temple B'nai Brith has attracted a new

generation of Jews in Somerville, bringing new vitality to the congregation. The renewed fortunes of Temple B'nai Brith mirror the remarkable resurgence of the city of Somerville.

As we now look to the future of this synagogue and of Jewish life in Somerville, we have reason for optimism. But we must also be clear-eyed about the challenges confronting us – and the most daunting of those challenges is to make our building accessible. This is both a moral imperative and a practical necessity, but its cost outstrips our financial capacity. That is why we are looking to a CPA grant to make this project possible. Your support will make a critical difference: most immediately, for the accessibility project, and more broadly for the future of the sole synagogue in Somerville.

I join with others in expressing gratitude for your consideration of our proposal and in eagerly awaiting the decision.

Sincerely,

Rick Silberman

From: Kate Melhus

Received: February 4, 2015

To whom it may concern:

I am a nine plus year resident of Somerville and think investing in the west branch library would be beneficial to many residents. It is a great old building with so much untapped potential. Think of all the events and activities that could take place there if it was in better condition.

Thanks for your attention,

A Somerville resident and parent

From: David Crosbie

Received: February 4, 2015

Hello Emily

I wanted to write and express support for renovating the West Somerville Library.

The role of public libraries has changed over the years as technology has changed, but what has not changed is the public aspect.

There are very few public meetings places in Somerville.

The ones I know are ephemeral - such as Tufts Triangle Field on Saturday mornings during soccer season, and Market Basket at roughly the same time!

Otherwise we are dependent on private spaces such as coffee shops.

Churches and school playgrounds only embrace a small proportion of the population.

Having a public space that is in walking distance of many West Somervillians would provide a venue for a whole range of functions - from community pot lucks to meetings for local youth sports clubs.

My personal desire for the library is to construct a public oven in the library garden - this is popular in Europe and Canada:

<http://publicbakeovens.ca/wiki/wiki.php>

Cheers

David
110 Highland Road
Somerville MA 02144

From: Dorothy Nelson
Received: February 4, 2015

February 4, 2015

Emily Monea
City of Somerville

Re: Grant Request from Community Preservation Act
for Temple B'nai Brith, 201 Central Street, Somerville, MA

Dear Emily Monea,

My name is Dorothy Shubow Nelson and I am writing to you about Temple B'nai Brith's need for additional financial support to complete its plans for an elevator and fire safety system. The purpose of my remarks is to concur with the statements of others about the importance of the long-standing Jewish congregation in Somerville for over 100 years and its historic 1922 building. I also want to share with you my own experiences and perceptions of the value of this Holy place and its contributions to the city.

My father, Rabbi Leo Shubow, came to Somerville to be installed as the Rabbi of Temple B'nai Brith in 1946 having been previously involved in the founding and ground-breaking for the building of two temples, one in Newton and one in Tuckahoe, New York. Imagine having the freedom to do this kind of foundational religious work for the Jewish people in America during a period of time when anti-Semitism was rampant over Europe and seeds had been sown for the extermination of the Jewish people. As a learned scholar and historian Rabbi Shubow knew the history of anti-Semitism, the Crusades, the Inquisition, the pogroms in Russia and eastern Europe. In fact his family left Lithuania for

America in 1904, as devastating pogroms were raging against Jews. He was two years old, the youngest of five when he traveled with his mother, Esther and siblings to America to be with his father who had immigrated previously.

The Shubow family settled in Boston and Leo and his siblings became Americans, with gusto. My grandmother believed deeply in education and wanted her children to experience the opportunities that were available in this country. She encouraged two of her four sons to become Rabbis (Leo and Joseph) after they both attended Boston Latin School and Harvard University despite the quotas enforced on the admission of Jewish students. My father was imbued with a pioneering spirit as an offspring of first generation immigrants escaping religious persecution.

It was fortuitous that he came to Somerville. He would invent new ways to serve as a religious leader in a City that was primarily Protestant and Catholic. Upon arrival in Somerville in 1946 with my mother Pauline and my younger brother Morris, (our brother Charles was born later in 1950) he immediately noticed that his Harvard classmate, William Howe, was minister of the church on the corner of Broadway and Central Street diagonally across from Temple B'nai Brith. They resumed their friendship and remained religious colleagues for the rest of their lives. With the encouragement of "Bill" Howe, my father knew that not only was he called to be the spiritual leader of the Somerville temple, but he would make it his obligation to introduce Judaism to the people of Somerville during his time at Temple B'nai Brith.

Responsibilities as Rabbi of Temple B'nai Brith

He was a busy man. As Rabbi, he could chant from the Torah through the entire year, and conduct services in fluent Hebrew as well as English, with the participation of laymen who were engrossed in the rituals and traditions of Sabbath and Holiday services. He was a devoted pastor to the sick and principal of the children's school, prepared students for Bar Mitzvah and Confirmation, and gave oversight to the Temple's organizations and functions with the tireless guidance and support of his wife Pauline and many active members of the congregation. His sermons were thought-provoking dissertations on timely broad issues and philosophical questions that connected meaningfully with the Torah readings. The majority of the members of the congregation, professionals, independent businessmen, and working people, lived in Somerville.

Involvement with greater Somerville Community

Rabbi Shubow would not turn down a request to attend a church service to explain a particular Jewish holiday or aspects of Judaism to a Christian congregation. On a regular basis he was asked to give the invocation or benediction for a variety of Somerville events supporting the work of such organizations as the Police and Fire Departments, and the Little League. He was an active participant in ecumenical gatherings, including a Thanksgiving service that took place yearly in different places of worship throughout the city. He did everything he could to be sure that the Jewish people of Somerville were not isolated from the larger community and that there was a continuing open dialog about religion, ethics and civic responsibility among the clergy of Somerville and its people.

This was one aspect of Rabbi Leo Shubow's response to the Holocaust. He was an avowed practitioner of democratic values which uphold the people's rights to freedom of expression and religion. But he was also a fervent teacher, and believed that an important way to counter anti-Semitism is through

education, communication and friendship. This legacy has been inherited by the present congregation who value the building, as well as its history and its place in Somerville.

My father retired after 31 years from Temple B'nai Brith as Rabbi Emeritus in December 1977 and died in 1981. I can still hear his voice singing in that beautiful sanctuary. We need to insure that elderly and disabled people can continue to attend services upstairs in that sanctuary. I can remember the last time that I took my mother to a service before she could no longer climb those stairs. We walked down the aisle on the left together. As she put her hand on the dark wood backrests of the chairs, she said, "my shul, my shul."

Thank you for reading my statement and for considering granting funds to Temple B'nai Brith so that work can be completed for an elevator and a fire safety system.

Sincerely yours,

Dorothy Shubow (Brickman) Nelson

From: Morton Landy

Received: February 4, 2015

Dear Emily:

I am a member of the Synagogue, 81 years old, and have braces for both legs. I recently had a heart attack, and my mobility is greatly comprised not unlike other members of B'NAI BRITH. It would be a blessing for Somerville to award the Temple sufficient funds to construct an elevator in this historic edifice, which is available to all, to accommodate handicapped members. We would be eternally grateful.

