



JOSEPH A. CURTATONE  
MAYOR

## CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE



MINUTES  
APRIL 22, 2020

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) virtually held its annual Community Preservation Plan hearing at 7:00pm on the GoToMeeting platform in compliance with Governor Baker's emergency orders regarding the Open Meeting Law during the COVID-19 crisis.

**Members Present** Chair Jane Carbone, Vice Chair Laura Beretsky, Eleanor Rances, Amelia Aboff, Heather Heimarck, Cristina Kennedy, Luisa Oliveira, Tatiana Shannon, Caitlin Hart

**Members Absent**

**Staff Present** Judith Tumusiime

**Others Present** Invited Speakers and the Public

**MEMBERS**

Jane Carbone, Chair  
Laura Beretsky, Vice Chair  
Luisa Oliveira  
Tatiana Shannon  
Amelia Aboff  
Eleanor Rances  
Heather Heimarck  
Cristina Kennedy  
Caitlin Hart

**STAFF**

Judith Tumusiime

### **Agenda item 1: Welcome and introductions to the Community Preservation Committee and the Community Preservation Plan (10 minutes)**

Ms. Carbone introduced the members of the Community Preservation Committee and the staff. She welcomed the committee and gave a brief highlight on the threat that COVID-19 had posed on our community. She recognized the people that had lost their lives to the pandemic and those who were sick. She appreciated the hard work and sacrifice of all those who were working to save lives and keep us all safe. She thanked all the participants and informed them that the hearing was being held virtually on the GoToMeeting platform in compliance with Governor Baker's emergency orders regarding the Open Meeting Law during the COVID-19 crisis.

She informed the hearing that in FY20 the CPC had continued its support of affordable housing in coordination with the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust. She said that the Trust had awarded funds to five affordable housing programs that include affordable rental housing, rent assistance, housing stability assistance, and housing for victims of domestic violence. She said that to date CPC has awarded funds for 90 new units of permanently deed restricted affordable housing. CPC also recognized the importance of health and recreation benefits that open spaces provided and the importance of the history of the City. She added that the committee was excited about the work they had done in FY20, and we are looking forward to seeing what great ideas the community put forward for projects in FY21. She requested Ms. Tumusiime to present the FY21 Community Preservation Plan.

Ms. Tumusiime provided an overview of the Community Preservation Act and estimated funding available for FY21. She said that FY21 would be the first year that CPA funds would go towards paying

debt service on the West Branch Library. Ms. Tumusiime also shared the draft priorities for the FY21 Community Preservation Plan.

**Agenda item 2: Invited testimony (5 Minutes each speaker)**

*City of Somerville SomerVision 2040, Victor Nascimento*

Mr. Nascimento provided an overview of the SomerVision 2040 and highlighted the key themes including displacement and equity and the need to mitigate the displacement. He presented the targets which included housing (20% affordable in perpetuity), climate and sustainability (80% decrease in carbon emissions from 2014 levels by 2040), public space and natural environment (105 new acres of open space by 2040), and youth and education (100% of youth on a path to college, career life by 2040).

*City of Somerville Public Space & Urban Forestry Division, Cortney Kirk*

Ms. Kirk provided an overview of the Central Hill – phase 1 designed project funded by the CPA. She said that the new playground will integrate reading and learning themes and include climbing, sliding, and spinning play; swings for a range of ages and abilities; a splash pad and attached rain garden; discrete areas for quiet play; sun and shade areas; and a patio for snacking and socializing.

*Somerville Community Growth Center, Lisa Brukilacchio*

Ms. Brukilacchio provided an overview of the Community Growing Center and shared the various projects that the CPA fund had supported. She said that the CPA funds had provided a safe and accessible recreational place for all people in the Somerville community to come together to celebrate, learn and grow. She thanked the CPA program for supporting their green public recreational space for current and future generations.

*Conservation Commission, Rachel Borgatti*

Ms. Borgatti thanked City employees for their work during the COVID-19 outbreak and keeping the public spaces open and available. She said that over 900 signs were printed and displayed in the City's public spaces. She recognized the fact that the CPP public hearing occurred during an unprecedented public health emergency and that her thoughts had changed from when she first put together an outline for the public hearing which had been scheduled before the outbreak. She said that she had witnessed the eagerness of residents to enjoy the City's public spaces and the frustration of those who were crowded out of those spaces. She highlighted the need for more public spaces for health, recreation, and in the case of the community path and the City's bike routes, for transportation when public transportation may no longer feel safe.

Ms. Borgatti said that she was representing the City of Somerville's Conservation Commission and that she had been a member for seven years and was honored to serve as the Chair for the last two years. She gave a brief background about the commission. She said that the CPA had been a great funding source for open space, from supplying emergency funds to purchase a property at Glen Park next to Capuano School to increase the open space in East Somerville to renovating our schoolyards to be more aligned with Open Space principles and therefore more usable to the general public. On the whole, she said that it was an essential funding source that is relatively easily accessible to the community and the city staff for open space and for improving the city. She said that they had learned a lot since the CPA was adopted in November 2012 and that there was still room for improvement.

Ms. Borgatti said that the Conservation Commission often had not been consulted about projects that might need their assistance or would require their oversight before the funds were awarded by the CPC. she added that the ConCom was eager to give input to projects like the Art Farm or the new open space at Glen Park as early as possible before the projects are funded by the CPC, not to hold up projects but to make the projects stronger and aligned with other programs they oversee in the City, preferably before a request for a conservation easement or oversight for a new community garden are required.

Ms. Borgatti said that the other issue they had encountered was projects seemed to be approved if there were funds available that year, without considering whether the City staff had already completed previous projects. She gave an example of the school yard renovation design projects which were piled up. She said that while she understood that politically that may be considered “fair” since all schoolyards had been awarded and were all awaiting movement, practically it reflected poorly on the CPC and City government, as the energy of community engagement was dissipated as time passed with little communication or action. She argued that getting things done in a timely matter so the residents that fund the CPA see the results was more effective than producing a multimedia project about projects that had not been finished, even if it meant that either strategic decisions needed to be made to cancel projects that could not be enacted in the timelines originally agreed upon, more funds were allocated to get previously funded projects over the finish line or even saying “no” to very good projects if the City Department had still not made sufficient progress on previously awarded projects and did not have a plan to increase capacity to move those projects forward quickly.

Ms. Borgatti said that the stay-at-home advisory had shown that the desire for more public space is intense for Somerville’s residents. She added that to no one’s surprise, the Open Space Task Force memo from 2019 showed that new public spaces were not only difficult to acquire with all the competing interests for the use of any potential open space in Somerville, but expensive to acquire. She applauded the formation of the Open Space Land Acquisition Fund to acquire new public space and suspected that there would be huge public support to continue to fund the acquisition of land for pocket parks and other open spaces, especially with an eye towards both opportunity and equity for all Somerville residents. She hoped that every year that Fund could be added to by the CPC so the City could continue to make the City an even more exceptional place to live, work, play, and raise a family.

#### *Somerville Museum Barbara Magnum*

Ms. Magnum provided an overview of the Somerville Museum events and gave an update on its current situation. She said that their main focus was accessibility and that it had been a long journey and that the CPC had provided over \$500,000 dollars to construct the elevator. She said that the elevator project was a \$1.6 million dollar project and that the museum had so far raised funds up to a point about \$900,000 dollars. She said that they were looking to close that gap and that they had applied to the Multi-Cultural facility grant for all the money necessary for their project. She added that should they fully fund the project, they would be coming back to the committee for funding for other projects such the one on collections, but added that likely they might not get all the funding for the elevator and that they would request another \$250,000 dollars from the CPC.

Ms. Magnum said that they were in the process of hiring a Development Director at the end of February using funds donated for that purpose when they got COVID 19 pandemic implications and fundraising activities became difficult and putting the recruitment on hold. She said that they were fundraising for operations costs to keep the museum afloat using a go funding campaign. She told the hearing that they were looking to finish the elevator project in 2021.

*Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Mary Cassiarnaud*

Ms. Cassiarnaud thanked the committee and said that much more affordable housing had been enabled by the CPA funding. She said that she had worked on the CPA to be passed and that she was among the first original members of the Somerville Affordable Trust Fund. She shared with the community how families afforded to buy homes in Somerville when she was growing and said that family members would pass on their houses at affordable rates from one family to another. She said that the need was even greater over the last decade and that issues around equality were affecting people so much.

Ms. Cassiarnaud spoke about the overcrowding conditions in East Somerville, a situation where families were in a room in a small apartment which she said was not surprising because the need for rental assistance had been disproportionate for the most vulnerable, those losing jobs, undocumented immigration. She added that moving forward the battle for affordable housing was even going to be tougher and urged the committee to continue supporting affordable housing. She underscored the pain and sorrow that is being witnessed. She said the number one social determinant of health was the cost of housing and that she had always said that Somerville had less and less diversity in the social economic diversity because it was getting impossible to be able to live there. She thanked the committee for the opportunity to advocate and said that the CPA housing funds were more important now than ever.

*City of Somerville OSPCD Office of Housing, Heidi Burbidge*

Ms. Burbidge provided an overview of the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust and said that it was the housing arm of the CPC. She highlighted the eligible uses for Community Preservation Act community housing funds including the support of housing affordable to households with incomes up to 100% of the Area Median Income. She presented a table highlighting how large the CPA funding had been each year since 2015 and mentioned the debt service that was paid off the FY20 allocation. She talked about how the CPA funding was distributed by the trust and said each year the Trust issued two requests for proposals to solicit requests from affordable housing developers and nonprofit housing organizations.

Ms. Burbidge shared examples of requests that they had received in the previous years and also said that the 100 Homes program goal was to create 100 new affordable units through the acquisition and renovation of existing properties. She said that there was the introduction of deed restrictions on each unit which ensured sustained housing affordability provided to households at a variety of income levels such as 20% of units up to 50% AMI, 20% of units up to 60% AMI, 20% of units up to 80% AMI, 40% of units up to 100% AMI. She said that 53 rental apartments had been purchased to date and 90% had been occupied. She said that the other housing programs such as short and long term rental assistance were likely to experience unprecedented demand in the aftermath of COVID-19 and that they had already started witnessing an increased uptake in the agencies that operated those programs in terms of applications. She also said that the CPA housing requests are higher than the CPA housing appropriations.

*Elizabeth Peabody House Association, Kretcha Roldan*

Ms. Roldan provided an overview of the Elizabeth Peabody house and highlighted the services they provide which included preschool, after school services, emergency food pantry, and partnership with Everwood Day Camp in Sharon. She said that they served immigrant families and low income families. She highlighted their projects such as the Elizabeth Peabody House Roof Replacement, Building

Condition Assessment and Prioritized Rehabilitation Plan, and Installation of An Addressable Fire Alarm System that had been supported with CPA funds and community benefits.

*City of Somerville OSPCD Planning Division, Sarah White*

Ms. White provided an overview of Historic preservation from a planning angle and also provided guidance on the eligible historic projects. She said that historic projects are not only about preserving buildings but that they could include preservation and access of election records, collection preservation (Somerville Museum), restoration of curved base relief that was done in the Central Library, blended projects such as the Mystic water works project. She said that a blended project was more than one use of CPA money at a time and that the Mystic water works project used CPA funds to preserve the building and restore it back to its original state and also provided 25 affordable housing units. She added that blended projects were very important because multiple goals could be achieved using the CPA funds as well as reach multiple goals of SomerVision including solving the issues of inequity.

