

**Community Preservation Committee  
Town of Needham, Massachusetts**

**Report to Town Meeting  
Annual Town Meeting – May 2017**

**Introduction**

In November 2004, the voters of Needham adopted the legislation known as the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act. Since November 2005, the Needham Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has forwarded numerous projects to Town Meeting for final approval, the largest of which is the preservation and reconstruction of Town Hall.

The committee membership is defined by the requirements of the CPA as adopted by Needham. The nine member committee consists of a member of each of the following boards or committees; Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Park Recreation Commission, Historical Commission, Housing Authority, and two members each appointed by the Town Moderator and Board of Selectmen.

A summary of the CPC's FY 2017 activities follows. The members of the CPC welcome input, questions, and attendance at all meetings and public hearings. The Committee generally meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month, and agendas, minutes and the Needham Community Preservation Plan are available on the Town's website at [www.needhamma.gov/CPC](http://www.needhamma.gov/CPC)

**Sources of Available Funds**

**Tax Surcharge Receipts**

Needham residents are currently billed a 2% surcharge on property taxes after the first \$100,000 valuation, as a result of town-wide vote accepting CPA. In FY 2018, it is estimated that Needham will receive \$2,230,000 in property tax surcharges dedicated to CPA, equivalent to the average collected in previous years. The CPA fund also generates revenue from penalties and interest assessed on overdue CPA charges and investment income on the CPA funds in the bank

**State Community Preservation Fund**

Needham receives a distribution from the Massachusetts Community Preservation Trust Fund, and to date, has received \$7,631,362 from this fund. The most recent distribution, in December 2016 was \$417,108, a 20.58% match to local collections, the lowest contribution to date. In October 2006 and 2007, Needham received a 100% match to its local collections, with a combined distribution of \$2,557,108. From October 2008 through December 2015, the distributions ranged from a high of 67.62% to a low of 20.58%. In 2014-2016, the Legislature has added funds to the Community Preservation Fund in order to provide additional distributions to communities. The fund has a complex distribution formula based upon the number of communities participating and

their respective local surcharges with 172 communities now participating in CPA, including the City of Boston that approved adoption in November 2016. There is legislation currently under review at the State House for revisions to increase the funding of the MA Community Preservation Trust Fund.

## **Fund Balances**

State law mandates that, annually, at least 10% of surcharges plus state distribution funds be spent on actual projects, or be allocated for future projects in three specific CPA reserves; Community Housing, Open Space, and Historic Resources. The remainder of the funds, minus funds allocated for administrative expenses, is placed in an Annual Reserve fund, which can only be used for projects in these three areas and/or qualifying recreational projects.

Needham's CPC has elected to target 11% of the estimated receipts for each special reserve to insure staying compliant with the mandate.

As a result of previous appropriations, the reserve balances available for appropriation at the May 2017 Annual Town Meeting, prior to FY2018 contributions, are as follows:

Community Housing:	\$ 1,470,573
Open Space:	\$ 835,954
Historic Resources:	\$ 15,820
2017 Annual Reserve:	\$ 1,537,037
Free Cash:	\$ 4,150,727 (note this balance closes out at the end of the fiscal year)

The unspent 2017 Annual Reserve, and remaining administrative funds and interest must go through the free cash certification process before being returned to the CPA Fund.

The CPC is recommending appropriation of four (4) projects, to be funded at the May 2017 Annual Town Meeting. After subtracting the appropriations for the final four projects, and adding the FY'18 appropriations from Article 37, the balances in the respective funds would be:

Community Housing:	\$ 1,739,573
Open Space:	\$ 1,104,954
Historic Resources:	\$ 15,820
2018 Annual Reserve:	\$ 341,831
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,202,178 as of July 1, 2017</b>

Please note the figures above assume that \$82,000 has been appropriated for the FY 2018 administrative expenses. *It does not include the eventual Free Cash funds that will be finalized in late 2017, estimated to be more than \$1,600,000.*

### **Administrative Expenses**

The CPC Administrative Funds may be used to pay for the expenses related to the work of the committee, including office supplies, mailings, legal notices, appraisals, consultant fees, property deposits, as well as the recording secretary's salary and three hours per week for the Staff Liaison's weekly salary. The funds were recently utilized to pay for the addition of conservation restrictions on properties purchased with CPA funds. The Needham CPC is a member of the Massachusetts Community Preservation Coalition and pays annual dues to the association, currently \$4,350. The Coalition provides regular consultation services to the CPC, and monitors and informs member communities on state legislative activity related to the Community Preservation Act.

