

**Northampton Community Preservation Committee Minutes
January 16, 2019**

Time: 7:00 pm
Place: City Hall Hearing Room, Second Floor, 210 Main Street

Brian Adams	✓
Linda Morley	✓
Julia Chevan	✓
Chris Hellman	✓
Jeff Jones	✓
Martha Lyon	✓
David Whitehill	✓
Jack Finn	✓
George Kohout	✓
Sarah LaValley - staff	✓

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

General Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

November 7, 2018. Linda moved to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by David, the motion carried unanimously.

Chair's Report

Brian stated that he visited the Leeds Historic signage project and the MassCentral Trail, and passed many other successful CPA projects on the way. He is grateful for the work the CPC does and all of the projects completed to-date.

Brian informed the Committee that matching grants for the conservation and park accessibility project and Florence Fields, so there will be additional funds available for the first funding round in 2019.

The Committee welcomed George Kohout, new Planning Board representative to the CPC.

Community Preservation Coalition Presentation

Stuart Saginor, Community Preservation Coalition Executive Director, provided a presentation to the Committee in response to Northampton not joining the Coalition in 2018.

Stuart stated that half of the state's communities have passed the CPA, and the trust fund that provides the state match is becoming stretched thin with additional communities and fewer Registry of Deeds transactions. The Coalition has advocated for budget surplus funding to contribute to the trust fund, and is advocating for a permanent increase to Registry recording fees. The Coalition has been less proactive than in the past regarding CPA adoption in new communities, but offers assistance when asked. In addition to advocacy, the Coalition also conducts defensive work when legislation is filed that proposes to change the enabling legislation or could negatively affect CPA communities. Coalition lobbying helped allow the change that now allows work to be done on existing park facilities. The CPA project database is a state database that is maintained by the Coalition.

Housing Partnership Discussion

Patrick Boughan, Housing Partnership, provided a presentation to the Committee regarding affordable housing.

Patrick noted that local CPA housing spending is behind other categories at 19.3 percent. Many homeowners are renters locally are cost burdened; income increases have not kept up with home costs.

Low Income Housing Tax Credits fund many affordable housing projects, but their value has decreased following tax reform, and this increases the importance of other funding sources. Goals to reduce energy usage need to include affordable housing to be effective. Patrick suggested that the Committee could consider bonding for an affordable housing project or increasing the housing set-aside.

Linda asked what issues the Partnership has identified other than funding percentage being behind other categories; noting that CPC funding recommendations for housing projects are usually close to the amounts requested. Julia added that per-round spending when housing projects are included is also much greater. Chris stated that decisions are resource-driven, and with large projects that include multiple funding sources, the question is often what level of local support is required. If the set-aside for one category were increased, it could result in unspent funds when there are pressing needs in other categories.

Jeff noted that there is a waiting list for housing authority rentals, and that the housing authority could be another possible grantee.

David noted that there is a cost increase over the life of some of the affordable housing projects that have been awarded CPA funds. Martha noted that there is a tie-in between affordable housing and historic preservation that should be further explored in the future.

The CPC planned to continue discussions in the future.

2018 Round 2 Debriefing

The Committee agreed that the round worked well.

George asked if site visits are included in application reviews. Brian stated that they are, as needed.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.