



JOSEPH A. CURTATONE  
MAYOR



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
JUNE 4, 2014**

**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

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) held a meeting at 7:00pm in the third floor conference room at City Hall at 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143. An audio recording of the meeting is available upon request.

- Members Present** Chair Michael Capuano, Vice Chair Dick Bauer, Tanya Cafarella, Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello (left early), Arn Franzen, Ezra Glenn (arrived late), Courtney Koslow (arrived late), and Uma Murugan
- Members Absent** Michael Fager
- Staff Present** Emily Monea
- Others Present** Jillian Adams

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:01. The Committee members referenced the material in the presentation attached at the end of these minutes throughout the meeting.

**Agenda item 1: Discuss historic preservation plan with Historic Preservation Commission members**

Ms. Adams spoke about what creating a historic preservation plan would entail and the value of having a plan, referencing the Massachusetts Historical Commission’s [Municipal Preservation Plans](#) primer. She said the plan would essentially look at what historic preservation work has been done in the City and make recommendations about what work should be done and the prioritization of this work. For example, creating a preservation plan would not involve performing more historic surveys but would assess what surveying work has been done and the quality of that work and indicate where more surveying work is needed. The preservation plan could also examine the processes that other communities have used to support work on private historic homes in the City. She encouraged the Committee to pursue a plan, noting that it would be difficult to prioritize between historic resources projects without a plan to guide those decisions. She estimated that a plan would cost no more \$20,000 and would take no more than three to four months.

Ezra Glenn and Courtney Koslow arrived at approximately 7:10pm.

**Agenda item 2: Public comment period**

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

**Agenda item 3: Approval of minutes from May 7<sup>th</sup> and May 12<sup>th</sup> public hearings**

Upon motion from Ms. Cafarella, seconded by the Vice Chair, the Committee voted 8-0 to approve the minutes from the May 7<sup>th</sup> and May 12<sup>th</sup> public hearings.

**Agenda item 4: CPA budget review & votes**

Ms. Monea updated the Committee on FY14 CPA Fund revenue. The City has collected over \$1.3 million in surcharge revenue to date, and the Finance Committee voted to approve the Mayor's request to appropriate \$1.35 million from free cash to the CPA Fund, which will maximize the match the City receives from the state in FY15. Final approval is now needed from the Board of Aldermen. Upon motion from the Chair, seconded by the Vice Chair, the Committee voted 8-0 to recommend that the Deputy City Auditor reserve 10% of FY14 Community Preservation Fund revenues for each of historic resources, open space and recreational land, and community housing.

Upon motion from the Chair, seconded by Ms. Duclos-Orsello, the Committee voted 8-0 to retroactively recommend two versions of the FY15 budget to the Board of Aldermen: one that assumes the Board approves the request for an appropriation of \$1,355,671 from Free Cash to the CPA Fund and one that assumes it does not approve that request.

Ms. Monea also updated the Committee on the total amount of funding that the Committee will have available to spend in FY15 as well as the amount of admin funding that will be available in FY15.

**Agenda item 6: Discuss next steps for Community Preservation Plan and CPA application process**

The Committee members took up agenda item 6 with a discussion of the timeline for pursuing a historic preservation plan, ultimately deciding that they would like to have the plan completed by the time applications are due in December.

The Committee members also discussed the fact that planning and admin money is rare and valuable and that using admin funding for a historic preservation plan would leave little for the Committee to spend on other purposes. They also questioned what exactly admin funding can be used for: for example, can the CPA use admin funding to support planning work for a preliminary project that may not end up happening? Ms. Monea said that she would research this issue. The members generally supported a comment received from a resident that argued that the City, not the CPA, should pay for a historic preservation plan. The Committee also discussed whether the CPA could pay for a CPA-eligible project that the City is intending to pursue in exchange for the City paying for a historic preservation

plan. The Committee also wondered whether pursuing a historic preservation plan would catalyze the City to pay more attention and devote additional resources to historic preservation. Ms. Duclos-Orsello noted that the historic preservation plan should include an accounting of the amount of money that the City has spent on historic preservation over the past five to ten years and comparable data from other municipalities.

