

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

The Community Preservation Committee is pleased to submit its annual report of activities for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013.

The Community Preservation Process in Wellesley

In 2002, Wellesley accepted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and formed a Community Preservation Committee (CPC). Pursuant to the CPA, Wellesley established a surcharge of 1% on the local property tax and began to set aside the proceeds of the surcharge to support Community Preservation activities. As defined in the CPA, these funds may only be used for four designated purposes: Open space, Historic resources, Recreational uses and Community housing.

Funds raised through the local surcharge are partially matched annually by monies from the Massachusetts Community Preservation Trust Fund, which is made up of revenues from Land Court and Land Registry fees. As an early adopter of the CPA, Wellesley received a 100% match for the first five years (FY2004-2008). With the decline in the real estate market and an increase in the number of communities adopting the CPA, the State match has declined substantially since 2008. In October, 2012 Wellesley received \$251,233, which is 26.83% of the FY12 local levy of \$936,256. Starting in November 2013, the state match is expected to increase as the result of revisions to the CPA adopted on July 8, 2012. Since 2004, the town has received a total of \$4.5 million in state matches as the result of adopting the CPA.

The Town's Community Preservation fund continues to be financially strong, despite the decline in state matches. Please see the Community Preservation columns of the Non Major Governmental Funds Combining Balance Sheet and Non Major Governmental Funds Combining Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances in the Town's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for detailed information.

The membership of Wellesley's CPC is determined by Town Bylaw. There are nine members, including representatives from five designated boards (Natural Resources Commission, Planning Board, Recreation Commission, Housing Authority and Historical Commission) plus four additional members appointed by the Moderator. In practice, one of the four Moderator appointed members is appointed on the recommendation of the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation.

Each year, the CPC must appropriate a minimum of 10% of all revenues for each of three primary purposes: open space (which can include recreation), community housing and historic resources. These appropriations can be for specific projects or they can be allocated to dedicated reserves for future use. The remaining Community Preservation revenues may be appropriated for any CPA allowable use or retained in undesignated funds for future appropriation. The CPC is also allowed to appropriate a maximum of 5% of all revenues for administrative purposes. These administrative funds are sometimes used to provide initial funding money to plan a larger project.

The CPA legislation provides language and guidelines defining allowable uses of CPC funds. In addition the Department of Revenue Division of Local Services and the non-profit Community Preservation Coalition provide additional resources to guide communities like Wellesley. The July, 2012 revisions to the CPA include new allowable uses and some new restrictions. The CPC will be studying these changes to determine how to adapt its long range plan.

Each year the CPC studies the needs of the community and reviews funding proposals submitted by Town Boards and other eligible parties. The CPC will hold one or more public hearings to receive input from the community. The output of this process is a Five Year Plan for future projects plus a determination of which proposals will be supported with appropriation requests at the Annual Town Meeting. Frequently projects will be tentatively added to the Plan without a firm commitment. This helps the committee view its long term commitments and plan appropriately.

Community Preservation funding proposals generally consist of capital expenditures for the purposes permitted by the CPA. Maintenance and ordinary operating expenses are not eligible. All appropriations from the Community Preservation fund must be approved by the Wellesley CPC and then subsequently be approved at a Wellesley Annual or Special Town Meeting.

In the past, capital funding of improvements to recreational and open space resources has been limited to property acquired with CPC funds. However, the changes in effect starting FY2013 allow the use of CPC funds to develop or improve recreation resources acquired in other ways.

An Overview of Community Preservation Activities

The Committee operates pursuant to a Community Preservation Plan for the Town, including specific Decision Guidelines and Goals which are used in reaching decisions about whether and to what extent to recommend funding for the proposals submitted to the Committee. A copy of the Community Preservation Plan as well as other materials, including reports by the Committee to Town Meeting can be found at the Committee's link on the Town's website at www.wellesleyma.gov.

To date, the Committee has funded a total of 41 projects or portions of projects. The complete list can be viewed on the state CPA project website at the following link (pick Wellesley): http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/cpa_town_pick.htm The list is also available on the Community Preservation Coalition website at the following link: <http://www.communitypreservation.org/projects/report?town=Wellesley>

Including FY13 appropriations, the CPC has appropriated \$9,990,979 for these projects. Of this total, \$3,190,500 (31.9%) has been appropriated for Community Housing; \$3,116,750 (31.2%) for Recreation, \$1,680,469 (16.8%) for Historic Resources, and \$2,003,260 (20.1%) for Open Space. As discussed below, a total of \$376,125 was appropriated during FY13 for three projects.

Projects Funded at the 2013 Annual Town Meeting

Grant to the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation (Community Housing)

Sponsor: Wellesley Housing Development Corporation

Description of the Project: Additional capital to invest in the creation or preservation of affordable housing

Amount: \$225,000

This appropriation will provide equity capital for the WHDC to acquire additional housing units and or to repurchase affordable units which is consistent with its purpose and the Town's affordable housing policies. The CPC believes that providing affordable housing is important to strengthening and preserving the culture of the Town. The Wellesley Housing Development Corporation was created by the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting for that purpose.

Appropriation for Perrin Playground Equipment Replacement

Sponsor: Natural Resources Commission

Description of the Project: Perrin Playground Equipment Replacement

Amount: \$25,000

This appropriation provides 83.3% of the \$30,000 cost to replace the playground equipment at the Perrin Park Playground. The remainder is intended to be raised by contributions from the community. The playground equipment at the Perrin Park Playground was removed from the park due to deteriorating condition and safety concerns.

This is the first appropriation request to fall under the expanded uses allowed under the July, 2012 amendments to the Community Preservation Act. The CPA now allows the CPA funds to be used to rehabilitate or restore recreational resources even if they were not originally acquired with CPA funds.

Appropriation for the Historic Preservation and Restoration of the Wellesley Hills Branch Library

Sponsor: Board of Selectmen & Board of Library Trustees

Description of the Project: Appropriation for the preservation and renovation of the east facing wall and chimney at the Hills Branch Library. This is jointly funded by the CPC and the Town. The funds were taken from balances on hand as of June 30, 2012.

Amount: \$126,125

In early 2010, the Town identified the necessity to repair the east wall and chimney of the Hills Branch library. Repairs attempted in Fall 2011 resulted in the collapse of a large portion of the upper chimney. Various approaches (historic and non-historic) for repair and/or restoration were analyzed and the decision was made to proceed with a full historic restoration with the support of the Board of Library Trustees,

Board of Selectmen, Historic Commission and the Permanent Building Committee (PBC) estimated the project cost with contingencies at \$252,250 with the CPC funding 50% of the cost.

Looking Forward

During the coming year, the Community Preservation Committee will continue to work diligently with Town Boards and community organizations to successfully implement already approved projects, consider new projects, and in particular to advance the process of generating long term strategic plans for historic resources, open space, recreation and community housing.

Respectfully Submitted,

Allan Port, Chair
Theodore Parker, Vice-Chair
James Conlin
Jeanne Conroy
Kathy Egan
Joan Gaughan
Dwight Lueth
Barbara McMahon
Susan Troy