

Community Preservation Act Committee FY21 Questions and Answers

1. Consulting Services – AMAHT

- a. Is Ms. Farrell a Town employee? This would be the third year CPAC has funded this position, which infers CPA funds are providing salary relief for a Town position. Does this in effect augment Planning staff?
Ms. Farrell is not a Town employee; she is a consultant. She does not provide "salary relief" for a Town position. There is no Town staff member with the time, the flexibility, or the combination of experience and expertise that Ms. Farrell offers.
- b. Is hiring a consultant every year financially prudent? Has the Trust explored hiring a part-time staff person for the same cost? What is the advantage of the consultant?
Hiring this consultant every year is not only financial prudent, but also programmatically smart. Ms. Farrell has over 30 years of experience working for the Massachusetts Housing Partnership, assisting local governments in the development of affordable housing. As a consultant, her time is flexible so that she is able to put in different hours each month depending upon the requirements of particular tasks. We only pay her for the work that she does. If we had a part-time employee, that person would work regular hours with limited flexibility, and we might find ourselves creating "make work" at times to justify her employment.
According to Nathaniel Malloy, after each contract, the Town procures the services of a consultant for the next contract. This helps ensure an effective use of funds. Currently, the Trust has paid Ms. Farrell \$20,000 for almost 20 months of work (Dec. 2017—July 1, 2019).
- c. What other sources of funding are you pursuing? If the proposal is unsuccessful, what are your options? Do you expect this to be an annual expense for the foreseeable future?
We are not pursuing other sources of funding for this consultancy. If the proposal is unsuccessful, our only option will be to reduce the capacity of the Housing Trust to develop new affordable housing opportunities in Amherst and to pursue outside grant funding to support our efforts. And yes, we do see this as a continuing annual expense.
- d. The budget gives no breakdown. How was the \$40,000 amount determined?
The \$40,000 is a rough estimate of the costs of reimbursement of the services we anticipate needing in any year. There is no breakdown because we are unable to specify what the precise requirements may be.
- e. What is the hourly rate of expense for the consultant? What portion of funds are anticipated for travel expenses?
The consultant's rate is \$85 per hour. To the best of my knowledge, we have not reimbursed her for travel in the two years we have been working together.
- f. What was the total cost of the consultant's work in the previous year? Was any part of the allocation unspent?
I do not have a summary of the total cost of the consultant's work in the previous year. Please request that information from Ms. Aldrich or Ms. Bowser. I would expect that we did not spend the entire allocation.

Note from Anthony Delaney: In FY19 Ms. Farrell was paid \$10,425. As of 12/31/19, \$105.50 of the FY18 appropriation remains unspent and the FY20 appropriation is entirely unspent.

- g. Please distinguish between assignments concluded by the consultant and those that are ongoing.

In the proposal submitted to CPAC for consultant services, the following were listed as examples of work in which we had assistance from Ms. Farrell. For each, I have indicated the current status:

- *Writing a draft RFP for development of the East Street School site - initial work concluded successfully, although we may be reissuing the RFP with some amendments in the very near future.*
- *Writing guidelines for the proposals for developers seeking Trust funds – concluded successfully*
- *Writing an application for funding from MassHousing Finance for a project to identify sites for affordable housing development and for a 40R district – concluded successfully*
- *Drafting contracts for organizations requested to do research related to the development of the East Street School site – concluded successfully*
- *Writing an application to CHAPA for support of affordable housing advocacy activities – concluded successfully*
- *Drafting the Town Policy on Affordable Housing Priorities – continuing*
- *Research on Massachusetts communities with a local housing voucher program, supporting local inclusionary zoning, State and Federal Uniform Relocation Act requirements, State legislative initiatives – continuing*
- *Participation in the 2019 Fall Housing Forum – concluded successfully*

In addition, AMAHT is forming a subcommittee to determine what may be necessary to improve access to affordable housing, in addition to housing production. Ms. Farrell has already done some research on this initiative and will be leading this effort.

- h. The proposal is vague as to the projects that the consultant will perform if the award is granted. Please specify, including time spent on developing new projects compared to policy reports, and time spent on identifying possible surplus town lands for a second project.

The proposal is vague because there is uncertainty about what new activities the Housing Trust will focus on in the coming months. In addition to the work noted above, the Trust anticipates looking closely at properties off Strong Street and at Hickory Ridge for development of new affordable housing. This would require services similar to those performed for the East Street School project.

- i. Has having a consultant work with the Trust helped produce more targeted or effective use of CPAC and other funds to support housing?

Without the consultant, we would probably not have been in a position to develop the East Street RFP. The CPA funds spent-to-date have been targeted toward that goal. We anticipate spending additional CPA funds to support development of affordable housing on the site.

- j. How has the consultant's work product—specifically the "guidelines for the proposals for developers seeking Trust funds"—been received by potential developers?
The Guidelines are a public document that developers are aware of and which has been shared with CPAC. We have not received any specific requests for funding as yet, but we anticipate that we will receive a request for funds to support development at the East Street School site.
 - k. When do you see Ms. Farrell's consultancy terminating?
Termination will occur either when Amherst has completed its development of affordable housing or when Ms. Farrell resigns.
 - l. When considering housing stock, does Amherst consider communities that share our regional schools or shop locally, such as Pelham, Leverett, Shutesbury, or nearby Sunderland, in terms of access for workforce?
Amherst does not have a specific community-wide housing plan. Housing is discussed in the Town Master Plan, the Housing Production Plan, the Comprehensive Housing Market Study, and the zoning bylaws, which in placing limits on development can be said to constitute a partial plan for housing. With the exception of the Comprehensive Housing Market Study, none of these consider the availability of housing in surrounding communities.
2. Project Funding – AMAHT
- a. When the Trust first proposed such a "grant in anticipation of a project" a few years ago, the rationale was that Town Meeting's restricted meeting times gave CPAC very little flexibility to help fund a project that occurred off-cycle. This is no longer the case. Why not just come to CPAC with a specific, well-documented proposal when it is close to shovel ready?
While it is true that CPAC is no longer restricted to the schedule for Town Meeting consideration, it is not clear that CPAC intends to request new proposals at more than one time during the year. It has been continuing to recommend funding of all or almost all of its available funding during its annual cycle. If CPAC plans to allow opportunities to request funds at multiple times during the year in the future, then this rationale should be reconsidered.
 - b. Why was there only one bidder on the RFP? The Town awarded the land to AMAHT—a substantial investment of in-kind resources assessed at \$100,000 or more. What were the reasons given by others for not submitting a proposal? Is it possible that \$400K is not enough to entice a developer?
The Housing Trust did not manage the procurement process; it was managed by Anthony Delaney, the Town procurement officer. The Housing Trust did inquire about the reasons why there were not more bidders, nor is it clear that that would be appropriate for us to do.
 - c. Did AMAHT anticipate the need to contribute substantial support beyond the land to develop the property? Was this laid out to the Town and Council at the outset?
The AMAHT did not formally consider whether financial support would be needed beyond the land needed to development the property. However, anyone familiar with development of affordable housing could make a case for why the land alone might not be sufficient.