Ms. White talked about protecting the public investment and said that when CPA funds are used (by nonprofits or even private owners) to rehabilitate or restore a building structure it was CPC's obligation as protectors of that money to protect that investment through a preservation restriction. She said that a preservation restriction was a legal binding document between the city and the nonprofit (private owner), must be in perpetuity, cover the entire exterior envelope of the building, and executed prior to receiving CPA funds (unless there is a pressing emergency). She said that future changes to building require compliance with restriction, review, and approval. She said that typically the restrictions are held by the City unless it is for a city building and in that case the city has to find an outside organization to hold it. She also talked about the upcoming Local Historic District (LHD) Property Owner Preservation Fund (\$150,000) which was received some years ago and were now ready to start putting the process (applications, approvals) in place. She said that the fund would provide small grants of up to \$15,000 dollars through the CPA Manager. She also shared a wish list which included outreach from CPC by encouraging more historic preservation focused projects, diversification of the applicant/recipient pool, encouragement of more blended projects (such as historic preservation and affordable housing, historic preservation and open space/recreation), meeting multiple SomerVision goals in one project, cross-border project collaboration and bordering CPA communities.

### **Agenda item 3: Public testimony (30 minutes)**

*Mark Alston Follansby*

Mr. Follansby is a resident of Waltham and works at the Community Action Agency of Somerville (CAAS) and oversees the program that disperses the CPA funds which help people with their rent. He said that they had, had the CPA fund for almost a year and that they were receiving about one application a week. He said that the applications started to pick up in January and in April they had received over 20 applications. He said that the CPA funds were very important for the work they did because they helped to keep people housed in Somerville, and helped people who were out of housing to get back into the housing.

Mr. Follansby told the hearing that he attended a training from Chapa about using CPA funds for emergency housing requests, and that he learned something that he didn't know before about using

CPA funds outside individual communities. He suggested to the committee that while they would wish for everybody to be able to stay in Somerville, the reality was that they were not able to find housing for everybody that needed it in Somerville. He requested the committee to consider using CPA funds to help people move to nearby cities or wherever they had to go which would be really beneficial to those people and as well as the community. His second suggestion was to expand the lifetime cap of \$3,000 per client upwards so that families with the most need could access those funds to enable their stability. He thanked the committee very much for the grants that they gave the Affordable Housing Trust and for the opportunity to speak about their needs.

*Tory Antonino*

Ms. Antonino lives at 65 Boston Street and that was from Green and Open Somerville. She said that they received a CPA grant in 2016 for a native meadow which provided a bit of nature in the city which was unfortunately landscaped in a very sort of sterile way. She requested the committee for more open spaces and recreation projects and to prioritize those which had an ecological restoration component. She added that they did not have to be huge pieces of land but could be simple, integrating more native planting in the existing parks which could lead instantaneously wildlife returning to the city. She believed that it was possible to have co-existence and that it was one of her goals as a member of Green Somerville and as well as a volunteer with the Growing Center which had a wonderful project that would be opening soon so people could really enjoy it.

Ms. Antonino said that the meadow was coming in and the insects were coming back and that it was important that everyone had access to nature so that it was not just privileged people who could go into the fallows. She stressed that it was possible to create the forest in the city and that the committee had the capacity to do that. She also talked about the need for food equity and emphasized the need to have the community or city gardens be accessible to everybody. She suggested that for every bit of small space in the city, to make sure that everyone was within walking distance of fresh food. She thanked the committee very much for their work.

*Brielle Short*

Ms. Short is the Director of Programs with the Somerville Homeless Coalition. She said that she was a resident of Woburn but that through her involvement with the Somerville Homeless Coalition and as a trustee on the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust fund, she wanted to attend the hearing to advocate for an increase in CPA funds for affordable housing. She said that because of the COVID-19 outbreak, it had become even more apparent how unaffordable housing was in Somerville. She said that presently households from every income level were having trouble paying for their rent and mortgage which was the reality that low income households faced on a monthly basis, and had been long before the pandemic. She said that although affordable housing projects that were supported by CPA funds benefit households with a broad range of income, she wanted to speak a little more towards the impact that CPA funds had towards the most vulnerable (that is the homeless population and households who are facing near homelessness) in their community.

Ms. Short said that the Somerville Homeless Coalition presently had two programs that were benefiting from CPA funds. She said that Ms. Burbidge had briefly mentioned them and that the first program provided short term rental subsidies that support low-income households as they got back onto their feet. She said that many of those households had received long-term mobile vouchers which increased their income through employment or other funds to sustain their housing. She said that the second

program provided a leasing differential that allowed formerly homeless and disabled individuals to continue to live in their community. She said that was very important because oftentimes their provider network and their community support networks were within Somerville. She stressed that without CPA funding, many of the most vulnerable in Somerville would not be able to continue to afford to live in Somerville. She encouraged the committee to consider putting more money towards affordable housing. She acknowledged the importance of open spaces and historic preservation but added that the city was going to lose a lot of the diversity that makes its community so wonderful if the committee didn't prioritize affordable housing going forward. She thanked the committee for allowing her to speak at the hearing.

*Ellen Schechter*

Ms. Schechter is a resident of Cambridge, and is the Director of the Somerville Office of Housing Stability. She thanked the committee for all the great work. She told the committee that she sat on the CPA Committee in Cambridge and was therefore pretty familiar with all the work that the committee does and was very grateful for it. She echoed some of what Ms. Short and Mr. Follansby had to say about the need for an increase in allocation to affordable housing. She urged the committee to allocate 65% of its unallocated portion of funds from the last year to housing. She commented on how the office of housing stability had gotten absolutely inundated with intakes for rental assistance. She said that about 90% of those intakes were from non-English speaking persons and said that although currently there was an eviction moratorium in place, she was afraid that once that eviction moratorium is done, the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak was going to fall predominantly on immigrant community on the lowest income communities. She told the committee that they would need to have rental assistance to be able to bridge that gap until they could reenter the economy. She added that it was going to be a lot slower for some things than it was for others to get on their feet again.

Ms. Schechter further said that a 65% allocation could assist both permanent housing and rental assistance programs. She suggested two things, one was an issue that had come up repeatedly in that as it was currently understood CPA funding goes to affordable housing, there was a question about whether or not there needs to be a 12 month lease. She encouraged the committee to lobby to relax the requirements. She said that in her experience, immigrant people of color and non-English speaking people all have much less of a chance of being tenants under lease or tenants under at will and that it was that huge population currently that was able to ask some of the CPA rental assistance that was available. She also said that although it was a state issue, she requested the committee to reach out and think about connecting with other communities and the Community Preservation Coalition around that issue. Ms. Schechter also requested for support in restructuring the way the Trust makes decisions about allocations but she agreed with Mr. Follansby on being really thoughtful about who provides seamless rental assistance in the most flexible way possible to make it the most useful in the COVID-19 pandemic. She thanked the committee very much.

*Kathy Arnelle*

Ms. Arnelle is a resident of Somerville for about 20 years and is a housing planner in Cambridge, and is on the board of the Somerville Community Corporation. She echoed what Ms. Schechter, Ms. Short, and Mr. Follansby said about the need for affordable housing. She said that it was more challenging than ever to create and preserve existing affordable housing in Somerville and that the COVID-19 outbreak just underscored the urgent need to continue expanding housing in the city. She added that it was good that the city had set the goal of 20% affordable housing by 2040. She said that she felt aspirational but

that she would love it if we could come together and make that close to a reality because that would make a huge difference in Somerville community and in the lives of a lot of people who are currently struggling.

Ms. Arnelle urged that the maximum amount should go to affordable housing projects and when housing projects come before the committee. She said that she was supportive of open space and historic preservations and that she agreed with Ms. White that there were more opportunities for combined projects. She said that housing money is leveraged by the state, federal, and private, and city funding and that investing in affordable housing could hopefully keep some families that are vulnerable in the community. She appreciated the work of the committee and thanked them for allowing her to speak.

*David Kissel*

Mr. Kissel is a project manager at the Somerville Community Corporation and manages the 100 homes program. He thanked the CPC for its ongoing support for the program and advocated along with others for increased funding for housing support and affordable housing in general. He said that they had a lot of tenants who were currently struggling and although there are different programs out there. He said that the local rental assistance programs that were funded through the CPC were crucial and echoed on how other systems should be currently expanded and said that in order to do so, they needed to allocate more CPA funding for housing. He said that the 100 homes program that he managed, as Ms. Burbidge mentioned earlier, had 53 units that had been funded through the CPA funds which was great and with additional funding from other sources the units had increased to about 97 (which was under their management).

Mr. Kissel said that there were different other kinds of subsidies but that CPA was an important source of funding that helped them leverage other kinds of funding to purchase and preserve as permanently affordable different units of housing throughout the city and keep the vulnerable people in them. He said that he appreciated what Ms. Cassiarnaud was talking about earlier. He said that they had a lot of tenants in units when they bought buildings and that they tried to keep everyone that was there and in some cases also assisted tenants with relocating to housing that fits their needs. He gave an example of a building they purchased on Austin Street in East Somerville that was mostly immigrants from Central America and that many of those families were overcrowded and they assisted some in relocating to other buildings that they owned which were primarily affordable. He said that they had been able to also lower the rent for the people that were there, so that they could have the right family size space for the affordable amounts. He thanked the committee for ongoing assistance to 100 homes and hoped that the committee would continue to support housing.

*Robert Kevin Kelly*

Mr. Kelly works at the Somerville Public Library and volunteers with the Somerville Community Land Trust. He seconded what everyone said in support of prioritizing in affordable housing. He said that working at the Somerville Public Library, he interacted a lot with lower income Somervillians, particularly immigrants. He said that the need for affordable housing was urgent and dire, and that if those people were displaced, not only would that be a social injustice but Somerville would be losing a vital part of its community given its diverse character.

*Diane Bluett*

Ms. Bluett is a resident of Somerville, a trustee and treasurer of the Somerville museum. She said that the museum had been trying to get access for full funding for a while. She said that people could not enter the museum with wheelchairs, or have trouble walking up the stairs. She said that they had been trying to get that project done for a while but they had a major lawsuit against them which made them lose more than a year of time despite winning the lawsuit. She said that due to COVID-19 outbreak, the prices for doing construction in Somerville were increasing, and that the museum gave a lot back to the community, to the high school, to all parts of Somerville, and hoped that the committee would consider the museum. She said that all the other projects were also worthwhile and that she couldn't imagine housing right now for people during COVID-19 outbreak, not being able to pay their rent. She hoped that when things got better, the people would go to the museum and see their exhibits, and learn a sample of their history. She also thanked the committee.

Ms. Carbone thanked all the speakers and participants and requested them to vote for their priorities in the chat. She asked all those who have more to say to send written comments by May 15 to Ms. Tumusiime and to also share their ideas by taking the CPA survey at [www.somervillema.gov/cpa](http://www.somervillema.gov/cpa).

**Next meeting: The next CPC will be held at 6:30 p.m. on April 29, 2020.**

### **Meeting Adjournment**

Upon motion from Ms. Beretsky, seconded by Ms. Shannon, the Committee voted 9-0 to adjourn at 8:29pm.