Sincerely,

Morton Landy, Esq.

From: Charles Shubow

Received: February 5, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea,

I wanted to add my thoughts to the wonderful letter sent to you yesterday by my sister, Dorothy Shubow Nelson about why it is imperative to grant the necessary funding for the improvements to Temple B'nai Brith.

I am a graduate of Somerville High School (class of 1966) and lived for many years with my family at 172 Central Street, just a few doors down from the Temple. I witnessed so much history that occurred there. It had a wonderful Hebrew School and Sunday School and was used by the community for many

activities including such varied events as dancing classes, Weight Watcher meetings, to Temple dinners and celebrations of all kinds.

I am an Administrative Judge with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and am very familiar with the Americans With Disabilities Act and the plight of those unable to climb stairs. Temple B'nai Brith is a milestone in the illustrious history of Somerville. My sister well documented this in her letter.

I strongly believe it would be a major mistake not to grant the funding necessary to complete the elevator and fire safety system to allow accessibility to this historic building which goes back to 1922.

This funding will allow both the disabled and elderly the opportunity to attend religious services as well as other programs presented at the Temple which they are now unable to do.

The congregation goes back to 1904 and it should remain a part of Somerville's long history which includes Paul Revere Park located just a few steps away at the corner of Broadway and Medford Street.

I strongly urge the funding of these important and necessary improvements to Temple B'nai Brith.

Sincerely,
Charles Shubow
6 Highpasture Ct.
Owings Mills, MD 21117
443-226-9515

From: MaryLou Carey-Sturniolo
Received: February 5, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea,

I have heard that the West Branch library on College Ave. is one of the possible sites being considered for the community preservation funds allocation. This beautiful building is near and very dear to my heart. I have grown up in Somerville and many of my fondest memories of my childhood were meeting a friend who lived in Davis Sq. at this library. At that time, my parents were always very strict and would not let me "hang out" in many places, however, the West Branch Library was always a place I was allowed to go to. We spent many hours there, doing homework, working on research projects, reading every Nancy Drew book there was and escaping to the many beautiful adventures that books can take one to!

Now, over 40 years later, I bring my boys there. They love to browse the many shelves of books and spend time in the library.

Somerville is such a wonderful place to raise children. We need to not only preserve this building but improve it to the standard it deserves. Imagine, such a beautiful, warm place for families to have to be able to socialize, study, listen to story tellers, attend informative talks, have meetings, enjoy concerts, organize community meetings, and sit in a cozy corner and get lost in a book. Please save our library!

Thank you very much,
MaryLou Carey-Sturniolo
37 Willow Ave. 02144
Mom to Justin, Nick, Chris and Matt
PTA President of the Brown School
Parent/Family Liaison at the Winter Hill School

From: Keiko Petrosky
Received: February 6, 2015

Dear Emily,

I am writing to support CPA funds for the renovation of the West Somerville Library. As a mother of three, the library has been a wonderful spot for me to take the kids to read and play and meet with other families, and the inaccessibility and disrepair is heart-breaking. An accessible entrance and ground floor access would make it truly family friendly and a place for children during the winter. The library is a favorite spot to go when it is snowing and can be a true safe haven with some changes!

Please let me know if I can provide any further assistance in support of the application.

Thank you, and stay safe in the snow!
Keiko

--

Keiko Petrosky, DVM, PhD

From: Miriam Schwartz
Received: February 6, 2015

Dear Emily,

[Comments to Ms. Monea removed.]

Our congregation at B'nai Brith is a remarkably inclusive one in spirit, but has been frustrated in this effort by the constraints of our beloved historic building. Speaking as one of the *first* members of the Accessibility Committee (from 2002-2012, leaving only because of family obligations), as well as a major donor to the project, I know *personally* how hard we have worked to devise a way to create a fully accessible space. From another personal angle, I must tell you that my nephew's bar mitzvah had to be held elsewhere this past June, because B'nai Brith was not accessible to my mother-in-law. With the passage of time, the number of life events which exclude members or extended family has increased at an accelerating rate, which not only discourages current members, but also potential members! Temple B'nai Brith has survived over the years with a lot of grit and determination, but we firmly believe that

becoming fully accessible is an important step in maintaining and expanding our vibrant membership.

Some congregations, faced with the difficulties of renovating an historic building, opt to relocate to where they may build something new, but we are devoted to our building, which has housed us from the beginning, and want to remain here. Many congregations in suburban towns include a substantial number of families of means, who can afford to donate very generously or tap others with resources, and effectively self-finance capital campaigns such as ours. But Temple B'nai Brith, because of its location and inclusiveness, is comprised of a different economic demographic, and as a result, we are desperately in need of the CPA grant. I urge you to help us financially, so that we may strengthen our presence in an historic building we love, and thus strengthen our participation in a city we also love.

Miriam Schwartz (member, Temple B'nai Brith, 201 Central St., Somerville, MA 02145)
home= 57 Highland Road, Somerville, MA 02144-2310
landline= (617) 628-2543
e-mail= kadima@rcn.com

From: Jacob Taylor
Received: February 6, 2015

Emily,

As a resident of Prospect Hill I would love to see the monument restored. This is a focal point of Somerville, and it would be great to be able to climb it again. The cracks also really need to be addressed - my wife messed up her toe pretty badly when she tripped on one of them last year.

I would also like to see the Tube Works project funded. This is an amazing building and I feel that the modest amount requested would be well spent on exploring its preservation.

Thanks,

Jacob Taylor
61 Boston Street

From: Tim Talun
Received: February 6, 2015

Dear Emily and members of the CPA committee,

I'm writing in support of the use of CPA funds for restoration of the Prospect Hill Monument and design services for renovation of the park. The Prospect Hill monument is an icon in Somerville, an important part of the prospect hill neighborhood, and in significant disrepair. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet CPA goals related to both open space and historic preservation.

Design services for renovations to the park are also an important use of funding, offering significant benefits for Union Square and the entire City of Somerville by improving the park ecologically and better telling the story of our history.

I would also ask that the scope of the design services contemplated be expanded to include traffic calming improvements on surrounding streets, improving safety around the park for children and usability for all users. The connection between Prospect Hill Park and the adjacent Sen. Corbett playground is extremely important, and it would be great if the design of a reconfiguration of the intersection of Prospect Hill Avenue and Munroe Street could be incorporated in the design of the improvements to the park. The 'Union Square Neighbors' neighborhood association has identified improvements to this intersection as an important priority. This would increase the usability and accessibility of these important open spaces for all users, especially children.

Thanks,

Tim Talun
30 Boston Street
Somerville, MA 02143

From: Renee Scott
Received: February 6, 2015

Hi Emily,

I would like to see traffic calming around the monument and Corbett-McKenna playground included in the Prospect Hill monument and park redesign plan. Traffic is already difficult to navigate with small children and if the monument is fixed and the park upgraded, more people and more cars will come. The Munroe-Prospect Hill Ave intersection is especially concerning.

Thank you.