- d. If the lone bid is accepted, when will the money be needed?
If the Town contracts with a developer for the East Street site, additional support would be requested by the developer once they have completed a full, financing plan. That would probably be 3-6 months after an agreement is reached with the Town.
- e. If the lone bid is not accepted, what happens to the appropriation? Will it hold in reserves or return to CPAC? Would the Town reconsider the property use?
If the lone bid is not accepted, there are a number of possibilities: (1) The RFP could be reissued with either minor or major modifications. (2) The Housing Trust could inform the Town that it no longer sees development of the East Street site for affordable housing as viable. Then it would be up to the Town to consider an alternative use. If the Housing Trust decides not to use CPA funds for development at East Street, it would expect to use these funds for development of affordable housing at other sites in Amherst. (Please see response to f immediately below.)
- f. The title of the proposal refers to "projects" but the discussion focuses on the East St. site. Might funds, if awarded, be used for other purposes?
*The Trust anticipates looking closely at properties off Strong Street and at Hickory Ridge for development of new affordable housing. We are also hopeful that the consultants funded by Mass Housing Finance will identify other possible sites for affordable housing. As stated in the draft "Town Affordable Housing Policy" which was have shared with CPAC anticipating your support, we believe that the Town should set a goal of development of 250 additional affordable housing units. CPA funding will be needed to help reaching this goal.
Also please see response to question l.*
- g. When do you anticipate that an agreement will be reached for the East Street project?
I feel constrained by the procurement process from responding to this question. I should be in a better position to respond later next month.
- h. AMAHT received a \$200,000 allocation in FY20 from CPAC with the expectation that this would support East Street School anticipating development. How much has been spent? On what, with what results? How much remains? What is the plan by June 2020?
None of these funds have been spent. The intention would be to commit these funds and likely more to support the development of the East Street School site, as needed. Development of affordable housing is a lengthy process. In that, it is probably quite different from other projects funded by CPA.
- i. The initial request for FY20 was for \$400,000. CPAC funded half. Why is AMAHT asking for \$400,000 now rather than the other \$200,000 projected to be needed for the project? Have cost estimates changed?
We believe that it is essential to develop a base of Trust funds that can be used for future development of affordable housing in Amherst, consistent with the goals of adding 250 residential units. Please see response to question l.
- j. What is the Trust's current balance?
*Please request that information from Ms. Aldrich or Ms. Bowser.
Anthony Delaney: Balance as of 12/31/2019 is \$498,626.71.*
- k. The proposal indicates AMAHT is actively looking for other Town-owned properties. Any specifics? For what type of housing?

Please see response to question f above. It is too early to speculate about the most appropriate type of housing for these or other sites. It would be consistent with the draft "Town Affordable Housing Policy."

- l. It appears from the last paragraphs that AMAHT would like to amass reserves over time to be able to fund other projects. The proposal states: "We hope to build up sufficient funds in the Housing Trust to be in a position to support future affordable housing development." If CPAC agrees to allow AMAHT to hold in reserves and spend on other projects not yet specified, how would CPAC track and assess use of the Funds? Would AMAHT share proposals in advance? How would this work? Is there a precedent?
This statement reasonably captures the goals of the AMAHT, indeed any housing trust. All expenditures of CPA funds are tracked by the Town Finance Department, which staffs CPAC. The Housing Trust agendas for each month are shared with several members of CPAC, including the Chair. Minutes are available at the Town website for the Housing Trust. Any planning for the use of CPA funds are documented in both the agendas and the minutes. In addition, the chair of AMAHT has proposed that CPAC and AMAHT develop a joint subcommittee to discuss planning for community housing. Under these circumstances, CPAC will have whatever access to planning information and decision-making that it would require.
 - m. What other projects other than East Street are pending or expected to be prioritized by AMAHT between now and 2021?
Please see response to question f. In addition, AMAHT is forming a subcommittee to determine what may be necessary to improve access to affordable housing, in addition to housing production. Any members of CPAC would be welcome to join this subcommittee. I have requested time on the CPAC agenda to discuss this and the development of a joint subcommittee, as noted in question l above.
 - n. Do you anticipate having specific community housing project/budget proposals for CPAC in the future separate from a general funding request?
This depends upon whether CPAC will entertain any additional requests for this Town fiscal year. We do anticipate making additional requests in the next CPA funding cycle.
 - o. Can you give more specific details of how developer would use CPA funds to leverage other funds, specifically DHCD?
When developers apply to DHCD for State funding, they are specifically asked if they have received a commitment of resources from the local government. Although I have personally never participated in this process, my understanding is that without a local commitment, the developer's request will be down-rated by DHCD reviewers, quite possibly to the point where the application would be entirely rejected.
3. First Time Homebuyers & Mortgage Subsidy Programs – Valley CDC
New attachments: Links to Other Programs, Income Limits. Valley also provides the following links:
Statewide data: [https://www.marealtor.com/news/press-releases/the-mar-report-test/2019/12/26/november-massachusetts-closed-home-sales-are-down-and-median-price-again-over-\\$400k](https://www.marealtor.com/news/press-releases/the-mar-report-test/2019/12/26/november-massachusetts-closed-home-sales-are-down-and-median-price-again-over-$400k)

Western Massachusetts data:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/c628182a301/67a05516-44a7-4c75-80bb-e9ae2e5ea900.pdf>

- a. Valley CDC proposed a similar program last year. Please highlight any changes in this year's proposal.
The funds will be recaptured by the Town, CPA Committee or The Housing Trust. The mortgage and note will define whom the money goes back to. We will need to think about how we want to recapture these funds with the committee. On past projects the funds have gone back to the town to use for any purpose or they were forgiven over time.
- b. In the event of a recapture of funds due to sale, deed transfer, or when the owner is doing a cash out refinance, where does that money go if it is not passed onto another FTHB family?
The funds will be recaptured by the Town, CPA Committee or The Housing Trust. The mortgage and note will define whom the money goes back to. We will need to think about how we want recapture these funds with the committee.
- c. What is the mechanism by which funds resulting from subsequent sales of purchases supported by this project will be rolled over or returned to CPAC?
The mortgage and note.
- d. By whom is the subsidy recaptured, Valley CDC or the Town?
The Town or the CPAC will recapture the funds at sale.
- e. What is the reasoning behind the 100% or less of AMI benchmark?
The CPA guidelines state up to 100% AMI and housing costs are high in Amherst.
- f. Is there a way, from Town records, to ascertain how many homeowners from households earning 100% or less of Area Median Income (AMI) have purchased houses in Amherst without mortgage assistance in the last decade?
I am not sure, if the voter registration information contains incomes, you could cross check/match it manually with the last decade of sale in Amherst from the registry of deeds but it's an awful lot of work and could potentially take months.
- g. Would it be possible to earmark mortgage assistance to Town/school employees?
I am sure it is possible but it could have some fair housing implications. Do you have an equal number of minority and white teachers?
- h. As these mortgage assistance funds would come directly from a property tax surcharge, how would you make the case for your proposal to a similarly lower/middle-income first time buyer who did not benefit from mortgage assistance but is being asked to subsidize it for others?
CPA was voted in by the Town and the Town has determined that affordable housing including homeownership is a need and benefit to the wider community. As with affordable rental housing, open space and historic preservation, not every citizen will individually benefit from the CPA funded projects, but they do serve the community as a whole.
- i. Have other funds been sought for this particular project in Amherst? If so, what has been the result?

No, this is a program of the Town, funded by the town and benefits the town and its residents. It's a goal of the housing production plan. Valley does raise funds from other sources for its First Time Homebuyer Workshops and foreclosure prevention services which serves anyone in Hampshire County, including Amherst residents.