### **Documents and Exhibits**

1. Agenda
2. Presentations/Testimonies



# CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE



JOSEPH A. CURTATONE  
MAYOR

## AGENDA

**DATE:** Wednesday, April 22, 2020  
**TIME:** 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.  
**PLACE:** GoToMeeting (Please join from your computer, tablet or smartphone. <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/792438397>. You can also dial in using your phone. United States: [+1 \(646\) 749-3122](tel:+16467493122). Access Code: 792-438-397)

### MEMBERS

Jane Carbone , Chair  
Laura Beretsky, Vice Chair  
Luisa Oliveira  
Tatiana Shannon  
Amelia Aboff  
Eleanor Rances  
Heather Heimarck  
Cristina Kennedy  
Caitlin Hart

### STAFF

Judith Tumusiime

### VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE SOMERVILLE FY21 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN

1. Welcome and introductions to the Community Preservation Committee and the Community Preservation Plan (Presentation) 10 Minutes
2. Invited testimony:
  - a. City of Somerville SomerVision2040, Victor Nascimento - 5 minutes
  - b. City of Somerville Public Space & Urban Forestry Division, Cortney Kirk -5 minutes
  - c. Somerville Community Growth Center, Lisa Brukilacchio - 5 minutes
  - d. Conservation Commission, Rachel Borgatti – 5 minutes
  - e. Somerville Museum Barbara Magnum - 5 minutes
  - f. Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Mary Cassesso – 5 minutes
  - g. City of Somerville OSPCD Housing Division, Heidi Burbidge – 5 minutes
  - h. City of Somerville Historic Preservation Commission - 5 minutes
  - i. Elizabeth Peabody House Association, Kretcha Roldan – 5 minutes
3. Public testimony (30 minutes -2 minutes each)
4. Next meeting: Wednesday, April 29 at 6:30 p.m. (GoToMeeting)



# **Applying for Somerville CPA Funds:** what you need to know about the pre-application process

FY21

Historic Resources & Open Space/Recreation Land

An aerial photograph of a vineyard, showing neat rows of grapevines stretching across a valley. In the background, a large, light-colored building with a gabled roof is visible, surrounded by more trees and fields. The overall scene is a typical agricultural landscape.

# CPA Overview

# What is the Community Preservation Act?

Massachusetts law that 176 municipalities have adopted to create a fund for grant making:



## Primary sources of funding:

Surcharge on real estate  
property tax (1.5%)

State match

Optional City  
appropriation

# Allowable Projects

	Community Housing	Historic Preservation	Open Space	Outdoor Recreation
Acquire	✓	✓	✓	✓
Create	✓	X	✓	✓
Preserve	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support	✓ includes funding for affordable housing trust	X	X	X
Rehabilitate and/or Restore	✓ if acquired or created with CPA funds	✓	✓ if acquired or created with CPA funds	✓

**\*\*Cannot pay for maintenance or replace current spending\*\***

# Allocation of Funding

CPA Category	State Minimum	Somerville Minimum Allocations FY20
Open Space & Recreation	10%	20%
Historic Preservation	10%	15%
Affordable Housing	10%	50%
Flexible	NA	10%
Administrative (max)	5%	5%

# How much is available?

Est. FY21 new project funding available=  
\$1,645,043

10% minimums= \$164,504

# FY21 Application Timeline

Step	Timeline/Deadline (Subject to change)
1 Pre-applications due	Wednesday, May 20
2 Eligibility determination forms due	Wednesday, July 15
3 Applicants submit funding applications	Wednesday September 16
4 CPC evaluates applications & gathers public input	September – December 2020
5 Applicants present projects at community meeting	October 28 at 7:00pm
6 CPC submits recommendations to Mayor for submittal to City Council; council votes on CPC recommendations	December 2020– February 2021
7 CPC issues award letters	February 2021 onward
8 Grant agreements executed	Late winter/spring 2021

An aerial photograph of a vineyard, showing neat rows of grapevines stretching across a valley. In the background, a large, light-colored building, possibly a winery or farmstead, is visible on a hillside. The overall scene is a typical agricultural landscape.

# CPA Pre-Applications

# When is a pre-application needed?

- If you want to propose a project on City land
- If you want to apply for feasibility study funds

# Community Projects on City Land

- Submit 2 page form
- CPA Manager shares it with the relevant City department
- City department decides to:
  - Sign on as a co-applicant
  - Propose to develop the idea for later submission
  - Encourage participation in existing process
  - Not sign on at this time

# Feasibility Studies

Fund neutral expert analysis of a proposed project to determine how to increase likelihood of project success through:

- Public processes
- Surveys
- Costing
- Technical advice

Project managed by CPA Manager

An aerial photograph of a valley with a winding river and terraced fields. The text "CPA Application Process" is overlaid in the center.

# CPA Application Process

# How are funding decisions made?

- Funding recommendations to City Council made by 9 member Community Preservation Committee (5 positions designated from relevant commissions, 4 at-large); Council gives final approval
- Guided by annual Community Preservation Plan
- Annual application process (emergency funding possible)
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund makes grants for housing projects

# What does the CPC look for?

- Is the project eligible for CPA funding?
- Does the project involve all the necessary groups?
- Will the project benefit Somerville residents?
- How well does the project match Community Preservation Plan priorities?
- Is this project a good use of public resources?

# Step 1: Eligibility Determination Form

## **Key things you need to have in place:**

- Ability to receive funds (ie 501c3, property owner)
- Permission from owner on private property or owner co-applicant on public property
- Determination of historic significance
  - Local Historic District
  - National register
  - Seek determination from Historic Preservation Commission

# Step 2: Full application

## **What you need to submit:**

- Completed narrative
- Completed budget
- Maps and photos
- Documentation of ownership
- Certificates of good standing/501c3 certification
- Letters of support
- Applicable reports
- Conflict of interest disclosure
- Campaign contribution disclosure

## Step 2: Full application

### **What you need to submit:**

#### *Historic projects*

- Documentation of historic significance
- Condition report

#### *Construction*

- Renderings, site plans, engineering plans, design and bidding plans, and specifications

# Questions along the way?

Contact the CPA Manager:

[jtumusiime@somervillema.gov](mailto:jtumusiime@somervillema.gov)

617-625-6600 x2111





# FY21 Community Preservation Plan

Community Hearing

April 22, 2020

# What is the Community Preservation Act?

Massachusetts law that 176 municipalities have adopted to create a fund for grant making:



## Primary sources of funding:

Surcharge on real estate property tax (1.5%)

State match

Optional City appropriation

# Allowable Projects

	<b>Community Housing</b>	<b>Historic Preservation</b>	<b>Open Space</b>	<b>Outdoor Recreation</b>
Acquire	✓	✓	✓	✓
Create	✓	X	✓	✓
Preserve	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support	✓ includes funding for affordable housing trust	X	X	X
Rehabilitate and/or Restore	✓ if acquired or created with CPA funds	✓	✓ if acquired or created with CPA funds	✓

**\*\*Cannot pay for maintenance or replace current spending\*\***

# Allocation of Funding

<b>CPA Category</b>	<b>State Minimum</b>	<b>Somerville Allocation- FY20</b>
Open Space & Recreation	10%	20%
Historic Preservation	10%	15%
Affordable Housing	10%	50%
Flexible	NA	10%
Administrative (max)	5%	5%

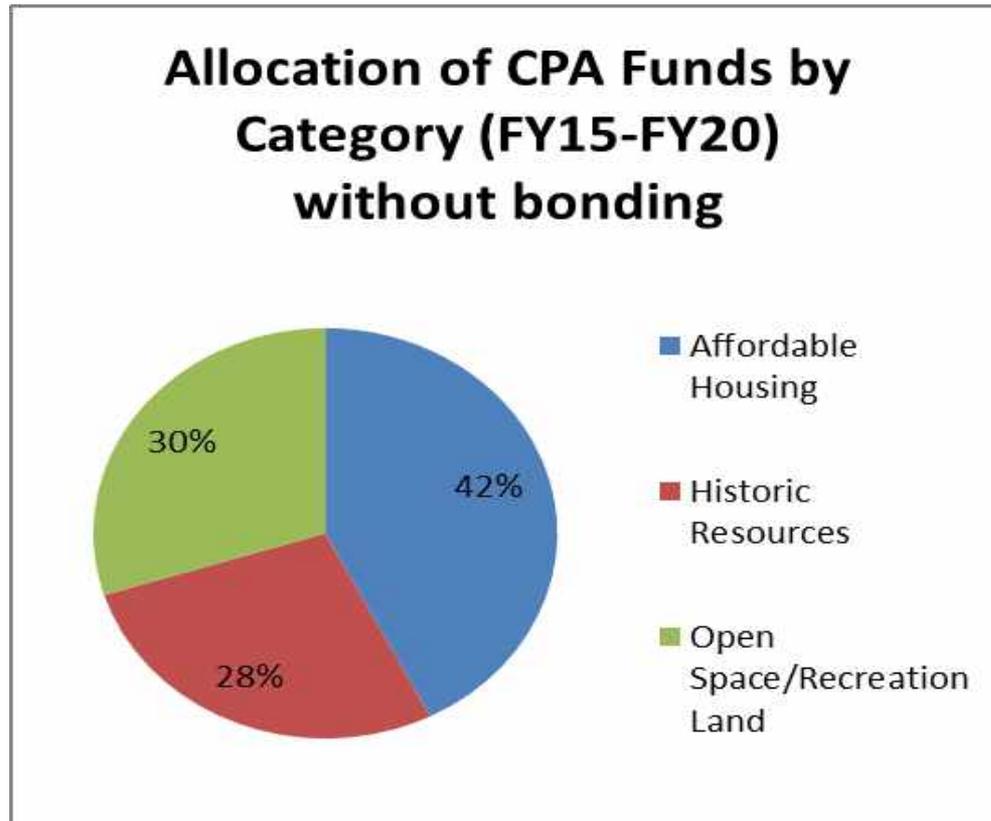
# SomerStreets Voting

	<b>Affordable Housing</b>	<b>Historic Resources</b>	<b>Open Space/ Recreation</b>	<b>Flexible</b>
<b>2016</b>	36%	22%	36%	6%
<b>2017</b>	42%	18%	33%	7%
<b>2018</b>	38%	18%	34%	10%
<b>2019</b>	40%	18%	32%	10%



# How much is spent?

Est. FY21 project funding available= \$1,645,043  
10% minimums= \$164,504



# FY21 Community Preservation Plan

## Proposed Priorities

### **Projects that are consistent with the community's values:**

- Improve accessibility for all members of the community
- Incorporate sustainable practices and design
- Receive endorsement from other Somerville boards, commissions, departments or community groups or from city, state, or federal officials
- Are consistent with the goals and priorities established in other current planning documents
- Address two or more of the CPA focus areas
- Supports Somerville's diversity, including support to immigrants regardless of their status

# FY21 Community Preservation Plan Proposed Priorities

## **Projects that use CPA funding strategically:**

- Leverage other funds or in-kind contributions and/or implement cost-saving measures
- Address long-standing or urgent needs in the community
- Take advantage of exceptional, time-sensitive opportunities
- Could serve as catalysts for transformative change

# FY21 Community Preservation Plan

## Proposed Priorities

### **Open Space & Recreation Land:**

- Support the acquisition of land for and creation of new publically accessible open space and recreation land
- Expand access to and use of the Mystic River and Alewife Brook corridors
- Improve the health of the wetlands and shores of the City's water resources
- Rehabilitate and restore existing recreational land according to need
- Expand urban agriculture opportunities

