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Housing Partnership/Fair Housing
Committee
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TO: Community Preservation Act Committee
FROM: Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee (HP/FH)
RE: FY2012 CPA Project Proposals
DATE: December 10, 2010

Preliminary FY2012 CPA Project Proposals

The Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee (HP/FH) supports the following project proposals:

235 East Pleasant Street (Hawthorne Property): Feasibility Study \$10,000

The HP/FH Committee, in partnership with the Historical Commission, requests funds to complete a feasibility study that provides a structural assessment and cost estimates of rehabilitating and converting the structure into affordable housing. The study will also examine the costs of demolition and constructing new affordable housing on the property, including the feasibility of reusing existing historic structural timbers. The study will also provide a conceptual site plan showing building footprints for new construction.

The development of affordable housing on the property helps achieve community-wide goals identified in the recently adopted Master Plan:

- Increase the availability of affordable housing for low-and moderate-income households, and
- Diversify the type of housing in Amherst to meet the needs of other demographics—elderly, workforce housing, disabled individuals. .

Appraisals and Surveys \$20,000

Funds for appraisals and surveys are critical to help implement projects and establish the value of a property. Currently, the HP/FH Committee and the Town does not have a budget for due diligence to take advantage of opportunities to acquire property for affordable housing.

Total FY2012 CPA Projects \$30,000

➤ **235 East Pleasant Street: Feasibility study for rehabilitation and preservation options of existing farmhouse** **\$10,000**

1. Feasibility of the project: The Town of Amherst intends to complete the study as per the conditions of the year-long demolition delay issued by the Historical Commission. The comparative analysis provided by the study is a necessary first step to determine how affordable housing will be constructed on site. The analysis is typical with such projects and can be completed in a reasonable timeframe.
2. Urgency of the project: Currently, the house is vacant and will remain so until plans regarding its future use can be determined. The house is also in need of structural repairs that will be exacerbated without any tenants or a plan in place for restoration or new construction.
3. Population(s) to be served by the project: The project will satisfy the Historical Commission and Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee, as well as the low- and moderate-income families in Amherst because affordable housing will be located on site. The property's location within a 10-minute walk of the Town Center, near public transportation and other amenities make it a priority for affordable housing.
4. Acquisition or preservation of threatened resources: The Amherst Historical Commission determined the house and large barn to be (historically) significant structures according to Section 13 of the Zoning Bylaw, and therefore issued a 12-month delay on any demolition of the structures. Conducting the analysis and structural study will help determine the future of the house, whether it can be renovated into affordable housing, or if existing historic structural timbers could be adaptively reused in new construction.
5. Possibility of multiple sources of funding: At this time, the Town does not have any extra funds to complete the study or for capital improvements to the property.
6. Complete description of project addressing cost: The Historical Commission, in partnership with the Housing Partnership/Fair Housing (HP/FH) Committee, requests funds to complete a feasibility study that provides a structural assessment and cost estimates of rehabilitating and converting the structure into affordable housing. The study will also examine the costs of demolition and building new affordable housing on the site, and if feasible, the cost of reusing existing structural timbers in new construction. A conceptual site plan showing building footprints is also included in this assessment. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$20,000.
7. Documentation: Please see attached site map and images of the house.
8. Projected timeline for initiation and completion of project: Completion of these projects would be at the discretion of the Town. Funds would not be disbursed until work had been inspected and approved by the Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee, and the Amherst Historical Commission and a permanent historic preservation restriction transferred from the Town/developer to the Town.
9. Expectations for additional funding in future years: Grant funds, CDBG funds, CPA

10. Funding available: See answers above.

11. Priority set by Committee: 1 of 2

➤ **Appraisals and Surveys**

\$20,000

1. Feasibility of the project: Conducting appraisals and surveys of property is standard practice and an integral step for the Town when deciding if it is cost-effective to develop affordable housing.
2. Urgency of the project: Many projects are hamstrung by the lack of funds to complete appraisals and surveys—without these initial steps the acquisition process or development of affordable housing cannot be initiated. The ability to examine a property or structure helps keep the Town competitive as it tries to increase its affordable housing stock.
3. Population(s) to be served by the project: These funds will serve the low- and moderate-income households in the community, as well as the extremely low-income.
4. Acquisition or preservation of threatened resources: The cost of real estate and housing in Amherst exceeds the resources of many individuals and families, making it extremely difficult for those citizens to remain members of the community. It is important for the Town to be able to act quickly when a property becomes available to assess whether or not it is feasible to develop affordable housing on the site.
5. Possibility of multiple sources of funding: At this time, the Town or the Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee does not have any extra funds to complete appraisals or surveys.
6. Complete description of project addressing cost: The cost of appraisals and surveys varies according to the size of the property, number and type of structures, and other variables that are difficult to generalize. However, appraisals and surveys typically range from \$2,000 to \$5,000, with the cost increasing for larger properties and more complex projects.
7. Documentation: N/A
8. Projected timeline for initiation and completion of project: N/A
9. Expectations for additional funding in future years: CPA
10. Funding available: See answers above.
11. Priority set by Committee: 2 of 2