- j. Please describe the successes and failures of your similar programs. Have the subsidies been recaptured in all cases when the homebuyer has moved on or refinanced? Have subsidies been lost to the program? Have any homebuyers failed to keep up with mortgage payments? Has the financial counseling been sufficient to ensure that clients can stay in the homes they buy? Has the program been abused in any way? What happens if the homeowner dies before the subsidy is repaid?
These programs are widely successful. In some cases yes, the subsidies have been recaptured. Valley generally proposes a program that is forgiven over time so we only know of one recent recapture or a past Amherst program. I am not aware of lost subsidies, but again, we generally forgive these over time. We are not aware of any homebuyers that failed to keep up with mortgage payments. Financial counseling has been successful; homeowners come back to us repeatedly for further assistance with maintaining the home, working with contractors and a variety of other post purchase supports they need. If the homeowner dies, a mortgage is recorded posting a lien against the property and it will be repaid at the time of sale by the estate or by the spouse.
- k. The proposal would fund 4 first time homeowners with a \$50,000 each mortgage subsidy. What has been Valley CDC's experience with such programs in Amherst or the surrounding areas in terms of ability to meet mortgage payments and avoid default?
Households who participate in program succeed at greater rates due to having a good understanding of the home buying process, understanding of home maintenance and repairs because we require pre and post purchase education.
- l. How did VCDC arrive at the specific \$50,000 amount?
Based on need and the available inventory of houses available on the market.
- m. Is the full 50k required of each purchase? That is to say, would/could a lesser amount be awarded if the circumstances warranted (e.g. lower purchase price of home), to spread resources further?
Lower priced homes require more updates and maintenance. We would most likely disqualify a home priced at between \$180- \$220K because it would need more work than the buyer could afford to put into the property. These properties don't come up much and they need a ton of work just to be livable.
- n. Are there any limitations or criteria as to which first time home buyer candidates can participate in the workshops?
Anyone can participate in our first time buyer workshops. We do not limit the registration and seats are available on a first come first served basis.
- o. Please clarify how the four recipients will be selected from the pool of 30. Is it competitive or will they be invited to apply for these resources?
Extensive marketing will be done initially to get the word out to potential buyers. A lottery could be conducted but we find that most of the folks selected will not even buy a

home, at some point 6 or 9 months into the program we open it up to first come first served of the potential candidates who can secure an accepted offer.

- p. How many total families have been helped by Valley CDC with this approach? How many in Amherst?

At least 12 households in Amherst have been served under similar programs. Valley has assisted 60-70 households under similar programs.

- q. Is there any data on turnover, sale of the homes within 1-5 or more years? What happens if the new owners or potential owners are also LMI? Is there a way of providing continuity or do the funds repaid at the point of sale revert to VCDC to allocate to a new family and a different home?

I'm only aware of one sale in Amherst that has happened under a mortgage subsidy program. The household paid back the full amount at the sale of the property. They were moving out of the area. Generally, when a LMI household secures a home in Amherst they stay there for the long term. Being a move up buyer in Amherst is difficult. We have seen some of the affordable owners in Palley Village become move up buyers.

- r. How did Valley CDC determine an asset test of \$75,000? What share of this would be needed to purchase the home? Is there an assessment of outstanding debt (student or other loans) relative to assets? Although unlikely, there might be instances where the family is drawing down substantially on assets each year to repay student loans that come due once working.

Although unlikely, there might be instances where the family is drawing down substantially on assets each year to repay student loans that come due once working. Ideally we hope households hold on to at least 50% of their assets as reserve funds for a rainy day. Due to the high cost of housing we are seeing buyers but more and more down payment into the transaction in order to win the bidding war and have an accepted offer on the property. \$75,000 is a very common asset cap for affordable mortgage products and down payment programs.

- s. How rigid is the LMI income threshold? What if the family gets a promotion or raise while applying to be in the program before the final house and mortgage?

Households must be income qualified at the time of purchase. They must disclose any income/household changes. Their income can increase after they purchase the home and can remain there.

- t. The budget clearly outlines the \$34,208 to administer the program, including indirect. The budget document indicates some applicants may require more intensive support. If more applicants than anticipated require more intensive counseling, does VCDC have flexibility to allocate more labor time as needed without exceeding the budget? Is there a commitment to do so?

Yes, we have other funding sources as outlines in the budget that would supplement/support more intensive counseling, if the required hours of services were greater than our projections.

- u. What risk does VCDC and/or the Town assume if a home with an LMI approved subsidy subsequently is foreclosed upon or sold at a loss?

There is a small risk of losing some of the funds. The buyers are not purchasing distressed properties, the value at resale is there to repay these funds. The town would

be repaid at the REO sale of the property or a short sale payoff would be negotiated at the time of the sale.

- v. Does VCDC have an opinion as to what method of housing opportunity/resource deployment is most effective to address the issue of affordability in Amherst (home ownership mortgage subsidies, new affordable rental housing, other, etc.)?
We feel rental housing for lower income folks should be the priority. Building affordable homeownership housing is very expensive and there is no funding for homeownership developments at this time from the Commonwealth. Having a mix of programs that help different income levels is ideal for any City/Town.
 - w. Can VCDC provide information on similar programs that have been introduced elsewhere (successful and problematic)?
See attached documents.
 - x. Is it VCDC's intent that any property purchased using this program must be brought into lead compliance? How will a positive lead test impact the process?
Only if a child under 6 resides in the property as required by law. MassHousing offers a second mortgage "Get the Lead Out" to help new homeowners delead the property.
 - y. What would be the response of VCDC if the homeowner under a program such as this decided at some point in the future to rent the house or a portion of the house to others?
We feel the homeowners should be able to have a roommate if they need them financially due to a financial hardship but we don't feel owners should financially benefit by renting the property. We will need legal help with the mortgage and note to insure renting of the property is prohibited.
 - z. Can/will costs of home maintenance budgeting be part of counseling process, and/or figured into budget when advising on affordability?
This is already a part of the counseling program. New buyers need to continue to plan and save for home maintenance prior to closing on the home. If a property needs substantial repairs, we want an action plan from the homeowner as to how they will address the issues that come up in the inspection reports.
4. Window Restoration – NACF
- a. Please elaborate on the specific materials and/or labor included in the \$8,000 requested. Are you seeking funds for liabilities already incurred, that is, for labor performed or materials delivered?
We are seeking some funds for expenses and labor already performed; (we are sure that the Committee understands why this is the unavoidable case). Specifically, we are seeking funds for what is detailed in the table shown below and which we attached to our most recent Application for reimbursement to close out the FY20 funding allocation.
 - b. If part of the funds is for replacing basement awning windows, and the original windows have rotted away, are new windows eligible for the CPA program?
Well, this seems like a question for staff, but we would say that the basement windows are an integral part of a completed historic restoration, and, as with the preference for fiber-cement clapboards, the Committee would similarly find favor with a far more durable (but visually and functionally similar) basement window solution—given the absence of the original window sashes.

- c. Please provide information as to the energy efficiency rating of the restored windows. *In so far as these are original wood windows restored for historical fidelity, there is no tested data on their energy efficiency or effectiveness. But, as described in our November report to the Committee, we did make a special effort to greatly improve the air tightness of the restored windows as they were reinstalled—by adding carefully designed and placed gaskets to the moving sashes. The effectiveness of the effort is clear from the sound reduction that was immediately evident upon closing the windows. In addition, from the way in which this work was done, we expect the sealing to be a durable solution—it was very well executed.*
- d. In last year's proposal there was mention of ongoing fundraising for the restoration. What is the status of those efforts? Has there been an effort to utilize private fundraising to cover the amount that was mistakenly thought to be rolled over? *We concluded our farm community fund raising at our annual fundraising brunch in June of the year (2019). At the time we thought that we had raised "the last dollar" (It was only in October that we were told that funds available from FY-19 would NOT be rolled-over. By that stage we had announced that "we were done;" that we had achieved our fundraising goal, and we were universally applauded for having done so. We have, however, effectively "raised funds" by making a special effort to reduce the cost by changing to an alternative window restoration workshop (from the one that we originally based our Application on), and by coupling that less expensive restoration workshop work-scope with our carpenters whom we trained to be able to do this more specialized work of re-installing the restored windows—again, as described in our November report to the Committee. As a result we are asking for only \$8,000 (and maybe now for only \$6,000) of the \$18,000 that remained to be "rolled-over" from the FY19 allocation.*
- e. Preservation Mass recently announced a matching grant opportunity for projects which includes the restoration of windows. Would NACF consider applying to this grant (letter of inquiry due 12/31), so that if awarded as a match CPA funds could be reduced and applied to other projects? <https://www.preservationmass.org/ma-historic-preservation-matching-g>
As explained to the Committee in relation to both our FY19 and our FY20 Applications for CPA funding, we found ourselves ineligible for Preservation Mass funds because we had chosen (for good reasons explained to the Committee at the time) to use a composite fiber-cement clapboard material for the replacement clapboards. Preservation Mass would have required us to use wood clapboards, but this was not a requirement to receiving Amherst CPA funding for historic preservation.