# FY21 Community Preservation Plan

## Proposed Priorities

### **Community Housing:**

- Provide affordability in perpetuity as required by the Community Preservation Act
- Preserve expiring-use units
- Support mixed-use and transit-oriented development
- Prevent homelessness and/or provide housing units or other support for homeless and formerly homeless households

# FY21 Community Preservation Plan Proposed Priorities

## **Historic Resources:**

- Priorities being developed through the creation of Somerville's first Historic Preservation Plan

# Still have more to say?

Written comments accepted through May 15:

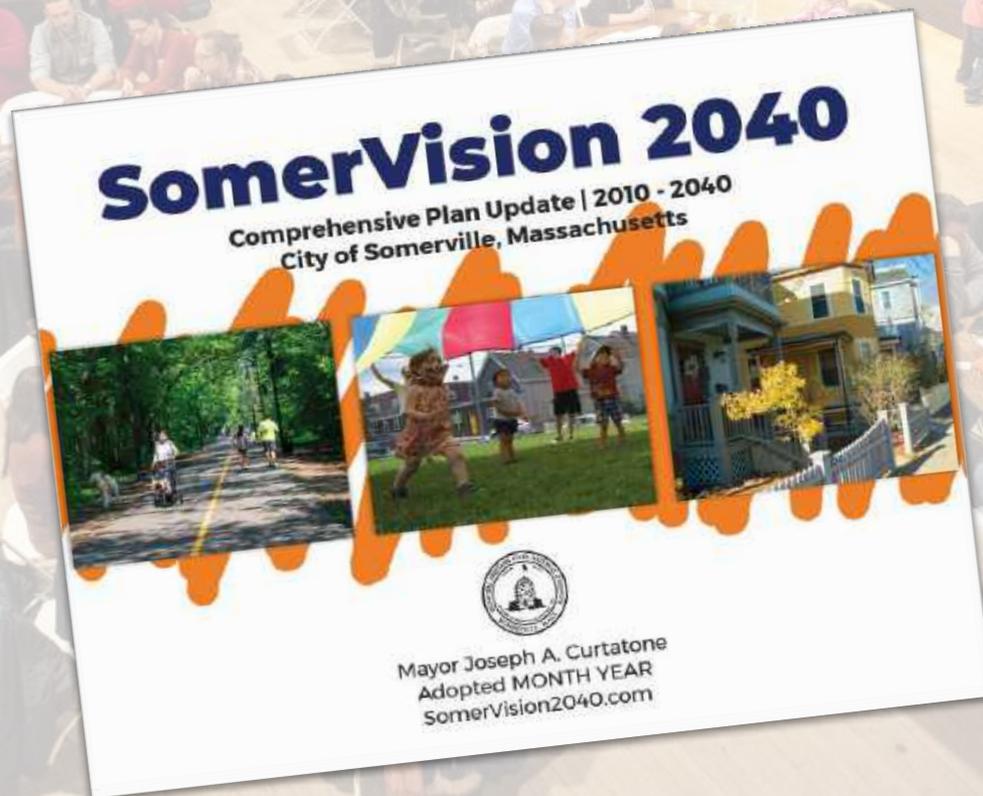
- [jtumusiime@somervillema.gov](mailto:jtumusiime@somervillema.gov)
- You can also share your ideas by taking the Community Preservation Committee survey at [www.somervillema.gov/cpa](http://www.somervillema.gov/cpa).





# SOMERVISION2040

April 4, 2020



**SomerVision 2040**  
Comprehensive Plan Update | 2010 - 2040  
City of Somerville, Massachusetts



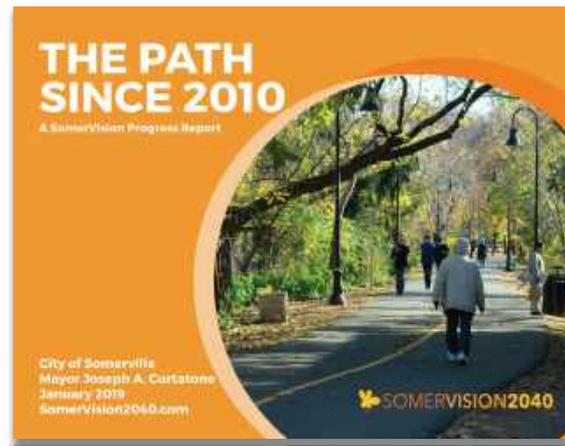
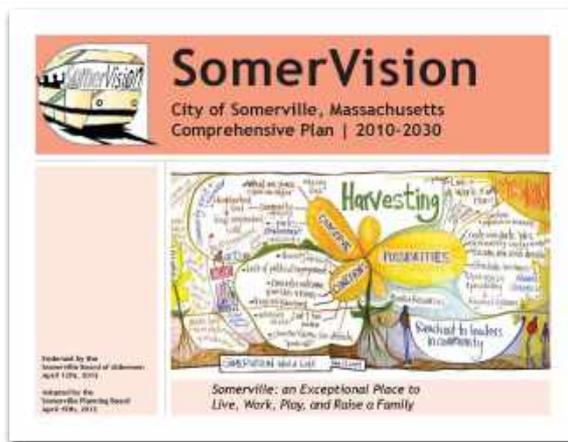
Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone  
Adopted MONTH YEAR  
[SomerVision2040.com](http://SomerVision2040.com)

The image shows a brochure cover for 'Somerville Vision 2040'. The cover features the title in large blue letters, followed by the subtitle 'Comprehensive Plan Update | 2010 - 2040' and 'City of Somerville, Massachusetts'. Below the text are three photographs: a park path with people walking, a child holding a rainbow flag, and a colorful house. At the bottom, there is the City of Somerville seal and the text 'Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone', 'Adopted MONTH YEAR', and the website 'Somerville2040.com'. The brochure is tilted and overlaid on a background image of a community meeting.

[Somerville2040.com](http://Somerville2040.com)

# What is the SomerVision2040 Comprehensive Plan?

- Our comprehensive plan was written in partnership with our community. It outlines our broad goals and big ideas for the future, informed by our shared values. Implementation strategies are a different process involving additional community input.
- A lot has changed in the 10 years since SomerVision2030 was written. **SomerVision2040** is a brand new plan that both adds new ideas and updates ideas from the previous plan to reflect our current needs.



# Key Themes from SomerVision 2040

## Displacement and Equity

- Households are being displaced from Somerville at alarming rates as a result of high housing costs. We need to continuously assess how we can minimize and mitigate displacement.
- In implementing our goals and utilizing our shared resources we must consider how different segments of our community have different needs, priorities, and challenges.



Equality



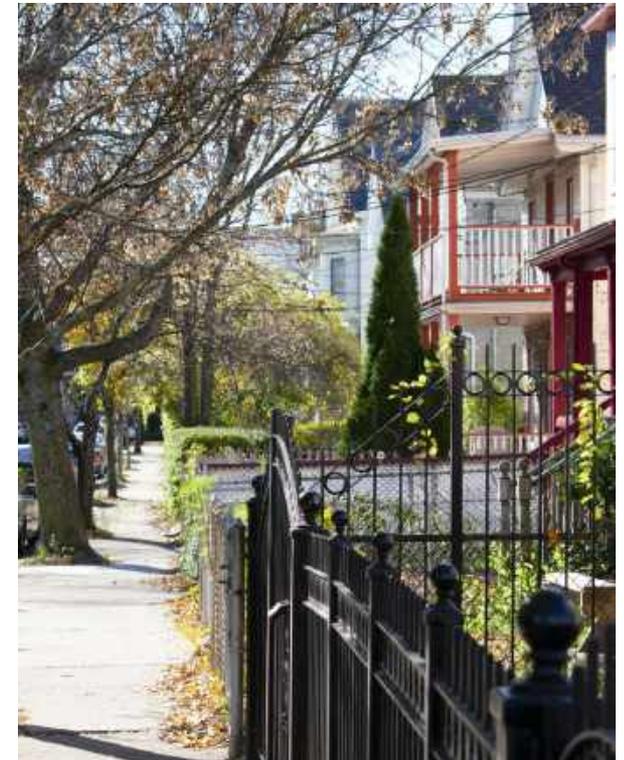
Equity

# Housing

## Topic Chapter Highlights

- Establish a task force with sufficient resources and expertise to **MEET OUR TARGET LEVEL OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING** and tools to enable both market and non-market developers to generate that target.
- Work on **ZONING AMENDMENTS** to support the goals of SomerVision, especially commercial development and housing.

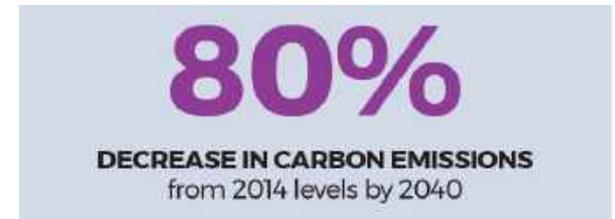
**20%**  
OF HOUSING STOCK AFFORDABLE  
in perpetuity by 2040



# Climate & Sustainability

## Topic Chapter Highlights

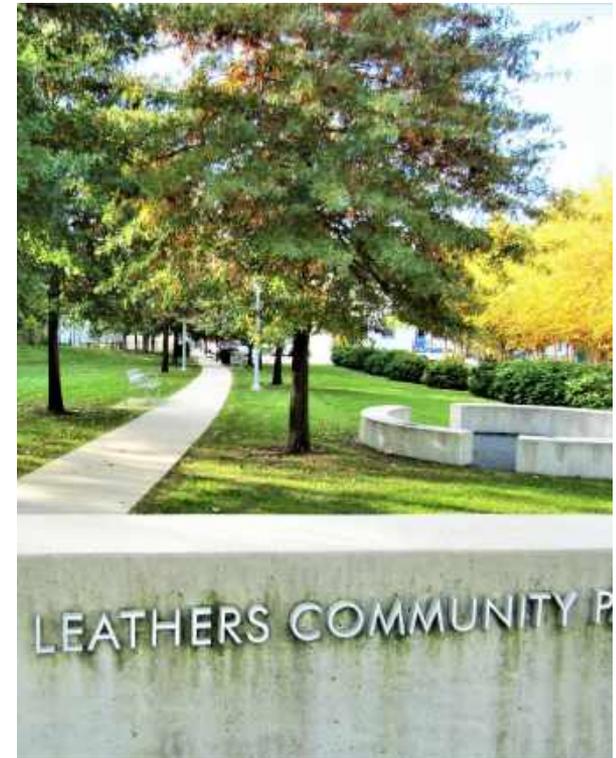
- Develop policy incentives to **ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOR** relating to consumer awareness.
- Educate Somerville residents and businesses on **CLIMATE ISSUES AND AVAILABLE ACTIONS**, to build a citywide culture of engagement and awareness.



# Public Space & the Natural Environment

## Topic Chapter Highlights

- Create an **OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION STRATEGY** that identifies target parcels.
- Study our open spaces to ensure they are accessible to pedestrians and do not have significant barriers. Use “**SAFE ROUTES TO PARKS**” as a model for park access.



# Youth & Education

## Topic Chapter Highlights

- Explore opportunities to create **NEW GATHERING SPACES FOR YOUTH** in the City.
- Explore how to provide **AFFORDABLE EARLY LEARNING AND CARE PROGRAMS** to all Somerville families.
- Ensure all **SPS SCHOOLS ARE TRUE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS** with integrated academic, health and social services, youth development, and community supports.

**100%**  
OF YOUTH ON A PATH TO COLLEGE, CAREER,  
LIFE by 2040





# Other Chapter Highlights

## Mobility

- **REDUCE AUTOMOTIVE VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (VMT)** in Somerville.