## **Requested Project Funding**

### **Article 33: Appropriate for Rosemary Recreation Complex**

The Park and Recreation Commission, in conjunction with the Permanent Public Building Committee and Town Manager, is requesting Construction Funds of \$12,000,000 to build an outdoor recreation pool and an outdoor fitness/competitive pool, add a spray park, rebuild the driveway and two parking lots, rebuild the lower level of the building for the bathhouse and pool functions, and rebuild the trailhead to Rosemary trails. The building will be solar-ready, and the driveway and lower parking lot will utilize porous pavement. A separate funding request of \$3,800,000 has been made for portions of the project that are not eligible for CPA funding, including the second floor of the building which will provide indoor space to support the site's outdoor recreation and provide opportunities throughout the year for indoor recreation space. The second floor would include office space for the Park and Recreation Department and the Health Department.

### **Article 34: Appropriate for Cricket Field Renovation Design**

The DPW Parks and Forestry Division, in collaboration with Park and Recreation, is requesting \$35,000 to design improvements to the two multi-purpose fields at Cricket Field. The design will be for the surface to be removed, the soils to be amended, and a new irrigation system to be installed before the final natural grass surface is restored. It is anticipated that work would be done during Summer 2018. The original request to the CPC was for \$285,000, to include construction, but the construction funds will be requested after the design work is complete and new estimates developed.

### **Article 35: Appropriate for New Elementary School Walking Trails**

The PPBC, in collaboration with the Board of Selectmen and School Committee, requests \$210,000 to construct a new trail at the Central Avenue site of the new elementary school. The nature trail will be ADA accessible, and all users will be able to explore a variety of habitats and enjoy a scenic vista overlooking water, wetlands, and forested

properties. The Student Conservation Association will participate in a portion of the project, potentially reducing some of the anticipated construction costs.

**Article 36: Appropriate for Needham Accessible Reservoir Trail**

The Town Manager, with the Conservation Department and Park and Recreation Department, requests \$860,000 to reconstruct the all-person trail around the Needham Reservoir. The trail will consist of a combination of wooden boardwalks and stone dust trails, and will significantly upgrade an existing trail and provide access to the Reservoir to all members of the community. Accessible fishing docks will be added and a bridge over the stream will separate the trail from the traffic. New parking spaces will be created in the parking lot at 500 Dedham Avenue. The former water supply wells will be closed, and sensitive wetland areas will be preserved and restored. The design of this project was previously funded through CPA grant.

**Article 37: Appropriate to Community Preservation Fund**

This article appropriates the estimated FY 2017 CPA receipts.

Administration	\$ 82,000
Annual Reserve	\$ 341,831
Community Housing Reserve	\$ 269,000
Historic Resources Reserve*	\$ 0
Open Space Reserve	\$ 269,000

\* The required annual funding or appropriation for Historic Resources is the \$449,163 payment of the debt service, voted on within Article 15.

**Conclusion**

Needham is fortunate to have the use of CPA funds which have funded numerous successful projects for the community. Appreciation is extended to the citizens of Needham and specifically Needham’s Town Meeting members for their support. The Committee thanks Lita Young and Ron Furman for their service. The Committee looks forward to FY 2018 and new requests and interest from the residents of the community.

Gary Crossen, Chairman  
Mark Gluesing, Vice Chairman  
Paul Alpert  
Robert Boder

Artie Crocker  
Bob Dermody  
Chris Gerstel  
Peter Pingitore