Renee Scott
63 Boston St

From: Aileen Bellwood
Received: February 6, 2015

Dear Community Preservation Act Committee,

I would like to echo Stephanie Hirsch's comments in support of the Growing Center (sent on 3 February 2015). I agree with everything that Stephanie had to say, and I would also like to add:

I have been a Friend of the Community Growing Center for 8 years. (I was the volunteer coordinator and site manager at the Growing Center for 5 years and am now on the board of directors). I would say that the majority of people who showed up for the volunteer orientations did so because they wanted to garden, and the Growing Center provides an experience that is accessible to all. The Center has seen a lot of use over the years, and it is very much in need of an upgrade. It is incredible to me what a group of volunteers (The Friends, led by Lisa Brukilacchio) has been able to accomplish on volunteer power for the past 21 years. CPA funds would ensure that the Growing Center will serve the community in the best possible way for years to come.

I feel very fortunate the Center is within 15 minutes walking distance of my home and my daughter and I are able to go there on a weekly basis. The Growing Center is our community's most valuable resource.

Sincerely yours,
Aileen Bellwood
37 Oak Street, Somerville

From: Tony Membrino
Received: February 6, 2015

Dear CPA Committee and Board of Aldermen:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed CPA projects. I encourage you to utilize the vast majority of CPA funds for open space and historic preservation, areas long in need of funding. Funding sources for these important community projects, outside of the CPA, pale in comparison to affordable housing sources from the city, and their benefits can be fully appreciated by the entire community.

I have listed my suggestions for priorities, though one could easily see the value of all the projects. Although some projects may be excluded, that is not an indicator that they should not be funded.

Prospect Hill Tower Renovations — studies pointing to the need for the prospect hill tower maintenance by qualified professionals date back to mid-1990s (possibly earlier than I am aware). This important structure commemorating our role in the start of our country is long overdue for the attention that it deserves. It needs to be a shining example of historic preservation that neighbors and visitors can be proud of.

Milk Row Cemetery — funds will help to carry out the 13 year old master plan to preserve this prominent cemetery located in a highly- changing area and an important part of our history.

Healy School to Mystic — having a master plan can go a long way to make this very thoughtful and exciting project a reality in an area really needing open space.

American Tube Works — a good start to preserve these buildings that can be a critical economic driver outside of Union Square.

School Garden Classrooms — engaging project that helps promote health and wellness to public school elementary students.

Somerville Museum — a long-standing supporter of the historic community and good neighbors. This building is a gem in the neighborhood and the organization's mission is important to our heritage.

Mystic Water Works — this seems like a good project that combines the need for senior citizen housing and historic restoration.

56 Bow St — will complement and enhance the Bow Street Historic area.

City Hall — this is a nice architectural example that is highly visible on a main thoroughfare and needs to be maintained so it can continue to be a source of civic pride.

I believe the vast majority of CPA tax funds should go to historic preservation and open space because of the greater benefit to the entire community and because for years these projects have been starved of funding. If you don't have the will to make that happen, I ask that your committee and the board of aldermen more fairly distribute CPA tax funds evenly among the three groups.

Thanks for your consideration,
Tony Membrino

From: Lynn Laur
Received: February 6, 2015

Lynn Laur
15 Greenville Street
Somerville, MA 02143
Email: lynnlaur@comcast.net

February 6, 2015

Dear CPA Committee and Board of Aldermen:

As there has been precious little funding for Open Space and Historic Preservation projects in the City of Somerville, I believe the majority of the CPA funds should be used for projects that fall in these categories.

Open Space and Historic Preservation benefit the entire community. Since CPA funds are derived from taxes that are paid by the community, the community should be the primary beneficiary of those funds.

I spent three years on the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission; I know from experience that money for important projects was not available. Now that there are funds to repair and preserve Somerville's buildings and monuments, we should jump at the opportunity to secure them for the benefit of the community and future generations.

All projects that have been submitted to the City in the areas of Open Space and Historic Preservation seem worthy. But if only a few can be funded these are my priorities:

Prospect Hill Tower Renovations – This monument pays tribute to early American history. The tower's aspect within the park is stunning and singular. It's a gem on so many levels

American Tube Works - Industrial buildings are coveted for adaptive reuse; they also represent Somerville's hard-working heritage

Healy School to Mystic – This part of the City needs open space. A master plan will provide the framework for thoughtful development in an area that needs attention

Thank you for your consideration,

Lynn Laur

From: Erin Hemenway

Received: February 6, 2015

Dear Ms. Monea,

I wanted to express my full support for the four proposals in the recreational\open space category

- 1) Groundwork Somerville school garden classrooms - any thing we can do to help our urban kids appreciate and enjoy some green space during the school day is money well spent!
- 2) Community Growing Center - this is a well loved and well used community resource.
- 3) Prospect Hill Park design services
- 4) Healey School to Mystic - this project would increase the green space in an overpaved area. It will be beneficial not only to children who attend Healey and the residents of Mystic Housing Authority. It could also be used by children from all over the city who attend the city sponsored summer camps that are housed at Healey school each summer.

I would especially urge the Community Preservation Committee to allow for the design of improvements to the street scape to calm traffic around the Growing Center and Prospect Hill Park. These public green spaces are located on residential streets that each experience tremendously high amounts of cut through traffic.

Cut through vehicles quite often drive too fast because they are going somewhere else. Cut through drivers are often not prepared to slow down and do not adequately yield for residential traffic or green space users. Residential traffic may be attempting to turn onto\from side streets or turn into driveways. Users of the green space may be attempting to slow down to park. Pedestrians may be attempting to cross the street to get to the green space.

There are a tremendous number of vehicles that speed down the length of Vinal Avenue until they have passed the Community Growing at the bottom of the hill. Likewise, vehicles drive too fast on the streets around Prospect Hill Park; many cars do not truly stop at the corner of the park located at Munroe & Prospect Hill Avenue

There is surplus money in the recreational land use portion of the funds. This surplus could reasonably be applied towards suitable traffic calming on the street scape surrounding Community Growing Center and Prospect Hill Park to benefit the users of those green spaces.

Regarding the \$8.6 million in the proposals for the historic portion of CPA funding:

While the West Branch library is a worthy proposal, it is inappropriate for the city to request the \$6 million in funds to come entirely from the CPA. This would tie up the historic portion of CPA funds on that one project for an estimated 10 years or more. I believe the city should budget for the West Branch library renovation directly and transparently for something that will cost that much more than the yearly historic CPA funding portion.

Thank you,
Erin Hemenway
54 Vinal Avenue
Somerville, MA

From: Abby Freedman on behalf of the SHPC-CPA Advisory Committee
Received: February 6, 2015

Dear Emily:

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (SHPC) and its CPA Advisory Committee appreciate the tremendous work that the Somerville Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is doing to support historic preservation in Somerville. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this year's proposals for CPA funding of historic preservation projects.

The letter below to the SHPC summarizes the recommendations of the SHPC-CPA Committee regarding this year's CPA applications. Because of the multiple major snow falls, the SHPC was not able to hold a public meeting to consider the applications prior to the deadline for comments to the CPC. We appreciate that the CPC twice extended the deadline for comments because of these snowfalls.