## Infrastructure

- Focus on greater investment into **BUILDING RESILIENCY INTO OUR WATER AND SEWAGE SYSTEMS** rather than a reactive approach to repairs.

## Commercial Development, Business, and Arts

- Work on **ZONING AMENDMENTS** to support the goals of SomerVision, especially commercial development and housing.

## Community & Governance

- **INCORPORATE EQUITY GOALS** into new neighborhood plans and development proposals to embed the needs of marginalized communities.



Thank You!

**Learn more at**

**[www.SomerVision2040.com](http://www.SomerVision2040.com)**

# Central Hill – Phase 1 Design



**New  
Somerville  
High School**

**Central  
Library**



Medford Street

MEDFORD STREET

Walnut Street

HIGHLAND AVENUE

HIGHLAND AVENUE

Highland Avenue

SUNAM STREET

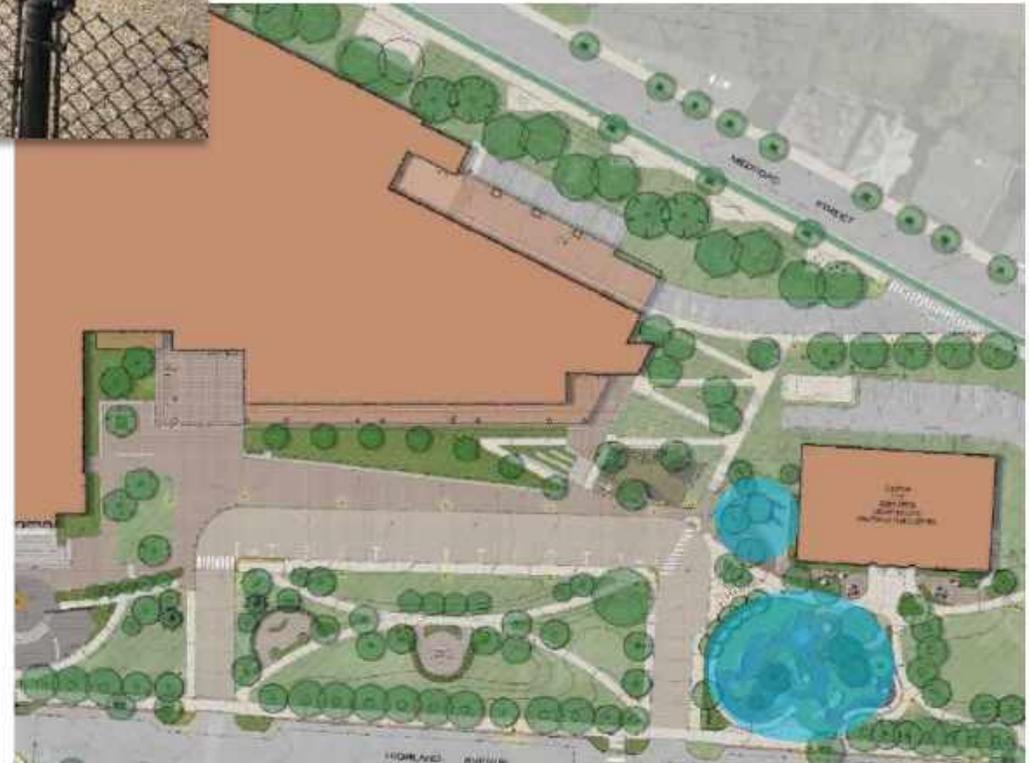
VINAL STREET

WALNUT STREET

# Library and Central Hill Playground



Former Central Hill Playground .21 Acres



Proposed Central Hill Playground .25 Acres,  
Parkland in perpetuity

# Central Hill Playground



Curved Embankment Slide



Mountaineering Rope and Half Balls Slope Climb



Embankment Slide context image



2-5 year old Play Structure

# Central Hill Playground



Toddler Swings



Nest Swing



Misting Pole



Parent Socializing



Cozy Spinner



Toddler Double  
Embankment Slide  
Mock Up

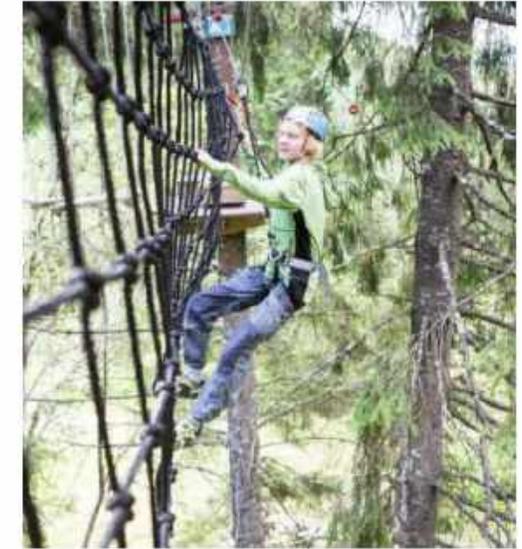
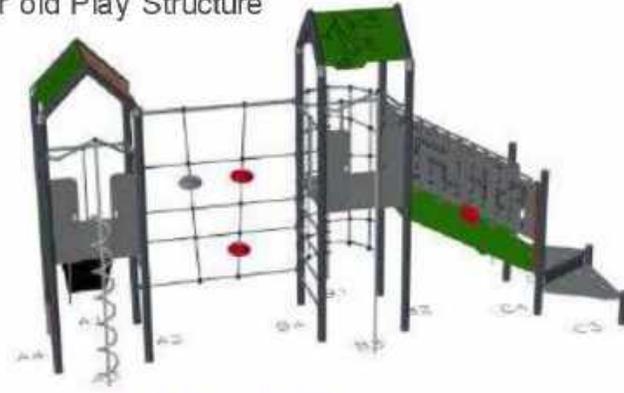
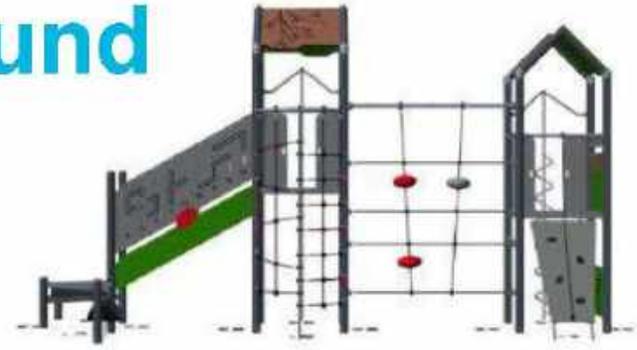


Embankment Slide  
context image

# Central Hill Playground



5-12 year old Play Structure



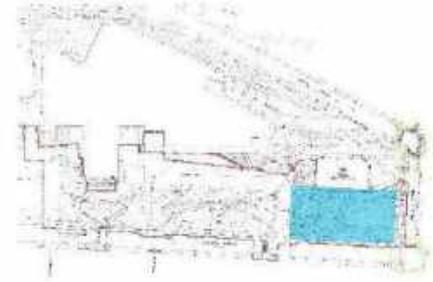
Nature inspired materials and colors, incorporating nature where possible



Climbing Grips Slope



# Library and Central Hill Playground



# Central Hill Playground



All Ages Spinner Dish



Story Walk



Child's Table with Seats

Thank you!



Somerville Community  
Growing Center

# Community Preservation Plan Public Hearing Somerville Community Growing Center

by the  
***Friends of the Community Growing Center***

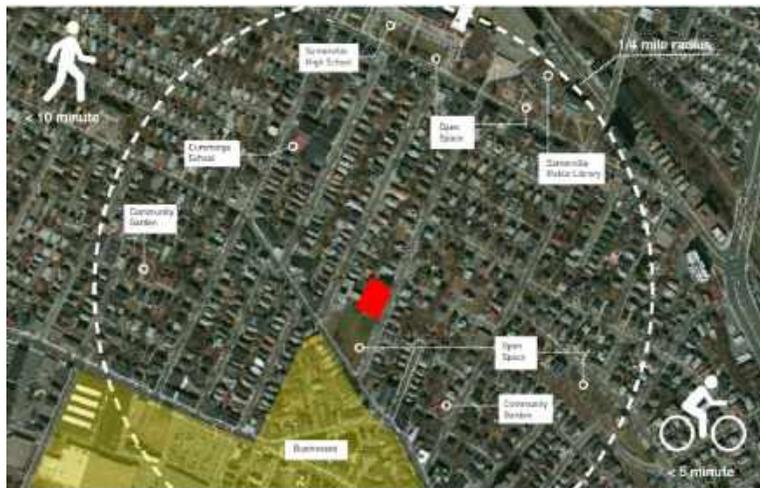
for April 22, 2020 Public Meeting

# Somerville Community Growing Center

- A model for urban land use
- A collaboration between city government and local nonprofit & community agencies
  - Designed and built by local residents; maintained by volunteers
- Redesigned and renovated through significant Community Preservation Fund support

## Our Location:

## Past / Present Partners:



### Urban Agriculture

- Model for school gardens
- Host for Groundwork Somerville Green Team
- Red Fire Farm CSA
- Green City Growers
- Maple Syrup Project
- Compost
- SHS and COA collaborations
- Food Security links

### Education

- Somerville High
- Art in the Garden, Arts Council site
- SFLC/playgroups
- Earthwise Aware
- Health & Wellness
- Children in Nature: Head Start & Community Pre-Schools
- Home Schoolers
- Cummings School

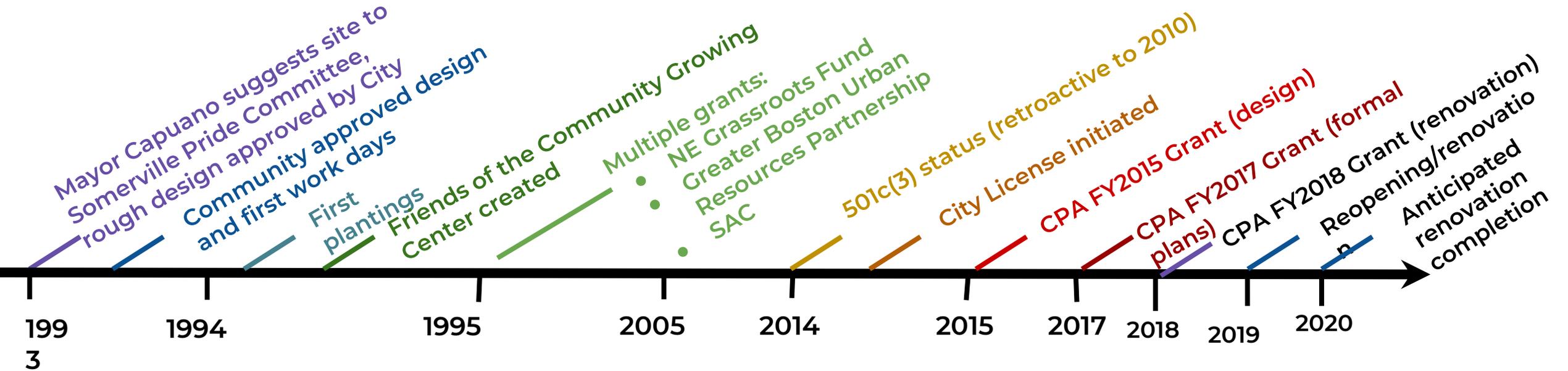
### Community

- Volunteers
- Somerville Arts Council
- Somerville Media Center
- Shape Up Somerville
- Teen Empowerment
- Somerville Library
- Neighbors
- Local musicians & artists
- Somerville Home
- Walnut St Center



Somerville Community Growing Center

# Growing Center History- 1993 to present



# Why funding was needed for the Growing Center

- **unique multi-functional recreational green/open space**
- **built on a “10 year-plan”, not on City park timeline- was over 20 years old**
- **natural growth and deteriorating hardscape creating potential hazards**
- **designed to build a multi-generational community; has met this goal**
- **an experiential meeting place where new skills are learned**
- **model for urban open space used for teaching & learning; work with SPS**
- **incubator space to try new ideas: solar, compost, native plants, etc.**
- **programs to engage young children & teens with the outdoors**



# Restoration and Rehabilitation of the Somerville Community Growing Center

## TIMELINE

To best preserve the mission and vision of the Growing Center, transition from design and preparation to full implementation of restoration and rehabilitation of this recreational space.

