

**Northampton Community Preservation Committee Minutes
August 4, 2021**

Time: 7:00 pm
Place: Remote Online Meeting

Brian Adams	✓
Linda Morley	
Julia Chevan	✓
Chris Hellman	✓
Jeff Jones	✓
Martha Lyon	✓
Dan Krassner	
Jen Smith	✓
Janna White	✓
Sarah LaValley - staff	✓

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM

General Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

None

Chair's Report

None

Discuss Expedited Applications and Make Funding Recommendations

Michelson Galleries/132 Main Street Façade Restoration

Paul Gulla stated that no changes to the building's historic character are proposed, and questioned whether a historic preservation restriction would be necessary given this. Sarah stated that state approved preservation restrictions are permanent, and apply to the full exterior of a building. Martha clarified that the Historical Commission found the building to be historically important but did not evaluate the CPC criteria, and asked about budget contingencies due to project uncertainties. Paul replied that details won't be known until work has started and the full extent of the damage is known. Several companies were approached but only one estimate was provided.

Martha noted the importance of the anti-aid amendment. Richard Michelson stated that the building will likely be sold if the project is not funded, but repayment of CPA funds could be possible if it were sold in a certain amount of time.

Martha noted that the application indicates that the building won't require special continued maintenance, but that it seems that it would given issues to-date. Paul noted that the building has experienced more than 100 years of deterioration.

Jeff noted that it is unique for such a large proposal to request full funding from the CPA. Paul and Richard stated that fundraising is also planned, and that associated costs were not detailed in the project but could be provided.

Martha asked about ADA compliance. There are ramps providing access to the front entrance, but there is no elevator. The past bank use presents challenges and expense. The Committee discussed possible implications for other privately owned buildings, and other restoration work underway downtown.

Brian suggested that public comment would provide insight into the project but that expedited review does not provide for public comments.

Jen asked if the exterior of the structure could be altered. Sarah replied that National Register listing does not place restrictions on alterations, but that changes would need to be approved locally since the building is within the Central Business Architecture district. Brian asked if a construction delay would be problematic. Paul there may be safety concerns regarding falling material that could cause a sidewalk closure. The Committee discussed whether it would be appropriate to review financial information. Julia moved to recommend full funding of the project at the amount requested. Seconded by Chris. Julia suggested that public input would be valuable, and noted that the fall funding round will be starting in September. Brian expressed concern about funding a private entity with public money in the absence of information about the entity's ability to fund a capital project. The motion failed 6-1.

Hampshire and Hampden Canal Historic Documentation

Brian asked how many of the six towns have committed funding to the project. Eric Weiss, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) stated that all have funds in process or have already allocated funding. With the exception of Russell and Southwick, all will use CPA funds. PVPC will cover shortfalls in the interim to allow work to begin. Martha asked if there are long-term plans for heritage tourism in involved communities. Shannon Walsh, PVPC, replied that the report should provide opportunities for this. Julia moved to recommend full funding at the \$15,000 requested. Seconded by Julia, the motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 PM.