We were able to hold a duly noticed public meeting of the SHPC-CPA Committee on February 5, 2015. The comments and recommendations below were supported by all four members of the SHPC-CPA Committee, as well as by two other members of the SHPC who were able to attend the public meeting. We are confident that when the full SHPC considers these recommendations at its next regularly scheduled meeting on February 17, 2015, it will formally adopt them. We therefore wanted the CPC to have these recommendations for its consideration of the applications before it.

Respectfully submitted,
Abby Freedman
Chair, SHPC-CPA Advisory Committee

Recommendations of the SHPC-CPA Advisory Committee for Review & Vote by the SHPC

February 5, 2015

Dear Members of the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission,

As you know, Dick Bauer is the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission's (hereinafter SHPC or Commission) representative on the Community Preservation Committee (CPC), and he has requested input regarding CPA proposals for Historic Resources funding from his colleagues on the Historic Preservation Commission. In response, the Commission formed a standing committee, the SHPC's CPA Advisory Committee (hereinafter the SHPC-CPA Committee). It has met four times to discuss CPA matters pertaining to historic preservation and has reported back each time to the full SHPC.

In addressing CPA matters, the SHPC is carrying out its administrative responsibility outlined in the City's Historic District Ordinance to "protect, enhance and preserve cultural and historical resources" of Somerville. The 14-member SHPC is similar to the CPC in that the SHPC is an all-volunteer body representing many different perspectives, including architects, preservation planners, contractors, real estate agents, attorneys, and historic property owners. The members of its standing CPA Advisory Committee are: Chair Abby Freedman, (vice-chair of the SHPC and a historic homeowner); Dick Bauer (chair of the SHPC and an attorney); and Commissioners George Born (an architectural historian), and Alan Bingham (a historic homeowner).

This letter summarizes the recommendations of the SHPC-CPA Committee regarding this year's CPA applications for funding for historic preservation. Because of the multiple major snow falls, the SHPC was not able to hold a public meeting to consider the applications prior to the deadline for comments to the CPC. We appreciate that the CPC twice extended the deadline for comments because of these snowfalls. We were able to hold a duly noticed public meeting of the SHPC-CPA Committee on February 5, 2015. The comments and recommendations below were supported not only by all four members of the SHPC-CPA Committee, but also by two other members of the SHPC who were able to attend the public meeting. We are confident that when the full SHPC considers these recommendations at its next regularly scheduled meeting on February 17, 2015, it will formally adopt them. We therefore wanted the CPC to have these recommendations for its considerations of the applications before it.

Due to the SHPC's legal responsibility overseeing Somerville's historic resources, the Committee respectfully suggests that all applicants seeking CPA funds for historic resource projects that involve exterior work visible from the public way be required to attend an informal review and comment session with the SHPC *before* the CPC makes its final funding decisions and recommendations to the Board of Aldermen. The intent of these sessions would be to help the SHPC guide preservation projects towards a historically appropriate solution as early as possible in the conceptual and design process, before plans are near completion, significant time and expenses have been expended, and changes are more difficult or tenable. Consistent with all of the SHPC's casework, the intent of the dialogue is to be informative and constructive, enabling the SHPC to make a positive recommendation for each of the "Historic Resource" funding applications to the CPC. All recommendations would be non-binding, and the sessions would be open, public meetings. Given that this is the first round of CPA funding, the Committee believes that several current proposals would benefit from this type of review and comment session before any CPC funding allocations are made, as further noted below.

The SHPC-CPA Committee also discussed whether or not municipal bonding would be an appropriate strategy for increasing the current amount of funding available for CPA projects in this year's proposal cycle. Based upon this cycle's proposals, and the absence of an adopted Historic Preservation Plan, the Committee wonders if it is wise, at this time, to compromise the amount of funds available for future CPA Historic Resource projects due to annual bond payments in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Committee recommends that applicants of very large projects seek additional sources of revenue, divide projects into phases, and/or reapply for more CPA funds in the next cycle(s), after some of the current Historic Resource projects of much lower financial need are accommodated.

In the future, the Committee recommends that all proposals to the CPC identify specifically which portions of the proposed projects would be funded with Historic Resources monies.

The SHPC-CPA Committee considered the following criteria in its review of each historic resources proposal submitted to the CPC:

1. Conformance with the *U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, as required by the CPA;
2. Degree of assets' historic significance to the City of Somerville;
3. Public benefit provided;
4. Extent of threat without funding or urgency of project need;
5. Likelihood of applicant to raise proposed funds from other sources, based upon prior experience, and to use CPA funds to leverage additional funding necessary to execute the project without the total amount requested in this cycle;
6. Extent of project addressing other CPA categories; and
7. Balance of City and private projects.

The Committee has not used a quantifiable method of assessing each project according to the above criteria, nor has it set forth a priority list of projects at this time. Our recommendations are presented in alphabetical order below:

1. 56 Bow Street Exterior Restoration

This property at 56 Bow Street (1874) lies within the City's first and largest National Register Historic District, as well as within the Bow Street Local Historic District, and adjacent to the Old Police Station, one of Somerville's most extensive and highly visible historic restoration projects. The exterior is marred by asbestos shingles; as in many cases where buildings have synthetic shingles and siding applied over wood clapboard, the original design and architectural details are obscured. The application of these synthetic materials is one of the most widespread and detrimental practices affecting Somerville's historic buildings over many decades. The SHPC has consistently encouraged owners to remove such materials and to either restore the original, or if that is irreparable, to replace in-kind with a type of siding to match the original. We understand that the applicants' proposal to remove the asbestos shingles is an expensive undertaking, and we appreciate that they are only requesting funds to make up the difference between the cost of replacing the asbestos shingles with a historically appropriate material, wood clapboard, instead of with synthetic HardiePlank, which is a cheaper, but less historically appropriate material. We also understand that although the applicants submitted their application in this funding cycle, they in fact do not expect to be able to proceed with the project until 2016.

While this property involves a private home (possibly to be converted to a bed and breakfast) rather than a public building, it is located within Union Square, a highly trafficked area undergoing extensive public investment. The City's overall goal is to restore the economic vitality of one of its primary and oldest central business districts. The proposed work will help achieve that goal by noticeably enhancing the streetscape, the integrity of the overall Bow Street Historic District, and property values of the area. It is also likely to inspire other owners to consider doing similarly historically appropriate work, both nearby and elsewhere in the City -- all of which serves as significant public benefits. The proposed work appears to conform with the SHPC's Design Review Guidelines that recommend the use of historically appropriate materials (wood clapboard versus HardiePlank). Thus, we think that this is the type of project that should be supported with CPA funds, provided that it is subject to appropriate restrictions and covenants to ensure that this preservation work will continue to serve the public on an on-going basis.

The City does not at this time have a program to assist homeowners and small businesses with funding for such historic preservation work. Now that funding for such a program can be made available through the CPA, the SHPC-CPA Committee has begun the work of establishing a historic property rehabilitation program that the SHPC would set up in collaboration with the City's Housing Division and local CDC staff, seeking CPA funds in a future cycle, hopefully as soon as the 2015 application cycle for funding in 2016. We know that such a program is also being considered as a component of the Historic Preservation Plan being developed by the CPC, and anticipate involvement by the SHPC-CPA Committee in that Plan.