WORK PROPOSED TO BE COVERED BY FY21 CPA FUNDING REQUEST			
	<i>Second and final billing from OWW for window sash restoration (portion payable with the \$30K "cap")</i>	<i>Old Window Workshop</i>	<i>\$1,109.66</i>
<i>Dec. 6th 2019</i>	<i>Miscellaneous purchases to support above—</i>	<i>Cowls Building Supply</i>	<i>\$177.00</i>

	<i>sealants, paint, painting brushes, etc.</i>		
<i>Oct. 3rd 2019</i>	<i>Air sealing gaskets for window sashes</i>	<i>Conservation Technology</i>	<i>\$288.28</i>
<i>Dec. 6th 2019</i>	<i>THIRD invoice for work install the second (final) batch of restored sashes—including fitting these restored sashes with weather stripping</i>	<i>Mark Roberts (Carpenter)</i>	<i>\$637.00</i>
<i>Dec. 6th 2019</i>	<i>THIRD invoice to install the second (and final) batch of restored sashes—including fitting these restored sashes with weather stripping</i>	<i>Lauren Faulkner-Duncan (Carpenter)</i>	<i>\$530.00</i>
<i>Spring/Summer 2020</i>	<i>Supply of new awning windows for existing openings (presently boarded up) in the farmhouse basement foundation wall.</i>	<i>Cowls Building Supply</i>	<i>\$1800 (Est.)</i>
<i>Spring/Summer 2020</i>	<i>Carpenters time to install new basement windows</i>		<i>\$2000 (Est.)</i>
		<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>\$6,541.94</i>

5. Special Collections Facility – Jones Library

Introductory Comments: This is an unusual application in at least two respects, and the Committee should be commended for the thoroughness of its consideration of it. Because this is a conditional application, the relevant considerations are not the ordinary. If the Town Council (or the voters) decides against going forward with the larger project, this application will be withdrawn. We urge the Committee to consider—and communicate—only what it would recommend if the Council (and, if necessary, the voters) approves the project. It would be extraordinarily helpful for the Council to know that, if it were to determine to move forward with this project, the CPA Committee would prioritize of its own funds and conclude that this grant should be approved. We urge the Committee to reach that conclusion.

The large amount requested in this application is an unavoidable result of the extent to which, in supporting wholly justifiable smaller projects over the last 30 years, the Town has deferred necessary larger capital expenditures. It is time to mobilize all of the Town’s resources to meet those needs.

New Attachment: Usage Statistics

- a. Is this project eligible for CPA? It does not appear to meet the definition of historic preservation. It would subsidize a planned new building expansion of Jones Library, that includes reconfigured and expand space for the special collections.

CPA grants repeatedly have been made for the protection/restoration of the Jones' Special Collections, including for improvements of the physical facility in which it is located (including two grants for the attempted improvement of the HVAC system currently in place). It seems illogical to conclude that the preservation of valuable individual items might be eligible, but not the provision of a roof over their head, or other things necessary for their use by the Town's residents.

This grant would not subsidize any of the rest of the expansion/renovation of the Library. It does request funding for the infrastructure required for any facility for Special Collections (see the answer to question b. below).

A number of other Towns in the Commonwealth have allocated CPA funds for the historic preservation components of much larger projects:

The Stockbridge Library

The West Springfield Library

The Concord Free Public Library

The Falmouth Library

The West Falmouth Library

The Flint Library in Middleton

The Boynton Library in Templeton

The Fogg Library in Weymouth

The Victory Theater in Holyoke

- b. If Jones had come to CPAC for this type of special collection facility would it have been eligible?

Yes. We assume this question is whether a stand-alone special collections facility would have been eligible. As noted above, it is inconceivable that the preservation of individual items is eligible (boxes, folders, cataloguing, etc.) but not provision of the most basic protection of all. One of the principal advantages of this proposal is its cost-efficiency. A stand-alone facility to house this important function of the Town would require a host of necessary support components—land, landscaping, entrance, roof, bathrooms, stairs, walls. It is not possible to preserve Amherst's history without them. By sharing the cost of these with the rest of the building, this proposal would require the funding of only a small fraction of them, and at least 40% of that fraction would be paid with MBLC funding.

- c. This is a huge CPA request, but a tiny part of the overall library restoration project. Why isn't it just folded into the \$21.5M total ask?

This is a question that could be asked by every funder we are being required to approach – individuals, banks, businesses, the MA Cultural Facilities Fund, the Community Foundation, etc. Why should we be asked to help pay for this project when the Town could just borrow the entire \$21.5M total?

The answer is the same for all such funders – the Town can obtain a better Library by spreading the burden among a number of different sources with different interests in the project. While the Town must guarantee to the MBLC the entire \$21.5 million, whatever funds are raised elsewhere will reduce the portion which the Town will have to provide by bond funding. Yes, CPA monies are tax monies, but, like the funds of other grantors, they are already available. Town taxes will not be greater if this grant is approved. By

contrast, Town taxes will have to be increased to support additional bond funding if this grant is not made.

The CPA has recommended other large grants which have foreclosed other possibilities, including one apparently as large as this. And, more important, if the larger library project is approved, it will be because the Town considers it a priority. Under those circumstances, we urge the CPA Committee to support that clear statement of the Town's priorities by its own prioritizing of this project. We urge the CPA Committee to do its part to help the Town address necessary capital expenditures.

- d. Is there precedent for CPA funds to be used to chip-in on a capital project of this magnitude?

See the answer to question a above.

- e. Is it the contention of the petitioner that failure of CPA to approve this request might endanger the chances of the Town's portion of the project (\$21.5M) being approved by Town Council?

Yes. Approval of the larger project is far from certain, and the tax consequences of \$21 million in bond funding will surely be more daunting than \$16 Million. Our informal conversations with Councilors confirms this conclusion.

- f. If the Town refuses to fund what the MLBC grant does not, but instead pursues a limited program of repair and renovation at Town expense, would a grant made toward this proposal be canceled? Or would the proponent want to put \$1.5M toward modifications of the existing Special Collections facility?

If the Town declines the MBLC grant, this application will be withdrawn. The Library would then undertake a thorough planning exercise, in concert with the Town, to determine how much would be available to address outstanding capital needs at the Jones and how it would be used. The Library has many compelling needs. Their prioritization in the present proposal was the result of extensive, careful and consultative deliberations. The Library would not be able to make similarly difficult prioritizing decisions on a more limited project without a similar planning process. The \$11M estimate of simple repairs contained no provision for Special Collections.

Even if a CPA grant of this amount were put entirely toward modifications of the Special Collections facility, such an amount would accomplish significantly less historic preservation than is part of the larger project. No part of an MBLC grant would supplement this amount, and the prospect of raising funds from other sources would be diminished. The considerable number of Library supporters working on this renovation/expansion project believe that it represents an exciting opportunity for the entire community to re-build its iconic heart. A limited repair job has no such appeal.

- g. Are the requested funds entirely for construction, or also for design?

The second and third pages of Attachment C – Budget to the application provides a summary of the major elements of the \$35.6 Million cost of the project, including \$24 Million in construction costs.

However attractive it might seem to view "design" costs as frills that should not be funded, they are just as essential as the construction costs, and it is not responsible to undertake such a project without them. They keep construction costs down, and they insure that construction bills yield the most value for the expenditure. In addition, as the

Committee has noted by asking question o, some of those "additional" costs involve the safekeeping of the Special Collections during the project.