### Regenerative DESIGN

#### Site Overview + Assessment



#### Participatory Design



#### Community Education



Primary Funding Sources: CPA Grant FY15, FCGC and Terra Curra in-kind volunteer hours

2014

2015

2016

### PREPARATION

- Stamped Landscape Drawings
- Formal Plans for construction (financial + further community engagement)

CPA FY17 & inkind

2017

### Restoration/Rehab

- City Bid and Procurement Process
- Construction phase
- Community completion phase



CPA FY18 & FCGC

2018-2019



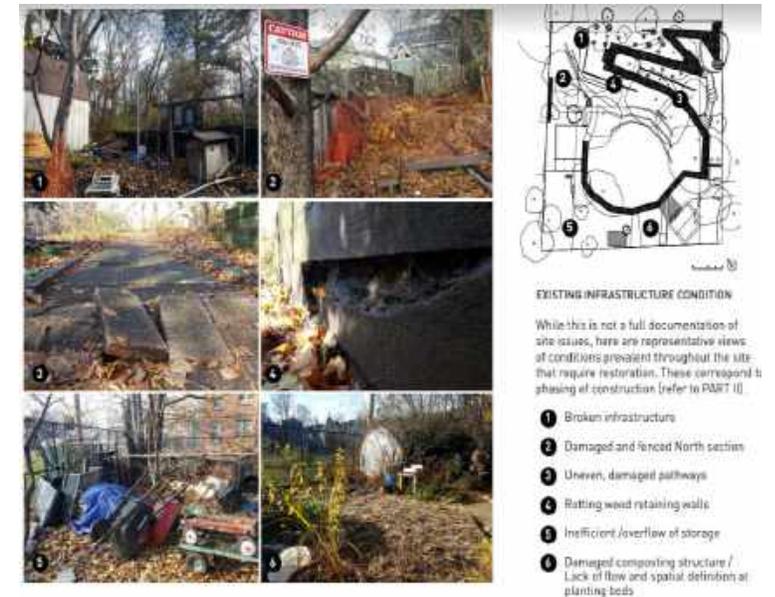
Somerville Community  
Growing Center

# What CPA18 funds made possible

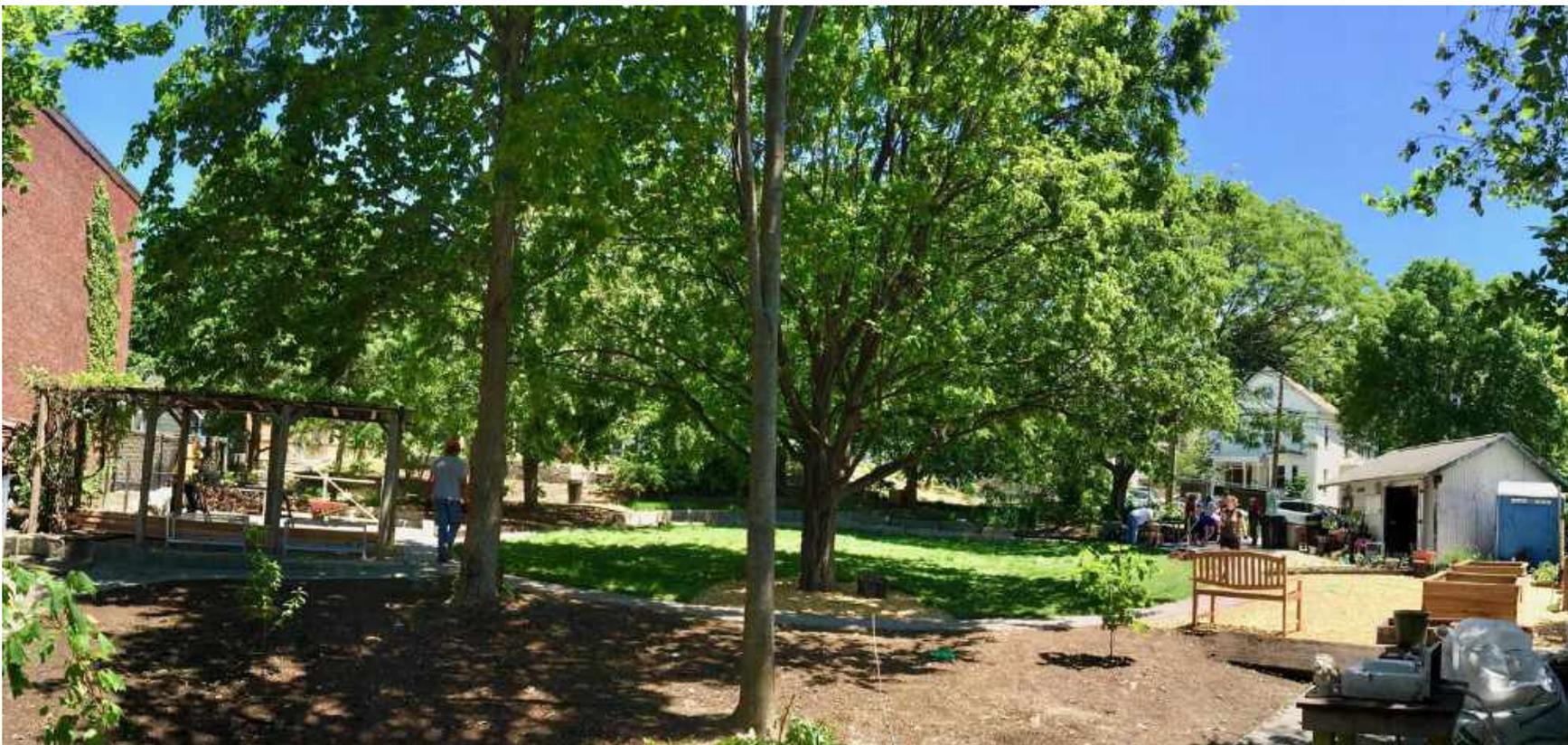
Providing a safe and accessible recreational place for all people in the Somerville community to come together to celebrate, learn and grow.

## PRE-EXISTING SITE ISSUES:

1. Aged infrastructure needed replacement (retaining walls, raised beds for urban ag, etc)
2. Uneven pathways needed to be rebuilt.
3. Plantings needed to be improved (removal of invasives and ecologically integrated plantings.)
4. ADA accessibility improvements/universal access
5. Storage insufficient to support programming

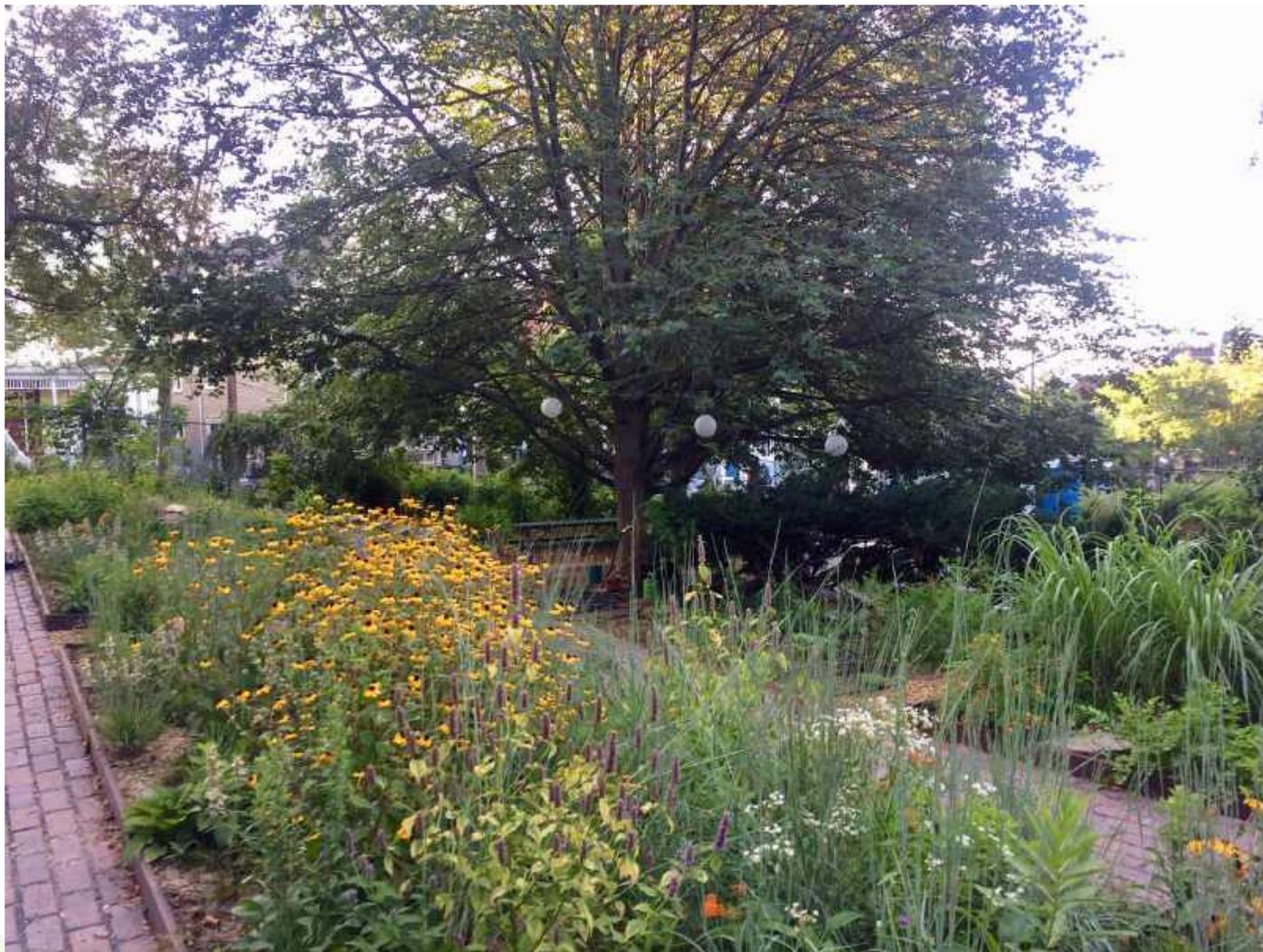


# A few images of activities post renovation



Somerville Community  
Growing Center

# New native pollinator meadow plantings



Somerville Community  
Growing Center

# Children enjoying new garden areas



# A place for all seasons



Somerville Community  
Growing Center

# Memories of gathering for cultural events



Somerville Community  
Growing Center

Thank you to the CPA program for supporting this green public recreational space for current and future generations!