Because such a program could not be set up until the 2015-2016 funding cycle, and because the applicants for 56 Bow Street have indicated that they in fact contemplate their project as a 2016 project, the SHPC-CPA Committee recommends that the CPC not fund the 56 Bow Street project at this time, but that it encourage the applicants to reapply once a historic property rehabilitation program is established.

2. American Tube Works Complex National Register Nomination

The City of Somerville began researching this historically significant collection of buildings—one of the most intact examples of Somerville’s early and innovative industrial past—as long ago as the early 1990s. For over 20 years, the SHPC has been promoting preservation and adaptive reuse of these buildings by the current or prospective owners. As extension of the Green Line transit station continues to escalate development pressure on the Union Square area, this complex, once housing the American Tube Works Company, is increasingly at risk. Prior surveying in 2010, by professional architectural historians hired by the City, has already determined that the complex is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This listing would create strong tax incentives for owners to preserve and rehabilitate these significant buildings over the next few years. To take this planning effort to the next level, the City is requesting a relatively small amount of funding to prepare the nomination of the American Tube Works to the National Register. In accord with the SHPC’s preliminary letter to the CPC on November 18, 2014, the SHPC-CPA Committee strongly recommends full funding of this request as a means to pursue this long-standing restoration goal on behalf of the rich industrial heritage of Union Square and Somerville overall.

3. City Hall Renovation—Design and Construction Management

The SHPC-CPA Committee is in full support of the overriding goals of this proposal. We strongly believe that additional rehabilitation and renovation of the historic fabric of City Hall (1852) is both needed and timely, to continue its use as a municipal headquarters and a great source of pride for the whole community. The Committee wishes to note that, as City Hall is designated as a Local Historic District, any exterior work on it, visible to the public way, is subject to review and approval as set forth in the City’s [Historic Districts Ordinance](#). The proposal is not entirely clear about whether or not the City intends to seek additional CPA funds in the future for this project. The proposal states that “The design and OPM funding will be a one-time request [to the CPC]” and also says that “The City intends to develop a design and a construction estimate which will be used as the basis for a CPA request in 2015.” In addition to conventional municipal bonding, can other source(s) of revenue can be identified to execute the overall project? The Committee recommends that a review and comment session be set up between the Applicant and the Commission as soon as possible to clarify and refine the proposed project and ensure its compliance with both the CPA and the SHPC’s overriding ordinances.

4. City of Somerville Archives—Processing Contractor

The SHPC-CPA Committee is pleased that the City has hired a professional archivist in recent years to review, organize, and oversee its historical records. Her work has led to a much greater appreciation of the importance of properly collecting and storing records, as well as to a significant improvement in how various departments identify, save, and store their materials. The archivist has actively pursued—and successfully secured—a grant to fund another project for which CPA money had originally been sought. We are confident that the current proposed work is both needed and timely.

5. First Congregational Church of Somerville UCC Renovation Phase 2

This church (1912) is one of several notable religious institutions on College Avenue on the periphery of Davis Square, and ideally could be part of a Local Historic District (LHD) proposed in 2010 to be known as “The Corridor of Faith.” Since that time, the SHPC and its Staff have met with representatives of the Church many times, with the goal of helping them to stabilize and update the aging structure in a historically appropriate manner. We sought their support for local historic designation, as well as a partnership in seeking government grants for which designation would make them eligible and highly competitive. The effort, however, was not successful, and since that time they have chosen to undertake work on the building exterior that does *not* meet the *U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. An example is the newly installed synthetic panels that seriously compromise the historic integrity of the building’s original design, as they conceal from public view significant defining features, such as original materials, detailing, and structural components,. In addition, some research indicates that installing panels made of this particular material on historic buildings may actually be destructive to the building envelope, rather than contributing to its stabilization. The applicant also proposes to install granite entry steps in place of the existing concrete steps. However, such steps are not only considerably more expensive than concrete, but the SHPC-CPA Committee doubts that in light of the age of the building (early 20th Century) and the building materials (stucco) that granite would be appropriate. It is much more likely that the steps have always been concrete, in which case concrete would be the historically appropriate material for any replacement steps.

The SHPC-CPA Committee appreciates the congregation’s desire to further stabilize the building, and its success in raising significant funds from its membership to support further work on this historically eligible building. Unfortunately, much of the work currently proposed is *not* in keeping with either the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards or the SHPC’s own design guidelines. However, since this building is not designated as a Local Historic District, the SHPC does not have purview over how work is done on the building’s exterior, and the Applicant chose not to consult with the SHPC in an advisory capacity before deciding to move forward with these recent exterior renovations. As a result, the SHPC-CPA Committee finds that it can only support one component of the proposed project for CPA Historic Resource funding—replacement of the acrylic panel with clear glass to cover and preserve the stained glass window at the front of the building. We believe that the latter is preferable, as it would make the stained glass, a significant historic detail remaining on the church, more visible to public view.

The Committee also recommends that the CPC attach a condition to any final funding decision, requiring the Applicant to meet with the Commission in a review and comment session, specifically to ensure that the glass panel is installed over the stained glass window in a manner that does not compromise the window’s structural integrity.

6. Milk Row Cemetery Rehabilitation and Restoration

The City, under the guidance and leadership of the SHPC’s long-standing Executive Director, Brandon Wilson, has been working for over a decade to preserve, restore and repair Somerville’s only historic cemetery. Located along Somerville Avenue, a highly trafficked thoroughfare in the City, and adjacent to popular commercial establishments and often-used bus stop, the Milk Row Cemetery is very visible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular passengers alike. Work on the cemetery has proceeded over four phases to date, and has enabled the City to prepare a Master Preservation Plan (2002) and make

significant progress on its multiple recommendations, including restoring the perimeter fencing and gates, enhancing the landscaping, repairing and conserving the Civil War monument and many gravestones, rehabilitating two tombs, and providing universal access into and within the grounds. The work has not only preserved the site's contents, but also enabled the cemetery to be opened regularly to the public for educational programs about Somerville's history. All of the substantive work to date has been accomplished through matching grants and private donations. It is hoped that the small amount of CPA funds requested in this proposal will enable the City to continue work on rehabilitating the remaining 6 tombs, in part by leveraging additional grant monies from the State. The SHPC-CPA Committee strongly endorses this project for full funding.

7. Mystic Waterworks

Beginning in 2011 the SHPC reviewed and approved the design plans for restoring this woefully neglected and in disrepair historic building (1863) at the far western edge of the City, and converting it into senior housing with multiple affordable units. Since then, the SHPC has continued to write letters of support to help the developers obtain the funding necessary to turn the plans into reality. This is a blended project, meeting needs in two separate CPA areas--Historic Resources and Affordable Housing. The SHPC-CPA Committee fully supports this project; however, due to the intense competition for comparatively fewer historic preservation funds, it recommends that a larger share of CPA funds be drawn from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, versus the Historic Resource pot. It also requests the CPC to attach a condition that the Applicant continue to apprise the SHPC about any new exterior design changes and consult with them during the design development and execution phases.