In any event, a 10.08% allocation of the total construction costs to the Special Collections square footage is \$2.4 Million. If a proportion of the MBLC grant helps fund this, the remaining costs for construction would still be \$1.5 Million. But this estimate is from 2016, the escalation estimates of which have already expired. As indicated in the application, it does not include the extra costs for such a facility beyond what might be computed using a square footage estimate.

- h. Would any of requested funding be used to restore the existing Jones building and library?

No. It is not possible to have any Special Collections facility without an entrance, roof, walls, bathroom, stairs, etc. In effect, the funding sought will pay for the share of those required for this proposed Special Collections facility. But, as noted in the answer to question b, this project pays for these expenses much more cost-effectively than any alternative.

If this question is asking whether any part of the funding would be used to restore the original 1928 building, the answer is almost certainly not. As noted in the answer to question A in the application, the layout accompanying the MBLC application called for the new Special Collections quarters to be in the new addition, not in the original 1928 Building. This could change, but is unlikely.

Petitioner elected to apply for funds for the Special Collections facility, rather than the restoration/preservation of the original building, because the extent and costs of the latter will not be known before the Town Council must meet the MBLC deadline. The Trustees of the Library, and the architects retained by them, are committed to the preservation of the 1928 building to the maximum extent permitted by the proposed program approved by the MBLC.

- i. The Budget originally proposed to the Town (Town Meeting), indicated only \$15.9M of the \$35.6M project would come from tax-supported resources. An expected \$13.87M would be from the library grant and the rest would be raised by Jones from private donations or historic tax credits. There was no indication of seeking CPA support. Why the shift?

There has been no shift. This is an oversight/misunderstanding resulting from the meaning of the shorthand name "tax supported" revenues. The 2016 feasibility study noted in the application specifically referenced the possibility of CPA funding. In seeking philanthropic funds, all non-profits seek grants from granting agencies that are tax supported but for which the funding is already in place—NEH, NEA, CPA, MA Cultural Facilities Fund, even the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. In that regard, those sources are indistinguishable from foundations, corporations and individuals. The intended distinction was between those sources whose grants directly increase taxes for taxpayers, such as municipal bond funding (see answer to question b above), and those whose grants come from funds already appropriated.

- j. Would CPA funding relate in any way to the historic preservation tax credits I have heard the larger project will seek?

Possibly. The principal target of tax credit funding is expected to be the preservation of the original 1928 building. But, to the extent the Special Collections facility is not otherwise fully funded, an effort will be made to seek funding for it.

- k. The increase in square footage is about 50%. Will that be enough to both display, properly store, and add to the collection?

Yes, we believe so. While no request for space is ever "enough," over the life of this building, we are confident that Special Collections, with its reputation for careful stewardship, and the interest of Amherst's citizens in preserving its history, will be able to use more space than is provided by this project. The increase in protected storage space (from 1,575 sq. ft. to 3,305 sq. ft.) was estimated to be sufficient for 25 years expansion of the collection at a reasonable rate. The Reading Room is already adequate to the demand, and, while the exhibit area will not be as large, the plan for the facility includes an instruction room that can accommodate public presentations.

- l. What is the justification for the 50% expansion in space? An estimate 600 people a year access the collections. Could CPAC funds instead be used to digitalize and catalogue some of the newspaper, tax records, and other Amherst relevant historic papers that do not have literary value? This could also reduce the square footage needed for boxes or files.

The Library has digitized some of its collections, and will continue to do more; its digital collections are accessed over 6,500 times each year. However, that does not mean that the originals may be de-accessioned. Many items, tax records, for example, are of such large format that they cannot be used in a digital format, and, for researchers, there is often no substitute for the original. And digitization creates its own problems – migrating formats, deterioration of records, etc. Finally, of course, digitization is no substitute for originals in arousing the interest of the unacquainted, particularly children. To use digitization effectively, you need to know what you are looking for; the Jones wants more of the 270,000 people who visit the building to be fascinated by their history without yet being aware that it exists.

- m. The proposal indicates the new structure would expand the square footage of special collections from 4,200 to 6,500 square feet. The budget is based on allocation of the total projected total project cost by square footage – not the cost of the specific space. It is not clear this is an accurate estimate of just the special collections. The larger project has contingency and other overhead and including elevators and more. What would have been the cost of a special collections' facility?

An estimate of the cost of the facility to be built within this larger project—the number of 2x4s, panels of sheetrock, electrical wiring, flooring, etc., including "contingency and other overhead and including elevators and more"—would be prohibitively and inefficiently expensive at this stage of the project, particularly where the floor plan has yet to be finalized, and the project has yet to be approved. This is an unavoidable aspect of the circumstances under which the Town must make its decision whether to take advantage of the State's offer to defray 40% of the library project. While the square footage estimation of this application is, indeed, a proxy estimation, it should be sufficiently definite to make that decision rationally.

Similarly, an exact estimate of the cost of constructing a free-standing facility would require an expenditure of a significant amount of design cost. As noted in the answer to question b, while a freestanding facility might not require an elevator, it would require the purchase of land, landscaping, driveways, entrance way, security features, etc., 100% of which would have to be allocated to the cost of the facility. It is inconceivable that the total cost of identical facilities would be lower than for the project proposed where such costs are shared.

- n. Has the Library considered any other locations where the Special Collections might reside? Amherst College has a Robert Frost Collection and the Emily Dickinson Museum houses papers and other items related to the poet.

It is occasionally suggested that the Jones reduce the size of its building by keeping a significant part of its entire collection, and some of its programs, elsewhere, accessed by delivery service and by patron visits to other locations. This misunderstands the role of the public library. It is not a research library, like Frost or DuBois; it is a browsing library with programs that attract as many people as the books. It is the one place in Town where everyone, from the homeless, to the learners of English as a second language, to families with children, to job seekers without a computer, to learners at all levels come together with only their curiosity, not a credit card at their disposal. The Town is much the richer for having that happen at its center. From the beginning, the building was meant to look like a house so that the average citizen would feel welcome to come to it. While the Jones' Special Collections does have a research mission, it is not just a repository. This project, in particular, seeks to harness the power of the library's Special Collections in pursuit of that larger purpose, in ways that would not be possible if its holdings were scattered all over Town.

- o. If the larger project proceeds, there will likely be a need for temporary storage of the special collection during the demolition and construction. Is this fully covered in the budget? Could such safe keeping/storage costs for the special historic collections be CPA eligible?

Yes. Such expenses are necessary for the preservation of the Jones' holdings. The fundamental issue is the amount of CPA funds that should be allocated to this project. If the Town Council proceeds with the overall project, we urge the CPA Committee to stand behind that determination by prioritizing its funds available in order to keep the additional taxes required for the project's bond funding as low as possible.

- p. If the Library expansion does not receive town funding (Council and/or override) will the Trustees seek to renovate the library on a smaller scale?

There is universal agreement that the present state of the Library is not acceptable, and places the Library's Special Collections at considerable, continuing risk. Something will have to be done, but the amount of resources to do it—from the State, from individual donors, from other sources—will be dramatically reduced. See answer to question f above.

- q. What will the Library plan to do with the Special Collections display if the 64,000 s.f. renovation/expansion of the Library Building does not happen? Would a separate proposal be considered to address the needs specific to the Special Collections? See the answer to question f above.