Questions?



Somerville Community  
Growing Center

# The Somerville Museum



Gateway to the Westwood Road historic district



# Collections



The flying double staircase at the Somerville Museum created by Charles Bulfinch (middle left) in 1792 for Joseph Barrell (upper left), a wealthy merchant in Boston. Bulfinch was the architect of his Federalist mansion (print image left), located in Cobble Hill.

# Collections



1838 Marine painting of Boston Harbor



Vase produced by the Union Glass Co. under the ownership of Julian DeCordova, who left his estate as the foundation of the DeCordova Museum.



Mary Sawyer Tyler -the “Mary” depicted in the poem *Mary Had A Little Lamb* by Sarah Josepha Hale/John Roulstone in 1830



This fire bucket was owned by Isaac Tufts, son of Peter Tufts and nephew of Samuel Tufts, who set aside the Milk Row Cemetery in 1804.

# Research

By members &  
visiting scholars

Dr. Nancy Lusignan Schultz, author of *Lifting the Veil*, the story of the burning of the monastery of St. Benedict. She used the library and resources of the Somerville Museum to research this event and her book.



# Exhibitions



# Exhibitions

## The Basement Project: Not Your Usual Basement Junk

A collaboration of the Somerville High School's Local History Club and the Somerville Museum's historic collection.

Thursday, February 27-Saturday, March 28



# Education

## SOMERVILLE (CHARLESTOWN BEYOND THE NECK) AND THE SIEGE OF BOSTON



Prospect Hill 1770



BG Nathaniel Greene



Prospect Hill Today



Knox's Noble Artillery



King George III



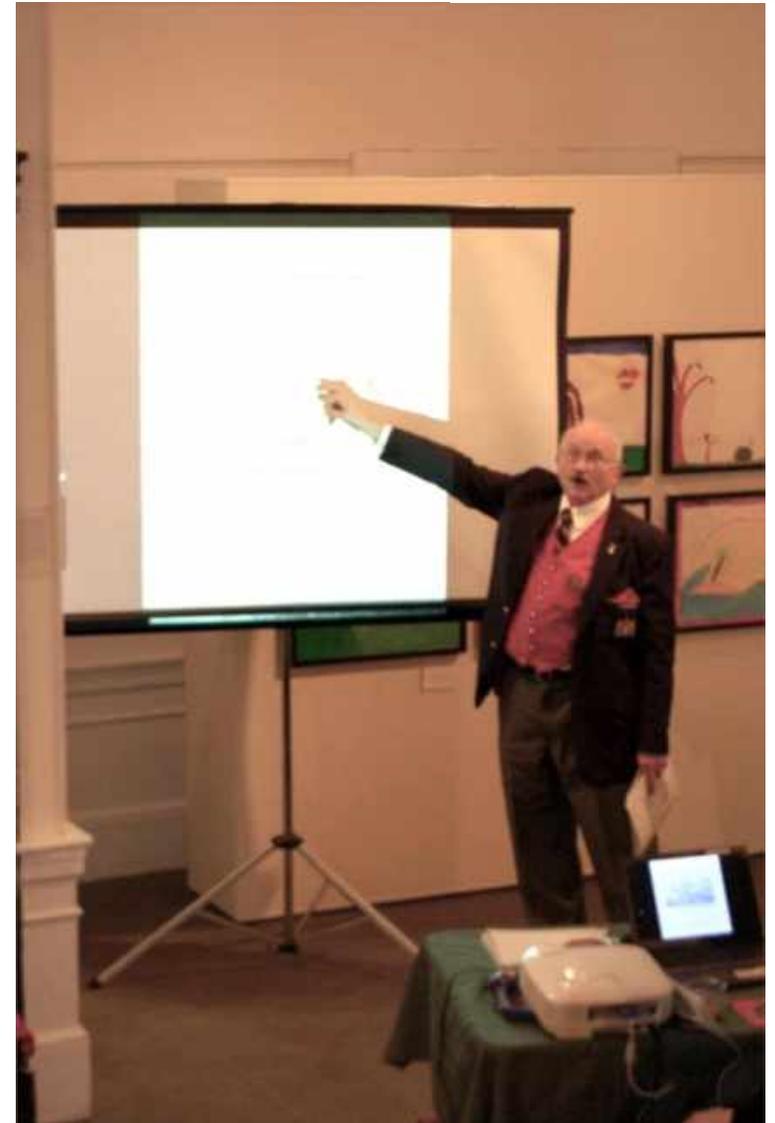
Boston 1775



Lord Howe

**HISTORIC SOMERVILLE PRESENTS:**  
A Lecture by **Col. Lawrence Willwerth**, Quartermaster of the Ancient and Honorable  
Artillery Company of Massachusetts (founded 1638)

Thursday, September 15th, 2011 7:30-8:30PM  
The Somerville Museum One Westwood Road Somerville  
\$5 nonmember, free to members



# Education



# Performances



# Performances



# As We Are Now



# As We Are Now



# As We Are Now



# As We Are Now



# As We Want To Be



PROPOSED PORTICO



PROPOSED PORTICO

And Can Be With Your Continuing Support.

*Thank you, CPC Committee  
and  
Thank you, People of Somerville*

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
SOMERVILLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND**

*JOSEPH A. CURTATONE*

*MAYOR*

---

Presentation for Community Preservation Plan hearing

April 22, 2020

## Eligible uses for Community Preservation Act community housing funds:

- Acquisition, creation, preservation, and support of housing affordable to households with incomes up to 100% of the Area Median Income.
- “Support” of affordable housing includes programs that provide grants, loans, rental assistance, interest-rate write downs or other forms of assistance directly to an entity that owns, operates or manages housing, for the purpose of making housing affordable.

# CPA Allocations by Fiscal Year

---

<b>CPA Funding allocated to Trust for Affordable Housing</b>	<b>Appropriation Amount</b>
<b>FY14 + FY15</b>	<b>\$2,206,028</b>
<b>FY16</b>	<b>\$1,834,675</b>
<b>FY17</b>	<b>\$880,416</b>
<b>FY18</b>	<b>\$1,200,402</b>
<b>Bond revenue for 100 Homes</b>	<b>\$6,000,000</b>
<b>FY19</b>	<b>\$1,396,986</b>
<b>FY20</b>	<b>\$1,263,752</b>
<b>100 Homes debt service (from FY20)</b>	<b>-\$312,153</b>
<b>Total CPA</b>	<b>14,470,106</b>

# FY21 CPA Community Housing Requests for Proposals

---

## CPA FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS RELATED TO HOUSING UNITS

- designated for projects that acquire, create or preserve affordable housing units.

## CPA FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR HOUSING PROGRAMS

- designated for programs that provide rental assistance or other financial assistance to income eligible households for the purpose of making housing affordable.

<b>FY20 CPA HOUSING REQUESTS</b>		
<b>PROJECTS</b>		
E3 Development	31 Tufts Street (15 units rental housing (50% - 110% AMI); open space)	\$1,000,000
<b>PROGRAMS</b>		
SCC	100 Homes Program Management	\$200,000
SHC	CPA PASS Expansion	\$199,952
SHC	Leasing Differential	\$66,108
CAAS	Housing Stability Fund	\$100,000
RESPOND, Inc.	Housing Program for Victims of Domestic Violence	\$11,400
	Total Housing Programs	\$577,460
<b>FY20 REQUESTS FOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS</b>		<b>\$1,577,460</b>

# 100 Homes Program

Goal: to create 100 new affordable units through the acquisition and renovation of existing properties. The introduction of deed restrictions on each unit ensures sustained housing affordability provided to households at a variety of income levels.

Program targets:

20% of units up to 50% AMI

20% of units up to 60% AMI

20% of units up to 80% AMI

40% of units up to 100% AMI

53 rental apartments have been purchased to date; 90% occupied.

# Housing Program Descriptions

## **CPA PASS Expansion (SHC) -- \$195,952**

Two-years of **rental subsidy** for Somerville households **at risk of homelessness**, or in transition out of emergency shelter system into apartments. Case management is also provided as part of the program.

## **Leasing Differential Program (SHC) -- \$66,108**

**Rental assistance for formerly homeless and disabled residents** living at scattered sites throughout Somerville. Units are leased by SHC and sublet to tenants for permanent supportive housing.

## **Housing Stability Fund (CAAS) -- \$100,000**

Up to \$3,000 assistance in the form of grants and loans to cover CPA eligible uses for homelessness prevention (including **first and last month's rent, security deposits and rental arrears**).

## **Housing Program for Victims of Domestic Violence (RESPOND) - award is pending**

Up to six months of **flexible rental assistance to survivors of domestic violence** who meet HUD's definition of homeless and who are seeking safe housing in Somerville.

## FY20 CPA Housing Funds / FY20 CPA Housing Funds Requested

FY20 CPA Housing Appropriation	\$951,599
FY20 CPA Housing Requests	\$1,577,460

# CPA & Historic Preservation



City of Somerville  
Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development  
Planning Division / George Proakis, Executive Director  
Sarah White, *MDS-HP*, Zoning Case Review Planner & Preservation Planner

# SUMMARY

Types of projects

Protecting the public investment

Upcoming implementations

Wish list

# TYPES OF PROJECTS

<p>Preservation and Access of Election Records </p>	<p>This project will preserve and provide access to the City of Somerville's Election Department records (1884-1967) by digitally scanning them and making them available free of charge online. These records include voter lists used at polls, index of registered votes, general register, voter annual registers by ward and precinct, preliminary and general election results, poll taxes, and list of women voters.</p>	<p>4/26/2018</p>	<p></p>
<p>Somerville Museum: Collection Preservation </p>	<p>The Somerville Museum will make climate control improvements, improve fire safety systems, and remediate mold in the building in order to protect its historic museum collection.</p>	<p>1/24/2019</p>	<p></p>
<p>Works Progress Administration Carved Wood Bas-Relief Restoration Project </p>	<p>The Somerville Public Library will hire a conservator to restore the wood bas-relief in the Central Library carved by a local artist through the Works Progress Administration program in 1939. The Library will also hired a skilled firm to install the carving in a safer, more prominent location in the Central Library.</p>	<p>1/24/2019</p>	<p></p>
<p>Mystic WaterWorks </p>	<p>The CPC granted \$243,000 to the Somerville Housing Authority to rehabilitate and restore the historic windows at the Mystic Water Works. The Affordable Housing Trust granted \$257,000 to fund soft costs related to the community housing portion of the project.</p>	<p>3/26/2015</p>	<p> </p>

## TYPES OF PROJECTS *(CONT'D)*



Restoration and move of Works Progress Administration (WPA) *bas relief* at the Central Library.



## TYPES OF PROJECTS *(CONT'D)*

Restoration of grave markers at the 1804 Milk Row Cemetery (multiple phases).



