



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE



JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

FY18 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN RESIDENT FEEDBACK

RECEIVED JUNE 12-JULY 20, 2017

WRITTEN COMMENTS

From: Danielle Evans
Received: June 12, 2017

Hi,

I would like to see CPA money used to improve the City's existing playgrounds and create new pocket parks for more green space. West Somerville Neighborhood School desperately needs a new playground and the portions of the vast asphalt lot converted to pervious green space.

Hodgkins-Curtin Park is already starting to look tired with patches of the rubber surface deteriorating. Also the landscaping could use a rethink/overhaul as it would be nice if there were grassy areas in the playground where you could sit down with a blanket and let babies crawl rather than the existing shrubbery and mulch which renders areas unusable (when we should be maximizing every square foot in a city with limited public open space). The adjacent field is either too sunny or not available due to baseball teams (previously it was safe to occupy the very rear portions of the outfield, but lately grown adults (possibly coaches?) have been hitting baseballs as hard as they can, sometimes even over the fence into the playground).

Thank you for your consideration.
Danielle Evans

From: Marjorie Nichols
Received: June 12, 2017

Hi,

This is in response to the public being asked how CPA monies be used. The "flexible" fund has given the smallest percent increase to housing.

How is the affordable housing funding allocated? Knowing that would help stimulate ideas for me. But one thought I have is giving cash to landlords who provide discounts to low and moderate income people. similar to section 8 It's hard to continue to be interested in meetings and preserving history, open space etc when developers are tempting even compassionate landlords. One day we have a home, civic pride, the next...

Thanks for asking. Remember that single people also need (enough) space and that many older people like being around kids and innovation and creativity. i.e.

MEMBERS

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Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello
Arn Franzen
Ezra Glenn
James McCallum
Uma Murugan
Jessica Palacios Yamakawa

STAFF

Kristen Stelljes

I'm encouraging you to not ghettoize.
Are there statistics that back making most affordable housing for family groups?

Cheers,
Marjorie

From: Green & Open Somerville, Somerville Climate Action, Friends of the Community Path, Union Square Neighbors

Received: June 18, 2017

Dear Ms. Stelljes,

We are pleased to see the CPA priority request notice and look forward to your committee once again funding deserving projects. We do have a priority for the committee and hope it will be taken into consideration: we would like to see even distribution of funds between the three categories of affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space and outdoor recreation. Alternatively, these categories could each get 30% with 10% flexible.

Somerville has the least amount of green space in New England, so the CPA funding is a natural way to fund more parks and open spaces. As the Board of Aldermen clearly showed in the Land Use Committee meetings discussing the Union Square Overlay District zoning, there are two truths regarding open space in Somerville: our community values green space and we do not have enough. The BoA spent hours trying to find ways to increase the green space that will be required in Union Square without breaking the MLDA or Covenant and the community supported this wholeheartedly.

We feel that open space, affordable housing and historic preservation are equally worthy causes, and we'd like to see this reflected in the funding percentages. With limited space, and funds, for any parks of significant size, the community will need to rely on pocket parks and other small areas to increase our green space. CPA funding is such a good fit for this and we hope to see more funds available for this in the future.

Sincerely,
Renée Scott
Green & Open Somerville

Maureen Barillaro
Somerville Climate Action

Lynn Weissman and Alan Moore
Friends of the Community Path

Rob Buchanan
Union Square Neighbors

TESTIMONY FROM PUBLIC HEARING

Barbara Mangum

(as Ms. Mangum was unable to attend the meeting, Ms. Stelljes read the following statement into the record)

Part of the reason that the CPA was created originally was to see three underfunded areas - low-income housing, land acquisition or reuse, and historic preservation - receive more and consistent financial support from the citizenry. None of these areas usually survive a fight for services in conventional municipal or town budgeting - at least not to the extent required to make a big impact. That said, we now see that in the three-way that passed into legislation, we again must defer to the immediate human needs of housing. What kind of person would deny this? However, this was not the intent of the original legislation nor the coalition of organizations that came together to see the law passed. Man cannot live by bread alone. We need open space. We need a sense of our history to remain a vibrant, thoughtful people with vision for the future. Land acquisition costs are very high in Somerville, preservation costs are often high for a variety of reasons. As the latter two areas have historically been underfunded, there is a backlog of projects to address. Although I do not want to say that the funds must be spent equally, as circumstances and needs may dictate otherwise, I do believe they should be brought closer to 30%, 30%, 30% with 10% for administration. When funding is available on a regular basis, organizations can dream new dreams and plan new and surprising ways to improve life in Somerville for all.

Nancy Kalojian: Ms. Kalojian spoke to the need to support individuals and mental illness and disabilities, such as creating a new park such as the Menino Playground at Spalding in Boston that is designed to be fully accessible. She suggested more could be done to feature and link our historic squares, mansions, hill and brooks. This could be done by combining open space and historic aspects.

Stephen Mackey: Mr. Mackey spoke about the importance of the Somerville Museum in his own life and the value of preserving historic buildings for Somerville. Through his involvement in the creation of the *Beyond the Neck* book, he saw how a historic collection can lead to much bigger things.

John Reinhardt: Mr. Reinhardt spoke about how the lack of open space negatively affects quality of life and merits investment. He is supportive of the CPC's efforts to set aside funding for land acquisition.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Alderman Rossetti inquired about the use of CPA funds for housing for municipal employees in Somerville during the FY18 budget hearing and passed along the following information from the Massachusetts Municipal Association:

From: Daniel Demaina <ddemaina@mma.org>

Date: June 7, 2017 at 12:00:21 PM EDT

To: aldermanrossetti@gmail.com

Subject: **Articles on CPA Funding for Municipal Employee Housing**

Hi Alderman Rossetti,

So I checked with our editor (who obviously predates me here) and our legislative staff, but no one seems to recall a Beacon article about CPA funds being used to create housing for municipal. I also can't find it on our website (which has all Beacon articles going back through 2010).

However, they did recall a couple of items that may be of interest to you:

- Nantucket building housing specifically for school employees: <http://www.communitypreservation.org/successstories/community-housing/254>
- Nantucket in 2003 approved \$70K in CPA funds for town employee and resident housing on town land
- Norfolk in 2003 approving \$100K in CPA funds for a down payment assistance program for town employees/teachers and residents.

Sorry I couldn't dig up the exact article you were looking for; hope these leads help you out.

Good luck with the Union Square rezoning and community benefits ordinance, I know you guys still have a lot on your plate there!

Best,
Dann

Daniel DeMaina
Associate Editor
Massachusetts Municipal Association

The Community Preservation Committee also received the following resolution from the Board of Aldermen:

June 22, 2017

SUMMARY

Resolution #203735	By Ald. Rossetti That the Community Preservation Committee consider allocating funds to house our municipal employees.
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COMPLETE TEXT

That the Community Preservation Committee consider allocating funds for the direct purpose of housing our municipal employees. (Refer to articles re: the communities of Nantucket and Norfolk at: <http://www.communitypreservation.org/successstories/community-housing/254>)

SPONSORED BY: Alderman at Large Rossetti

RESULT

RESULT: APPROVED