- r. What percentage of the available Special Collection Materials are currently on display?
Only a tiny fraction (we estimate 3-5%) of the Special Collections materials are on display—a few paintings and sculptures throughout the Library, a rotating selection of items in a small display case in the main lobby, and the permanent and rotating exhibits in the Special Collections exhibit area.
- s. Are the current Special Collection viewing limitations primarily related to staff availability (employee resources)?
No. Many physical plant shortcomings can be cured with sufficient personnel—but not sensibly so. The limitations are primarily due to security and accessibility. The Special Collections Reading Room and Exhibit areas cannot currently be accessed without allowing simultaneous access to the secure area. And all of Special Collections, including the Exhibit area, is in a remote part of the building which the overwhelming majority of the Library’s patrons do not know exists or how to find. We urge the Committee to make a site visit to appreciate the obstacles the present building presents to a staff-efficient pursuit of the Library’s historic preservation mission.
- t. What additional staffing requirements do you anticipate after the renovation/expansion is completed, in order to properly manage the Library and Special Collections?
The renovation/expansion plan incorporates a more open floor plan with clear sight lines and more efficient traffic flow, replacing, for example the rabbit-warren of small rooms in the 1993 building, and the 3-sided circulation desk. As a result, the Library believes that this expansion can be managed with no increase in staff. A secured storage area, sufficiently large to hold the entire collection, would permit an adjacent exhibit area to be open to the public without additional staff.
- u. What is the insured value of the inventory of Special Collections?
The Town’s insurance coverage includes a rider noting items that in several appraisals from 1989 through 2012 were estimated to have a market value of \$1.7 million. This does not include the large amount of local materials which have little value in the marketplace, but are irreplaceable for the Town.
- v. What are the specific security improvements that will occur under the new renovation?
All of the collections would be stored in a secure, climate-controlled area accessible only by staff. The planned installation of security cameras would also reduce the threat of theft or destruction in the reading room, and the possibility of internal theft or destruction.
- w. What is the impact if the community campaign does not yield sufficient funds by the deadline?
The Town Council could decline to commit to the required MBLC match. This application asks that the CPA Committee condition its recommendation on that approval. In a similar fashion, the CPA Committee could condition its support on any other set of contingencies, including participation by other funders, or financing by other means, to a specified level. Challenge grants are a fundraising strategy with proven effectiveness, and the CPA Committee’s willingness to endorse this project, on a conditional basis, will be no less important to other funders as it will be to the Town Council. By the creative and interdependent use of all the resources available to the Town, including a motivated

Library constituency, this project represents a unique opportunity to achieve a remarkable outcome that would otherwise be beyond reach.

- x. If possible, can you comment on the prioritization of all of the major capital projects facing the Town and how this project and this request fits in?
*We believe that Amherst must undertake all of the long-delayed capital projects it faces. The library must be a priority in order to serve well the 270,000 people who visit it each year to attend its programs or borrow items; Amherst's permanent (i.e. non-student) residents use its Library more intensively than the residents of any of its neighboring Towns – by 40 to 100% (see the analysis appended).
In two successive contested elections for Library Trustees (in 2017 and 2018), in which the positions of the candidates on this project were starkly juxtaposed as the central issue of the election, the candidates who supported the project decisively defeated those who opposed it; no opposition was even mounted in the last set of elections (in 2019). We believe the Town can undertake all of these projects with a careful, phased, financial plan that collaboratively takes advantage of all of the resources available for their funding. This is one of those collective enterprises in which everyone is willing to participate if everyone else does also. The CPA Committee's signal that it is willing to participate would be a major incentive for everyone else to join in.*
- 6. Update Historic Resources Inventory – AHC
 - a. You say that the Town made a pre-application for funds. What is that? And if those funds are awarded, will they be used for the same purpose as this request to CPA but for different specific historic resources?
The Town applied for funding from the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). MHC uses a pre-application round to vet projects and narrow the field of entities submitting a full application. The Town was recently informed that it will not be advancing to the full application.
 - b. If this is a two year project, shouldn't funding be divided between FY20 and FY21?
The project timeline was conservative due to the time it takes to research each property, complete a form, and then work with the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). MHC takes months to review forms and for this reason the project would likely take more than a year, although at this point in the process, the work will be nearly complete.
 - c. What information from the recent work of the PVPC was used to arrive at the \$25,000?
Shannon Walsh, the preservation planner from PVPC, attended a recent Historical Commission meeting and noted the time and funds necessary to complete inventory forms.
 - d. What will occur if the costs exceed the requested \$25,000?
The costs would not exceed the \$25,000. The Town, Historical Commission and consultant would work together to keep the project within budget.
 - e. Is there additional work to occur in relation to the Inventory project that is not expected to be covered by the CPAC funding request?
The Historical Commission and town staff would help review and prioritize the buildings to be inventoried, but the consultant would complete most of the work, including photographing the property (MHC has standards for images), conducting property and

deed research, and completing the inventory form. The Historical Commission and town staff would also be involved with the review of the completed inventory forms.

- f. Would the inventory be used as part of a formal request for a demolition delay?
Yes, these forms are used during the demolition process. The forms help the Historical Commission determine whether a structure is significant. Without an inventory form, staff researches a property, but typically does not have the time to complete as thorough of a report as the inventory form.
- g. Does an inventory of a specific building take place only if the owner gives direct, affirmative assent?
An inventory form can be completed without the permission of the owner because the form itself does not impose any regulations or conditions on the property. The form is used to document the property and structures to help inform future decisions and actions. If an owner does not want someone to enter their property, for instance, to take photographs, then there will be discussion with the Amherst Historical Commission and town staff about how to complete the form or if the property needs to be omitted. PVPC noted that many property owners were eager and excited to share the property's history.
- h. If property owners can decline to participate in the inventory study, won't demolition by neglect actually be increased?
See answer above. In general, completing an inventory form does not prevent demolition by neglect. The Town has very little regulatory ability to make an owner maintain a structure, unless it poses imminent danger to the public. For example, if a building were close to a sidewalk and was showing signs of disrepair, an inspector could require that the structure be stabilized to prevent it from falling onto the sidewalk.
- i. As a record of historic buildings, how much has changed since 1988? Or is it an update on building conditions that may have changed?
The inventory in 1988 captured hundreds of primary (i.e. main house) structures around town, but did not document many outbuildings such as barns, carriage houses, garages, or workshops. Through PVPC's recent work, it was estimated that there are over 100 outbuildings that would be worth inventorying.
- j. How many of the estimated buildings could be inventoried in this Phase? Would this complete the work?
This would not complete the work. It would take additional funds to inventory over 100 outbuildings.
- k. What happens once there is a picture and short history? Is this just the state inventory? Does anyone go back and write a longer story about the past use? For example, old dairy barn dating back to early 1800s—owners, scale, community at the time?
The inventory form asks for a short narrative about the history—owners, past use, architecture—of the buildings and property, and also the relationship of the building and property to the community. If there is a well-documented history of the property, this is referenced on the inventory form for future use. The inventory form is used to document the factual history of the property.
- l. Is such a history planned? Could the person inventorying the buildings partner with a student to augment the history?

Yes, the consultant could use assistants to help with property and deed research. However, this would require someone properly trained to use primary sources, conduct historical research and interview owners. In order to make the most efficient use of funds, the consultant is not asked to provide this training.

- m. If the PVPC has identified 100 structures that "appeared noteworthy and in stable condition," why are only 60-80 structures proposed for this inventory?
The request is the second phase in a larger project to document Amherst's outbuildings. Through the efforts of the 2014 work and PVPC's recent research, it became apparent to the Commission that there are a significant number of outbuildings that need to be inventoried.

- n. Proposal states that the results of the proposed survey will be posted on the Town website. Are the results of the Town's 2014 inventory of outbuildings and the 1998 Inventory of Historic Resources on the website? If not, shouldn't those inventories precede the proposed new initiative in Town website listing?
Completed inventory forms are uploaded to an online database maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission: the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS). The Town's public GIS Viewer links to the MACRIS database.

- o. You mention that the information will be on the Town's website. Please talk a bit more about the back-end technology that is used for this documentation and how it will be accessible to the public. Can you also talk a bit more about how this information is presently used, if so?