8. and 9. Prospect Hill Park Design Services and Prospect Hill Tower Renovation

The Prospect Hill Tower and adjacent park together were designated as a Local Historic District (LHD) in 1985. This site holds a significant place in Somerville's history -- as a key fortification, communication point and encampment during the American Revolution, as well as the location where the first flag representing the United Colonies was raised on January 1st, 1776.

Prospect Hill Park Design Services: As a blended project, it is eligible to draw funding from two separate CPA areas -- Historic Resources and Recreational Land. The SHPC-CPA Committee is generally in favor of that portion of the proposed work that relates to historic resources, namely historic site research and surveying, including a potential archaeological dig, and preparation of a landscape design that incorporates interpretive features revealing the site's history. Since the park, however, lies within a LHD, the SHPC requests that the CPC attach a condition to any Historic Resource funding requiring the Applicant to present its RFP for design services to the Commission for review and comment before it is issued, and then consult with the SHPC (or its Staff designee) in respect to consultant selection and direction.

Other aspects of the park project that do not pertain to historic resources, such as ADA accessibility and incorporation of sustainable storm water management practices, are expected to rely upon funding from the CPA's Recreational Land allocation. In addition, it is hoped that the construction phase of work will draw heavily on the usual State grant program for park renovation, and only use the limited CPA funding as the grant match.

Prospect Hill Tower (1903): Although the City has previously funded some repairs, the tower continues to be in urgent need of additional stabilization work. In its present condition, the tower is no longer safe for access by the public, and more recently even by DPW employees, as was discovered for this year's Flag Raising event on January 1st. An application submitted to the SHPC this past fall, in 2014 has been approved, and SHPC staff have issued a certificate authorizing repair and replacement work with existing or in-kind materials. Due to public safety needs, the Committee strongly supports full funding of the proposed stabilization work to preserve this important historic resource.

The Committee also wishes to note that any additional restoration and rehabilitation work not considered to be in-kind repairs and maintenance outlined in the CPC application, is subject to review and approval through the regular application process to the SHPC. The Committee hopes that likely extensive future work will rely upon CPA funds primarily as a match for State grants or conventional municipal bonding.

10. Somerville Museum—Capital Improvements: ADA Accessibility and Preservation of Light-Sensitive Collections

The Somerville Museum (1925) is listed on the local, State and National Register of Historic Places and is a prominent feature of the City's premier Westwood-Benton Road Historic District. Although privately owned by the Somerville Historical Society, it is also a municipal treasure housing a museum dedicated to local history, art, and culture, and also makes space available to the City and community-at-large for a variety of events, programming and functions. By offering public exhibits, educational programs, and space for municipal celebrations like the Preservation Awards Ceremony and the Somerville Arts Council Open Studios, the Museum offers numerous public benefits, to a very diverse constituency -- from school children, to municipal departments, to local artists, musicians and exhibitors. The two proposed projects are critical to the Museum's long-term survival and overall mission within the City.

ADA Accessibility: The first project is to provide universal accessibility into and within the building by creating a new entryway on the Westwood Road side and an ADA compliant restroom on the first floor. The SHPC already reviewed and enthusiastically approved the plans for the exterior ADA-accessible work subject to its jurisdiction two years ago. The totally volunteer staff of the Museum has spent the interim time raising funds through grants, memberships, and private donations to execute the plans. Full funding of this CPA application will enable them to finally accomplish all of the ADA work, interior and exterior alike. The SHPC-CPA Committee appreciates the long-standing commitment and perseverance of the overall team, and strongly urges the CPC to reward them with full funding.

Preservation of the Collection: The second project involves protecting the Somerville Museum's collection of local historic artifacts from light, moisture, extreme temperatures, and other environmental hazards necessary for preservation of these important historic resources. This collection represents the heritage of the City since its earliest days as a community 'Beyond the Neck' of Charlestown proper. The collection is invaluable to current residents and visitors, enabling them to learn about and celebrate the richness of Somerville's past. The Committee strongly supports this proposal to ensure that the collection is preserved for future generations.

The budget submission is detailed and persuasive. The SHPC-CPA Committee gives very high marks to full funding of these two projects, offering tremendous public benefits, and evidencing prolonged and substantial fundraising capacity over multiple years.

11. Temple B'nai Brith Fire Safety and Accessibility Project

Temple B'nai Brith is the only synagogue building in Somerville and a fine example of early 20th century (1922) religious architecture that retains a high degree of its original historic integrity. (Another Jewish community, Havurat Shalom, meets in what was originally a private house.) Survey work in 2007-08 determined that it is eligible for designation as a Local Historic District, and leaders of the Temple supported the designation when it was first proposed in 2008-09. It currently awaits a final vote by the Board of Aldermen.

The proposed project of installing a fire safety sprinkler system and elevator to all three stories is important to the preservation and full use of the historic building by all members of the community, both in Somerville and the wider region. Beyond serving its own congregation, B'nai Brith also provides a meeting place for many community groups, but none of these constituencies are well-served by the multi-storied building's non-compliance with safety or universal accessibility codes. None of the proposed work will undermine the historic integrity of the facility exterior, which has been well-maintained over the years.

Although B'nai Brith has raised a substantial amount of money from within its own congregation to keep the building in repair, it has not been able to execute these much larger projects over the past seven years. It has researched alternative ways to meet its needs, and has successfully identified a more cost effective solution, greatly reducing the overall price and timeline. The project application is thorough and the budget is detailed and persuasive.

The SHPC-CPA Committee supports full funding of this project due to the Temple's historic significance, its well-maintained and largely intact exterior facade, and its current--and likely wider--use by the community-at-large once the project is executed. The Committee recommends that the applicant discuss the project with the Commission in a review and comment session. It also recommends that substantial CPA funding be conditional upon designation of the B'nai Brith property as a Local Historic District before work commences.

12. West Branch Library Renovations—Construction Funding

The West Branch Library (1908) is an excellent example of a high and Classical Revival style building funded as a Carnegie Library at the turn of the 20th century. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and was designated as a Local Historic District (LHD) in 1985. It has received multiple historic grants from the State and is subject to a Preservation Restriction by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and as a LHD, it is within the purview of the SHPC for exterior work visible from the public way. Previous stabilization work by the City on the exterior, and a limited amount within the interior in 2006, has helped to retain much of its historic integrity. The building, however, is clearly in need of substantial updating and improvement to continue serving its main function as a branch library, as well as a vibrant and vital community center for this western end of the City.

The SHP-CPA Committee wholly supports the general concept of the proposed project, to more fully preserve, update, and rehabilitate this very prominent, striking, and valuable historic library. The scope of work outlined in the application, however, has raised some questions. Items such as repairing the building envelope, restoring interior finishes, controlling water intrusion, and improving ADA access are eligible for CPA funding. Other project components, such as redesigning the interior to increase community meeting space, landscaping changes in the front, and creating an open air meeting space in the rear, however, may not contribute to historic restoration of the building or site. If that proves to be the case, the Committee hopes that funds from other sources can be identified and tapped.