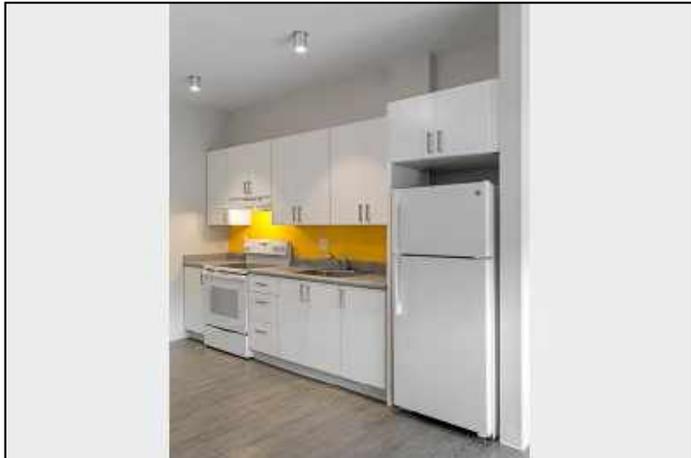
# TYPES OF PROJECTS *(CONT'D)*

## Addition to Somerville Museum to accommodate elevator



## TYPES OF PROJECTS *(CONT'D)*

Mystic Water Works – Blended Project – Historic Preservation & 25 Units of Affordable Housing



# PROTECTING THE PUBLIC INVESTMENT

## Preservation Restrictions

- Legally binding
- In perpetuity
- Entire exterior envelope of building
- Executed prior to receiving CPA funds
- Future changes to building require compliance with restriction, review, and approval
- Held by the City\*

*Preservation restrictions on City buildings must be held by outside entity*

# UPCOMING IMPLEMENTATIONS

## Local Historic District (LHD) Property Owner Preservation Fund

- \$150,000
- Small grants (up to \$15,000)
- Messaging, communication, application, review & approval (Planning Office)
- Grant management (CPA Manager)

# WISH LIST

## Outreach from CPC

- encourage more HP-focused projects
- diversify applicant/recipient pool

## Encourage more “blended projects”

- hp & affordably housing
- hp and open space/recreation
- meeting multiple SomerVision goals in one project

## Cross-border project collaboration

- bordering CPA communities

QUESTIONS?

Contact:

**Sarah White, MDS-HP**

Zoning Case Review Planner & Preservation Planner

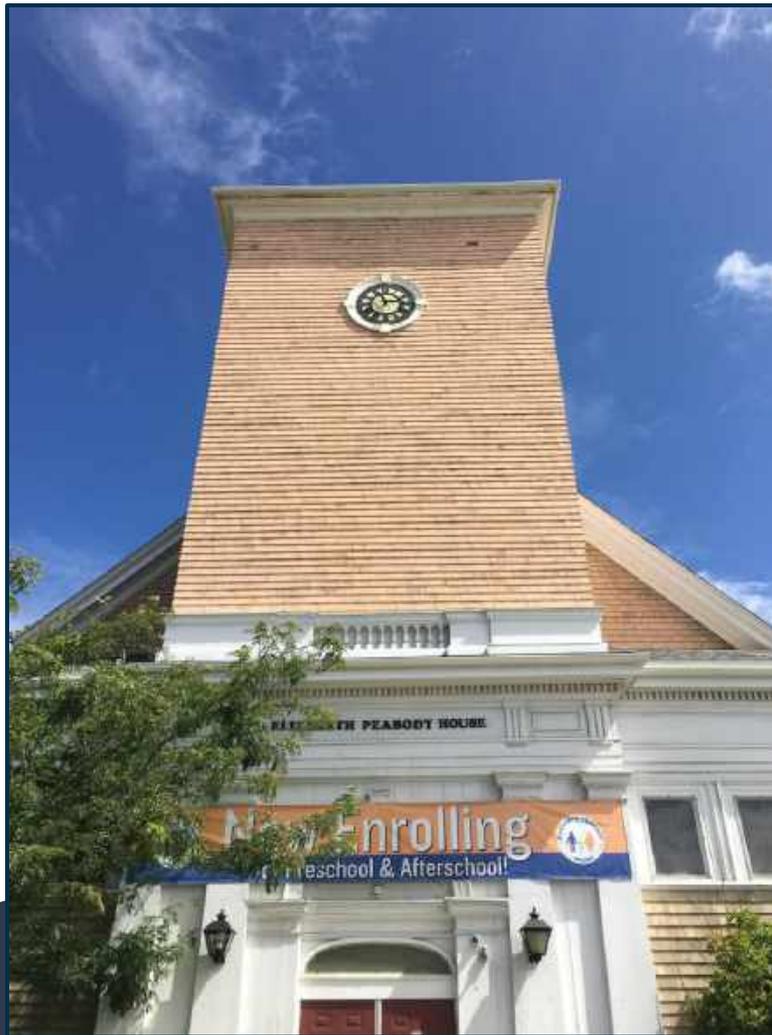
[swhite@somervillema.gov](mailto:swhite@somervillema.gov)

# Elizabeth Peabody House

## Addressable Fire Alarm System Project

The mission of Elizabeth Peabody House is to support families in our community in reaching their full potential through early childhood education, youth enrichment and development, and family services.

**Kretcha Roldan**, Executive Director  
**Katie Aucella**, Development Associate



# What We Offer:

## Preschool

- 2 classrooms, 40 students
- Curriculum designed to foster physical, intellectual, social, and emotional growth
- Students and staff from a variety of backgrounds
- 2nd most affordable childcare out of 23 centers in Somerville.
- One of only 8 centers that accepts vouchers

## Afterschool

- 43 students ages 5-13 years old
- Transportation from 6 Somerville schools (one of only 2 programs that offer transportation)
- Program offers:
  - homework assistance
  - social emotional development
  - experiential learning to reinforce skills and knowledge

# Programs, cont.:

## Emergency Food Pantry

- Open every Wednesday from 5-7:30 pm
- Serve ~80 families each week, including EPH parents
- Distribute 2,700+ bags of groceries each month
- Collect and distribute 300+ Thanksgiving baskets to EPH families and community members

## Camp Everwood

- Partnership with Everwood Day Camp in Sharon:
  - students experience a host of activities
  - opportunity to enjoy nature otherwise inaccessible due to economic hardship
- EPH offers transportation to and from camp
- Camp slots reserved annually for EPH students and Alumni

# Who We Serve

## Immigrant Families

- 50% of students are first-generation American
- Families come from countries like Haiti, El Salvador, Eritrea, Brazil, etc.
- ~65% of Food Pantry clients speak English as a 2nd language

## Low Income Families

- 65% of our students are on vouchers/contracts
- 81% of Afterschool students receive free/reduced lunch
- 1 in 3 of our students come from a single-parent household

# Historical Significance



View of 277 Broadway from across the street, date unknown

- Built in 1882 as a Methodist Church
- Colonial Revival style church with entrance foyer and tower
- Acquired by EPH in 1979 and converted into a community building
- Historical designation in October 2017

# Prior CPA–Funded Projects

## FY 2018: Full Roof Replacement

- Stripped the old shingles
- Replaced rotten roof boards
- Re-shingled roof and installed new rubber on flat roof

before



after



## FY 2019: Comprehensive Building Assessment

- Prioritized building rehabilitation plan
  - Next steps after roof replacement
- Outlined 3 immediate causes to address:
  - *Ground electrical cabling*
    - Completed within week of receiving assessment
  - *Fix remaining water filtration through roof*
    - Completed before end of the summer
  - *Demolish and replace egress staircase from afterschool*
    - Finished week of October 14th 2019
- Listed other areas of concern/priority

before



after



# FY20 Project



## FY20 Project: installing an addressable fire alarm system.

- Allows firefighters to see exactly where an alarm is being set off
- Recommended by FY19 building assessment plan
- Crucial to ensure working and up-to-date safety systems

## Community Benefits:

- Reduce potential damage to the building
- Provides sustainability to
- Extends potential of our services to immigrants and low-income families

# FY20 Project Updates/COVID-19 Response

- EPH has closed childcare services on Governor Baker's orders
- Reopened food pantry on 4/15
  - Served 30 households, large percentage of new clients
- Maintaining social distancing procedures
  - Limiting number of volunteers and staff in the building at one time
  - Wearing gloves/masks
  - Wiping down all surfaces
  - Deep cleaning of both buildings

- After discussion with the board, we made the hard decision to delay the start of this project
- Currently focusing on food pantry operations and keeping students engaged in virtual learning
- Teachers continue to have communication with EPH families

I want to start off thanking the City employees for all their work during this time to keep public spaces open and available. I know there have been over 900 signs printed and displayed in the City's public spaces and, having personally sent emails past 9pm to City staff and still received a response, I appreciate that Somerville Public Space and Urban Forestry staff are working hard to keep the City safe and accessible.

I also want to recognize that this meeting is occurring during an unprecedented public health emergency and my own thoughts have changed even from when I first put together an outline for this exact public meeting merely a month ago. We have witnessed the eagerness of residents to enjoy the City's public spaces AND the frustration of those who were crowded out of those spaces, bringing to head the necessity of the City's public spaces for health, recreation, and, in the case of the community path and the City's bike routes, for transportation when public transportation may no long feel safe.

I'm here tonight to represent the City of Somerville's Conservation Commission, which I have served on for seven years and have had the honor of being the Chair for the last two years. I'll paraphrase from the City's website that the Somerville Conservation Commission (Con Com) is devoted to preserving and protecting Somerville's natural environment. The Con Com administers and enforces the Wetlands Protection Act and River Protection Acts, and has an important role in open space planning. Now, almost every City and town in the Commonwealth has a Conservation Commission to regulate the City's wetlands and waterfront, but we also have the pleasure to oversee the City's Community Gardens.

The Community Preservation Act has been a great funding source for open space, from supplying emergency funds to purchase a property at Glen Park next to Capuano School to increase the open space in East Somerville to renovating our schoolyards to be more aligned with Open Space principles and therefore more usable to the general public. On the

whole, this is an essential funding source that is relatively easily accessible to the community and the City staff for open space and it's fantastic that we can access local funds to improve our City.

Of course, we have learned a lot since the CPA was adopted in November 2012 and there is still room for improvement. The Conservation Commission often has not been consulted about projects that might need our assistance or will require our oversight before the funds are awarded by the CPC. The ConCom is eager to give input to projects like the Art Farm or the new open space at Glen Park as early as possible before the projects is funded by the CPC, not to hold up projects but to make the projects stronger and aligned with other programs we oversee in the City, preferably before a request for a conservation easement or oversight for a new community garden are required.

The other issue that we have encountered is that projects seem to be approved if there are funds available that year, without considering whether the City staff have already completed previous projects. For example the school yard renovation design projects are piled up. While I understand that politically this may be considered "fair" since all schoolyards have been awarded and are all awaiting movement, practically this reflects poorly on the CPC and City government, as the energy of community engagement is dissipated as time passes with little communication or action. I would argue that getting things done in a timely matter so the residents that fund the CPC see the results is more effective than producing a multimedia project about projects that have not been finished, even if it means that either strategic decisions need to be made to cancel projects that cannot be enacted in the timelines originally agreed upon, more funds are allocated to get previously funded projects over the finish line or even saying "no" to very good projects if the City Department has still not made sufficient progress on previously awarded projects and does not have a plan to increase capacity to move those projects forward quickly.

Lastly, the stay-at-home advisory has shown that the desire for more public space is intense for Somerville's residents. However, to no one's surprise, the Open Space Task Force memo from 2019 showed that new public spaces are not only difficult to acquire with all the competing interests for the use of any potential open space in Somerville, but expensive to acquire. I applaud the formation of the Open Space Land Acquisition Fund to acquire new public space and suspect that there would be huge public support to continue to fund the acquisition of land for pocket parks and other open spaces, especially with an eye towards both opportunity and equity for all Somerville residents. I hope every year this Fund can be added to by the CPC so the City can continue to make the City an even more exceptional place to live, work, play, and raise a family.