The inventory forms could be made available online in a few places. They could be linked to the Town's GIS maps (which they are currently), and could be included in a property index created on the Historical Commission webpage.

- p. Would there be a hard copy somewhere? History Museum? Incorporated into Town's Preservation Plan?

A hard copy of the forms are available in Town Hall and can also be shared with the Jones Library.

- q. Has a specific consultant been identified (or consultant candidates)?

No, a consultant has not been identified. The Town would need to use a public procurement process to choose a consultant.

7. West Cemetery Headstone Restoration – AHC

- a. What impact has the ongoing restoration project had on the cemetery vandalism problem?

Improving the conditions of West Cemetery through headstone restoration, landscape treatment or signage are all deterrents to vandalism. The Historical Commission does not track vandalism, although the Police Department or Public Works may be able to provide information on this issue.

- b. Is the current security system sufficient to protect the restoration work as well as the remaining stones?

The cemetery, like Amherst parks, are free to the public for daytime use with limited security. There is a perimeter fence with gates, and minimal lighting. The goal of maintaining the cemetery and encouraging more use to help activate the space are steps that can be taken to help protect the restoration work. The older headstones in West

Cemeteries are at an age where deterioration can occur without vandalism. The weather and climate impact the stones. The best defense to these natural causes is maintenance and restoration.

- c. What steps has the Town taken and what additional steps could be taken to protect the cemetery from future vandalism?
Vandalism is difficult to prevent, especially in a public place. Activating the cemetery with more users would be an effective measure to help prevent vandalism. This could be achieved with more signs, improved conditions, and possibly more programming. It is not the Town's intention to increase security with more lighting, physical barriers or cameras.
- d. Has the work completed in the 2005-2009 phase of the cemetery restoration proved to be effective and (at least to this point) lasting?
The restoration work that has been completed is in good condition and helps extend the life of the stones.
- e. Have the adjacent new buildings (Kendrick Place and 1 East Pleasant Street) changed the traffic and usage of the cemetery grounds or the threat level to the stones?
It is unclear if the new buildings increase threats to the cemetery, although the opposite typically happens: more 'eyes on the street' and people deter vandalism.
- f. What is the status of the work funded by the FY20 grant?
Change in staff in the Planning Department has resulted in some projects not being completed. The work in West Cemetery is one of those projects that has been delayed. The timeframe is to select a contractor for work to begin in the spring 2020.
- g. Has the work been well done? Will the Historic Commission provide a final report or assessment to CPAC for the records? Pictures on Town website? Other?
At the completion of Phase 1, the consultants provided a memo and table listing the stones that were restored, as well as a report detailing the restoration methods and the process used for each stone.
- h. Has the 3-year budget been as forecast?
The budget would address the stones in the most need of restoration. The consultants initially identified over 250 stones that could use some level of restoration or repair, with a total cost over \$200,000. The ongoing CPA requests are an effort to restore the highest priority stones.
- i. Have any documents or electronic resources (e.g., searchable maps, walking routes) been developed for the West Cemetery?
The Town has created an online map of the plots in the public cemeteries, with a history and information of each plot. There is also the ability to upload photos of the headstones, which has been done for some of the plots. The Historical Commission is also working with the developers of One East Pleasant to update historic signs for the new Amherst History Mural.
- j. Are there any unique requirements that we should be aware of relating to the fact that the cemetery is sacred ground that is the final resting place of for the ancestors of many individuals and descendants?
The work of the consultants does not require excavation or use of power equipment, and doesn't trigger additional review or requirements. Restoration of larger monuments,

fencing or structures (i.e. Town Tomb) would require local review and possibly review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

- k. Are there any additional steps that would further enhance the long term life/durability of the various headstones that due to expense were not included in the proposed restoration process?

The Commission periodically discussed the maintenance of the cemetery with public works. The staff at public works is aware of the age and importance of the cemetery and take steps to safeguard the stones during routine maintenance. The Commission is also researching the use of grazing animals in the cemetery to reduce damage to stones.

- l. What assumptions were included in the estimate that was derived from the larger MCC project; in other words, how was the \$50,000 arrived at?

The \$50,000 was estimated to fund a year's worth of work, and was also seen as a reasonable request of CPA funds.

- m. What will occur if the work commences and the expenses exceed the grant?

The amount of CPA funds is the maximum amount allowed for the project. If expenses were projected to exceed the funding, the number stones to be restored would be reduced to keep costs within budget.

- n. Can some of the needed restoration work be completed by Town staff or volunteers?

Town staff and volunteers would be better equipped with other aspects of maintaining the cemetery, and not restoring headstones. Ongoing maintenance such as mowing, trash pickup, and seasonal cleaning of the grounds are appropriate for staff and volunteers.

- o. Is this the last request for this specific project? Do you anticipate other future requests for headstone repairs? Will this be an ongoing, indefinite project request?

The ongoing restoration, repair and maintenance of West Cemetery is an important part Amherst's history that requires an annual allocation of funding. The Historical Commission and Town have not determined the future plan for West Cemetery.

8. North Amherst Library Repairs – Hilda Greenbaum et al.

- a. Have the Jones Library and Library Trustees been contacted or involved in the project discussion?

Jones Library Trustees Alex Lefebvre and Tamson Ely were present at the Joint Capital Planning Committee meeting last spring where Molly Turner (a former President of the Jones Library Trustees) and Hilda Greenbaum requested that funding to provide toilets and handicap accessibility for the 1893 North Amherst Library designed by Roswell Field Putnam be placed in the capital plan. It was enthusiastically endorsed, unanimously, by all present. Ms. Greenbaum subsequently met with Alex Lefebvre to discuss details of how this work can be accomplished.

The Jones Library Director already had put an \$800,000 holding place in the capital plan to accomplish this project in the next few years. It is a Town-owned building but North Amherst Library is way down a very long list of capital needs of the Town. Improving the library would help re-vitalize a badly deteriorated gateway to the Town of Amherst as well as consolidating us as a neighborhood.

The Board as a whole has been involved in Long-Range Planning for both branches. Last winter a consultant was hired who produced the report after public meetings with users

of both branches: <https://www.joneslibrary.org/DocumentCenter/View/5411/Long-Range-Plan-for-the-North-Amherst-Library-FY2020---2024-November-13-2019-PDF>, from which we cite the following conclusions from page 3:

Gaps

1. *Although the North Amherst Library patrons appreciate many aspects of the current facility, the building lacks accessibility and a public restroom.*
 2. *Funding from the Town of Amherst and other sources must adjust to developing service needs and future growth.*
 3. *The Library's open hours schedule is confusing.*
- b. The Town owns the Library. Why has the Town not applied for repairs to the foundation or other structural elements of the library if needed?
Many Town-owned buildings, we are told, suffer from significant deferred maintenance. Our presumption is that no one looked at the foundation of the 1893 structure as a problem until we found private funds to go forward with a new addition providing toilets and a handicap lift.
A group of North Amherst residents—library users and former trustees—have been meeting and working very closely with the Town Manager and Director of Public Works as well as our District One councilors and Council President Lynn Griesemer since last Spring. The Town has been very cooperative in expediting completion of this important project. Both the Jones Library Trustees and the Town are pleased that private funds are available to fulfill the thirty-year-old requirement for handicap accessibility of public buildings. The work would not be done were private funds not available.
- c. How much has the anonymous donor committed?
This is confidential information. We feel that enough funds can be raised to at least provide Scheme A, the rest rooms and a lift. A community room could be added at the same time or later depending on funding.
- d. Please provide detailed budget and schematics.
Kuhn Riddle Architects has drawn the schematics and has passed them on to a cost estimator. This information will be available to the public in the new year.
- e. Obviously, we need more information including the project description, timeline and plans for the project. Please tell us more about the matching grant opportunity, as well.
Kuhn Riddle suggests that the permitting and bidding processes can be finished in time to begin construction by fall 2020 and open for use in the summer of 2021.
- f. What is the basis for the \$100,000 estimate? What repairs to the historic building are envisioned? Is 100k request to go toward accessibility features, or structural work?
There is considerable work to be done to up-grade the HVAC, electrical and plumbing systems in the existing library estimated to be between \$150,000-250,000. In addition we learn that the foundation needs considerable restoration. We will know more when the refined estimates are done. The needed up-grades as well as the foundation work are described in a draft document from engineers Tighe and Bond available from Kuhn Riddle Architects.
Since much of the up-grading, like water and sewer lines, electrical and HVAC would be required for the new building—and some of this work would be eligible for Historical

Preservation funding—we feel that the foundation work would be needed to preserve this building whether the addition were completed or not.