The Committee is also concerned about the enormous dollar cost of the request, which is nearly ten times greater than the entire amount currently allocated to Historic Resource projects in this funding cycle. Because this proposal is out of scale with all the other ones, full funding of this project may compromise the ability to fund and execute other worthy CPA projects in this initial round. Also, the proposal does not appear to identify supplementary sources of matching funds that might be leveraged as a result of CPA funding. For example, the ADA accessibility component might be considered for both CDBG and State grant program funding, which would notably reduce the total project cost. In addition, given that the property is governed by a Preservation Restriction and the Historic Districts Ordinance, the Committee would appreciate the opportunity for the Commission to discuss the project with the Applicant, so that the SHPC may become more familiar with the proposed scope of work before substantive plans are generated, and to begin a constructive dialogue about various options. This library site is a very significant historic municipal property, and it is exciting to see the City stepping up to undertake long needed rehabilitation and preservation work to update, enhance, and restore the building to its original grandeur and grace.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposals, and hope that our analysis is both helpful and informative to your final decision-making.

Sincerely,
Abby Freedman
Chairperson, SHPC-CPA Advisory Committee

From: Dominique Stassart
Received: February 6, 2015

Hello Emily,
I am writing to you in regards to our beautiful neighborhood.
We moved to the Prospect Hill area 2 years ago and soon were involved with our neighbors in trying to make our neighborhood more family friendly.
I would like to request your consideration for CPA funding for the park and would like to see the funding being expanded to including traffic calming around it as well. We many of our neighbors, we have spent some time thinking about it and reaching out. We would be happy to share with you and the committee some of our findings.

I thank you for your time.
Dominique Stassart (47 Columbus Avenue)

From: Karl Thidemann on behalf of the Friends of the Somerville Community Growing Center
Received: February 6, 2015

Dear Emily:

The Friends of the Somerville Community Growing Center wish to submit the attached response to questions raised during the public presentation of our CPA proposal to the Community Preservation Committee.

Please let us know if you have any questions or if we may be of further assistance. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Karl

Karl Thidemann
Board Member, Friends of the Somerville Community Growing Center



Somerville Community Growing Center

February 6, 2015

Ms. Emily Monea
Community Preservation Act Manager
c/o SomerStat
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

re: Response to questions raised during public presentation of CPA proposal

Dear Ms. Monea:

On behalf of the board of the Friends of the Somerville Community Growing Center (FCGC), I am pleased to submit this letter and the accompanying table (see attached pdf, "Somerville Community Growing Center - Activities, Challenges, Goals") in response to questions raised by Community Preservation Committee members during the public presentation of our proposal.

In particular, we wish to clarify the need for this upgrade to the Growing Center by highlighting specific design intentions to better serve the broader Somerville community. For each of the three key aspects of the Growing Center — serving as an educational hub for Urban Agriculture, hosting a variety of Community Programs, and maintaining land and structures through Site Management — the current usages and challenges are shown, followed by the positive changes that could be enabled by a regenerative design system as proposed.

We want to emphasize that our Application for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding — in particular, the graphic Concept Proposal included with the application forms — is not intended to serve as a detailed design proposal. The objective of the Concept Proposal is to introduce the non-profit teams involved in the process and to outline design intentions, including vision, strategies, key objectives, and budget/timeline/deliverables (see pages 14 to 25 of graphic Concept Proposal).

Funding for Design Services (refer to pages 16, 24, 25)

The CPA grant is an upfront investment (page 16) that would help FCGC enlist design and engineering services to translate the proposal's intentions and leave the Growing Center in the position to build upon the current infrastructure. The design fee including engineering drawings

takes up approximately 80% of the total grant applied, covering the scope of work listed in pages 24-25 of the Concept Proposal. This next phase of design work is estimated to commence in Spring 2015 (contingent on grant availability) and continue until the end of 2015.

Funding for Initial Implementation

To kickstart initial phases of site work and construction, we have budgeted approximately \$10K for material and labor costs in the 2015 season to work with the designers of Terra Cura on hands-on projects that would actively engage the community (page 25 of Concept Proposal). This amount is intended to cover repairs that require immediate attention and basic soil remediation that would allow continued use of the Growing Center space this next season while setting the foundation for the overall upgrade process over time. Once the upgrade design finally gets fully developed and construction documents are produced, further funding can be sought by FCGC in collaboration with the City to cover additional infrastructure or other site costs not covered by this grant.

Community Involvement as a Key Part of Design and Implementation

From the inception of the Center to design charrettes in 2012 with a Boston Architectural Center student team, we would like to highlight our community informed design history. In particular, this upgrade design process does not follow a conventional landscape/architectural project delivery method, in which professional designers drive the design, and conclude their relationship with the place after a third-party contractor has implemented the design. A huge part of this project extends beyond infrastructural provisions. Terra Cura bring their expertise in the role of designers as well as education facilitators, to help collaboratively design and support FCGC in organizing community events around the site upgrade, integrating community involvement directly with the design, implementation, and long-term site management. This builds on the 20 year history of the Growing Center as hands-on learning space -- designed, built and maintained through strong community engagement in each process.

For example, Terra Cura or Community Outreach Group partners could help us organize a public seminar on composting by a soil microbiologist. This can be coupled with one of our Work/Learn events where volunteers could build new composting boxes for the garden using reclaimed pallets. These types of activities demand intricate planning and coordination to manage labor availability of varying (layman to professional) skill levels. The volunteer Friends group can benefit from some consulting and support expertise in leading such programs for optimal impact. We see such activities as key to the community-building and empowerment process for the diverse ethnic and age Somerville demographic-providing the type of experiential learning experience that the Growing Center has always worked hard to provide.

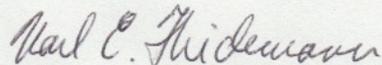
February 6, 2015
page 3

The Terra Cura team also has environmental educators on board who can help us further develop our Children in Nature Initiative learning programs supported by improved and additional features enabled by the planned upgrade, inspired and informed by input from the early childhood community and Somerville parents.

Our vision is that this city-owned Growing Center space be able to continue to serve as a multi-function recreational open space, meeting a myriad of interests and needs of the Somerville population through participatory programs and passive enjoyment of a unique vibrant garden park in a dense neighborhood. The CPA funding would help bridge the reality gap between a space that supports such a vision, having outlived the initial 10-year design for more than a decade.

Please let us know if you have any questions or if we may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karl C. Thidemann".

Karl Thidemann
Board Member, Friends of the Community Growing Center

Somerville Community Growing Center – Activities, Challenges, Goals

The following articulates the need for a re-design and upgrade at the Somerville Community Growing Center by identifying current site activities, challenges it is facing and positive changes that could be enabled by a regenerative design scheme.