Ultimately, the Committee decided to pay for a historic preservation plan with CPA admin funds in FY15 and to begin the RFP process immediately. Upon motion from the Vice Chair with an amendment by Ms. Koslow, seconded by Ms. Murugan, the Committee voted 8-0 to instruct Ms. Monea to begin preparing an RFP for a historic preservation plan with the goal that the plan would be completed by November and with a tentative cap of \$20,000 (with the final amount to be based on the admin funding that is ultimately available to the Committee).

#### **Agenda item 5: Debrief public testimony on draft Community Preservation Plan priorities**

The Committee members discussed draft community housing priorities 3 (target assistance to households with income below 50% AMI) and 4 (target assistance to moderate-income households (80-100% AMI)). Ms. Monea noted that Jennifer Goldson and Mary Cassesso will be at the Committee's July 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting to discuss community housing funding and the Affordable Housing Trust. Ms. Koslow suggested amending the former to target assistance to households with income below 30% or 40% AMI and the latter to target assistance to households with income between 60 and 100% AMI, noting that the majority of affordable units in Somerville are tax credit units, most of which are affordable to those with incomes between 40% and 60% of AMI.

The Committee members discussed how to target community housing assistance. In her feedback on the draft Community Preservation Plan priorities, one resident suggested targeting by waiting times for assisted housing. Ms. Cafarella noted that the only waiting list for public housing that has movement is for the elderly. They discussed whether we should examine need by income and household type together rather than separately but ultimately decided that it is simpler for the Committee and applicants to consider these criteria separately, especially because the Community Preservation Plan lays out priorities not requirements. Mr. Glenn noted that there are two possible approaches available to the Committee: 1) to target those who are not being served by the market or existing subsidies and 2) to target the types of people that we would like to live in Somerville, regardless of whether there are already resources targeting them. Ms. Duclos-Orsello noted that the purpose of the CPA is to do things that are not able to be or are not being done now.

Ms. Koslow suggested, and the Committee generally agreed, that the community housing priorities should address programs in addition to projects and that draft priority 7 (include units for homeless and formerly homeless households) be expanded to include programs to prevent homelessness and stabilize formerly homeless households.

Ms. Duclos-Orsello left at approximately 8:40pm.

The Committee also discussed how to capture the project ideas that residents began to voice in the feedback on the draft Community Preservation Plan priorities and how to communicate these ideas to City departments and organizations. They tentatively agreed that an appropriate time to do so would be after the first application cycle, perhaps at the public hearing(s) that the Committee will hold in early 2015 on the actual project applications that the Committee receives and/or in the spring of 2015 when the Committee updates its Community Preservation Plan.

Ms. Koslow requested to add to the agenda for the July meeting the issue of establishing and communicating the percentage of CPA funding that the Committee intends to allocate to each focus area, about which there was agreement from Committee members. The Vice Chair, who will not be at the July meeting, said he supports establishing and communicating explicit percentages in the Community Preservation Plan, arguing that it would be easier for the Committee to compare projects within focus areas and that it gives applicants a better sense of how much funding is actually available to them.

Ms. Monea noted that she discovered that DOR revised its position on what constitutes a majority on CPC votes: while DOR's IGR on the CPA says that a majority of the entire Committee is needed to take any action, the Community Preservation Coalition has [an article](#) on its website noting that DOR changed its position. DOR now says that once a CPC meeting begins with a quorum of the entire CPC membership present, the CPC can approve its actions with a majority vote of the members present.

**Agenda item 7: Next meeting: Wednesday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7pm at City Hall, third floor conference room**

The Chair suggested attempting to reschedule the July 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting as one member will be unable to attend and two members may not be able to attend. Ms. Monea will see if this is possible.

**Meeting Adjournment**

Upon motion from Ms. Cafarella, seconded by the Vice Chair, the Committee voted 7-0 to adjourn at approximately 9:00.

**Documents and Exhibits:**

1. Meeting agenda
2. PowerPoint presentation
3. "[Municipal Preservation Plans](#)" by the Massachusetts Historical Commission
4. Excerpt from Braintree's [CPC application packet](#) on Historical Commission's determination of historical significance (pg. 9-10)
5. Draft FY15 CPA Fund budget submittals for Board of Aldermen (one assuming free cash appropriation request is approved by Board of Aldermen and one assuming it is not)
6. Community Preservation Act Fund Explanation submitted to Board of Aldermen with CPA Fund budget

7. Excerpt from FY15 Municipal Budget on CPA Fund (pg. 266)
8. Draft Community Preservation Plan Summary with summary of resident feedback on the plan