Key Site Activities / Current Usage:	Current Challenges/ Additional Improvements Desired :	Goals that the Upgrade Shall Address: * In addition to the objectives outlined in the graphic proposal submitted and other design possibilities that is not apparent until a thorough site analysis has been conducted
Urban Agriculture Related		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Serves as a demonstration site for Somerville residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight multiple scales of urban agriculture ranging from growing in planter boxes to high yield gardens • Integrate urban agriculture with other sustainable practices such as composting, alternative energy systems, and storm-water management • Teach visitors of all ages about the importance of growing food in the city. Generally takes place during Open Garden hours on Saturdays, special events and volunteer maintenance hours 2) Supply produce to community food security and food education programs, including Somerville Arts Council Nibble project, Community Cooks and local residents 3) Serves as a distribution facility for local organic produce through Red Fire Farm Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. Excess produce donated to Project Soup Food Pantry in collaboration with Tufts Food Rescue. Activities include weekly set-up of tent and tables during a 4-hour window to pick up farm shares. Tables, tent, and storage bins are stored on-site during the growing season (June through October) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Due to insufficient sunlight in the “forested” Northern half of the site, crop yield and diversity are highly limited for supporting food security partners such as the Community Cooks program, which provides free meals to local food insecure populations 2) Reactivate gardens that represents the ethnic and cultural diversity of Somerville; Currently not feasible due to spatial limitations (e.g. one summer the Growing Center planted a “Brazilian” garden). 3) Enhance production of crops that promote seed saving, including local heirlooms such as “Guy’s Red Cherry Tomato” 4) Increase fruit horticulture production for on-site sampling, highlighting varieties that grow well in small spaces 5) Increase berry production beyond the one stand of thorn-less blackberries against the neighboring building 6) Better utilize existing grape varieties, or replace with more productive edible varieties while maintaining shade coverage 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Maximize crop yield, diversity and nutrient density within a largely shaded condition through regenerative agriculture strategies such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-site soil regeneration • on-site soil remediation • complementary planting selections that includes insectary plants, mulch-producing, high yield and high value crops • growing beds reconfigurations that allow maximum access with minimal infrastructure in the smallest space provisions

Community Programs Related		
<p>The Center provides event space/ storage/ equipment/ education material for community programs such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Art in the Garden, run by the Somerville Arts Council for 7 weeks (4 days/week from 8am-3pm). Activities include art projects, nature exploration, free play 2) Annual Somerville Maple Syrup Boil. A 2-day event held each March in collaboration with Groundwork Somerville, which has taken on management of this project originally developed by the Growing Center. Activities include experiencing the process of boiling locally-collected maple sap into syrup (which is sold by Groundwork Somerville at local Farmers Markets), interactive educational displays, syrup tasting 3) Seasonal weekly drop-in Play Group for toddlers run by parents on Fridays 4) After-school programs for older children 5) Ten or more evening and weekend programs that promote literacy, outdoor physical activity, and/or imaginative play. These programs (item 3-5) are offered in collaboration with volunteers and the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative to provide cultural and/or linguistic exposure. Activities range from visiting the garden beds with senior volunteers, free play, water-play in pool or sprinkler, story-telling, and nature exploration 6) Field trips from local schools and daycare centers. This is part of the Children in Nature Initiative, which trains teachers in educational applications of the Growing Center. Activities include garden tours, scavenger 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Damaged lawn and labyrinth area; Heavily compacted by vehicle and foot traffic 2) Explore opportunities to increase wheelchair and walker accessibility within the site 3) Improve range of use at Northwest section of site (the former "stream"/ bird sanctuary) which is now home to a resident beehive maintained by a dedicated volunteer 4) Increase range of use at the pond area to include educational activities such as native species demonstrations, and/or fruit production opportunities. Strongly consider adding safety features around the pond area, to allow for extended opening hours of the whole site (the city's permitting process which enables the Growing Center to have a pond, requires a locked gate to prevent children from accessing the pond without supervision) 5) Incorporate activities for after school programs that promote awareness of water management and conservation 6) Increase educational programs that promote healthy soil regeneration 7) Increase opportunities for nature exploration and safe free-play for young children 8) Develop educational materials that support active learning through self-guided tours highlighting different features and topics (such as a Bee tour, a 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Regrade and remediate central lawn at Northwest section of site. Develop soil maintenance and planting strategy that would help sustain a healthy ground cover and withstand regular traffic 2) Adapt topographical changes, repair existing pool feature to create a micro "living machine" that mimics wetland ecology to efficiently capture, treat and store surface runoffs for irrigation. This recreational feature can also function as a water conservation teaching tool 3) Complete stone terracing initiated in the 90s. Better integrate levels of garden in this area. Build better apiary support 4) Explore other water conservation measures including reclamation of greywater from hand-washing, rainwater collection, alternative impervious paving material etc. 5) Develop spatial schemes that increase interconnectivity and multi-functionality of event spaces, paying special attention to wheelchair and walker needs 6) Explore partnerships with local artists. Integrate design and implementation process with the community

<p>hunts, nature exploration, monitored tree climbing</p>	<p>solar tour, an herb exploration, finding fruiting plants, etc.) throughout the site. Currently lacks display options for information display</p>	<p>7) Develop visually engaging educational material, workshops that increase the visibility of the regenerative systems enabled by the upgrade. For example, Terra Cura could organize a public seminar on composting by a soil microbiologist, which may be coupled with an event where volunteers build composting boxes for the garden using reclaimed pallets</p>
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Site Management Related

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Train and organize volunteers (typically >50 per season) to provide labor support for maintenance of the site. Activities include requisite on-site orientation, provision of a Volunteer Manual, monthly listing of volunteer opportunities, and training in specific tasks as needed. Volunteer program includes daily Watering Angels who volunteer from April through October, and a Garden Team that generally meets weekly for group activities. 2) Offer monthly Work/Learn Days during the growing season to provide hands-on learning experience in horticulture, gardening, landscaping upkeep, pruning, etc. which also helps to sustain the site. Requires tools and supplies pertaining to the specific tasks. 3) Host for a range of free educational programs, from gardening (i.e. compost and pruning workshops) to wellness related (yoga and meditative labyrinth walks) 4) Host for approximately 10 to 12 outdoor performance groups (per season) offering free cultural programs, such as music concerts, films and theater 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Reclaim the former “nursery” area at the Southwest section of the site. Currently overgrown with trees that will not be able to reach maturity in their current state 2) Restore and increase growing capacity of greenhouse and potting/vertical garden area 3) Improve water conservation measures; Harvest greywater from hand-washing; Increase rainwater collection opportunities for site irrigation 4) Reclaim Northern boundary of garden; Currently overgrown with weed trees, etc. Consider alternative fencing method 5) Preserve Memorial Trees (such as Dalai Lama’s cherry tree, the Linden row, Kousa Dogwood and weeping crab apple). Need heavy pruning/upbranching of mature trees, especially the Lindens 6) Maintain rodent free management while expanding composting capacity and crop production 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Integrate maintenance schedule into Work/Learn Days program 2) Develop planting and site maintenance strategies that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve soil health by cultivating diverse microbial food web • Increase plant health and nutrient density • Increase water retention • Increase carbon sequestration • Improve air quality • Increase biodiversity on-site and beyond • Improve resilience to pest and diseases • Decrease invasive weed growth • Decrease labor input over time
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