So far there is no documented basis for \$100,000 for the foundation work but it seemed to be a reasonable portion of the total \$250,000 required for structural up-grading to the old building without seeming to be greedy given all the other fiscal demands on the Town. It is hoped that grants might cover the rest of the needed restorations.

- g. What is the full scope of the project? Why urgent?

The full scope of the project is to construct an addition to the north of the present building to provide both handicap accessibility and toilets. It is urgent because the front steps are very steep, the brass handrail gets very hot in the summer, and handicap accessibility in public buildings has been the law for thirty years.

There have been no toilet facilities available to the public in North Amherst since the gas station and Aristocrat Stylists closed many years ago. Not having toilet facilities has been a hardship for small children and seniors alike. We are told that a porta-potty could be made available but this is neither a permanent nor aesthetic solution.

North Amherst Library is used by many children. So many attend children's events that there is not room in the present library. The community room could be beneficial as a children's area.

- h. Who would receive the funds? Is there a non-profit entity?

Since last summer, we have been in the process of completing an agreement between the Town and The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts to set up an endowment for the North Amherst Library. Funds left over from the building project will be available for future maintenance, reconstruction or restoration of the Town-owned facility.

- i. Do you consider the timeframe of 2021 to be a realistic schedule given some of the pending and or yet to be provided information?

The architects suggested it and find it quite reasonable.

- j. When do you anticipate having a more detailed plan and expense estimate for the work?

Plans and estimates should be available after the first of the year—hopefully.

- k. Have/will other sources of Historic Preservation funding be pursued (e.g., Mass Cultural Council Cultural Facilities Fund, Preservation Mass Historic Preservation Matching Grant, etc.)?

We plan to apply for funds for preservation, accessibility and sustainability when the gaps in the details are filled.

- l. How many people visit and use the North Amherst Library?

From the consultant's report:

"North Amherst Population: The 2010 Census recorded the population of the North Amherst Area as 6,819 people. The 2000 Census recorded the population of the North Amherst Area as 6,019 people."

An automatic counter registered the number of visitors to the 900 square foot North Amherst Library between January 1, 2019 and December 27, 2019 as 19,876 people. This is a lot of visitors given the library is open at most 20 hours per week—fewer when there is a holiday—at very irregular hours.

The demographics of North Amherst are changing again from student housing in the nineties as the older families left their homes to many more young families with children. Just this fall, 130 units have opened at the Mill Site alone and many families of foreign students residing currently at North Village more than ever use our little, but often crowded, library. Looking at the books on the Inter-library Loan shelf, we know that many people from Leverett and Shutesbury, so probably also Sunderland, use our library.

9. Trail Maintenance & Access – ToA

- a. Given the number of critical needs noted in the application, \$25,000 seems like a very small figure. As there are no land purchase proposals this cycle, why wouldn't this be an opportunity to make a much more significant investment in our open space infrastructure?

Trail needs are significantly greater than \$25,000. The reason for this year's modest request is based on the following: 1) consideration of all the needs in the Town and the funding available, 2) the department has limited staff resources so we can only work on so many projects in one field season. Town staff are currently finishing two open space projects (Szala, Keet-Haskins) from the last round of CPA funding and with Hickory Ridge pending we have a full plate. We are very careful in our assessment of new acquisitions and at this time, there are no new priority properties in the cue. In addition, each project takes months of pre-work, negotiations with owners and significant effort to secure grant funding as a match for local funds.

- b. Please provide more detail for anticipated expenditures. What specific trail projects are your highest priorities? Is there a sequencing of proposed work and a projected timeline?

I wish I could be more specific but project decisions are made based on many factors including weather during the field season and available funding for summer staff. A brief list of projects is provided here:

- *Complete work at the Fort River Farm Conservation Area – community gardens, parking area, car access and welcome kiosk.*
- *Design and build new access, parking and welcome kiosk at the Richie Conservation Area on Bay Road.*
- *Design and build new access, parking and welcome kiosk at the Sweet Alice Conservation Area on Bay Road.*
- *Design and build new parking area, possible community gardens and other improvements at the Szala Conservation Area in North Amherst.*

- c. Are the funds intended specifically for bridges and if so is there any timeframe for the work identified?

Parking, access and welcoming at trailheads is the highest priority for 2020 but we are likely to repair and/or replace a few small bridges as well.

- d. What general categories are the funds expected to be spent on (contractors, materials, etc.)? Would the work be done by Town staff or contractors?

Most of the labor will be provided by Town staff from the Conservation Department. Costs include materials, trucking, and some equipment rental. There are times when we need to hire a wetlands scientist to help us permit more complex projects in wetland resource areas.

- e. What aspects of the scope of work are not routine maintenance?
Routine work includes mowing of some trails, removal of downed trees and similar seasonal tasks to keep the trail open. Building new parking areas, replacing significant bridges and other larger efforts are not considered routine.
- f. What trail maintenance was carried out in FY19?
The list is very long. My field staff are out on our Conservation lands throughout the spring, summer and fall. This summer one of the major focus areas was downed trees blocking trails—in total more than 100 were removed!
- g. What trail maintenance is needed but was not carried out in FY19 due to lack of funds?
See response b.
- h. Is it not the case that CPA funds could only be used for maintenance of open space acquired with CPA funds? Specifically, which are those eligible properties?
Yes, that is true. Since the adoption of the CPA in the early 2000s the Town has acquired hundreds of acres of Conservation land. The list is very long but includes the following Conservation Areas:
- *Richie*
 - *Westover Meadow*
 - *Szala I*
 - *Fort River Farm*
 - *Bluebird Meadow*
 - *Cushman Brook*
 - *Epstein*
 - *Szala II*
 - *Keet-Haskins*
- i. Can some of the scope of work be completed by current town employees, student volunteers, or interns?
Yes, we always match CPA funds with Town resources and/or outside grant funds. When possible we use volunteers and interns—recent examples include drafting an Invasive Species Plan and for improvements at Markert’s Pond Conservation Area in Orchard Valley.

10. Surveys, Appraisals & Studies – ToA

- a. Proposal Overview is incomplete. Please supply the missing text.
Thank you. I was unaware of this issue. Let me provide additional supporting text.
Anthony Delaney: The missing text has been uploaded to the main proposal page.
- b. On average, over the last decade, how much has been spent annually on surveys, appraisals and studies?
I would estimate \$8,000-\$12,000/year.
- c. Regarding "jumpstarting projects when an opportunity is presented to the Town," can you give a few examples when funds dedicated by CPA to surveys, appraisals and projects have jumpstarted a project?
Most of the conservation-related acquisitions that the Town has done during the past 20 years have been "jumpstarted" using CPA funds. In short, most departments do not have funding in their operating budgets for survey, appraisals and similar studies.
- d. What would occur if there were a need for due diligence to jumpstart a project if this funding request were not approved/allocated?
If an opportunity arose the town might have to "pass" on the acquisition. In a worst-case scenario, we could reach out to the Kestrel Trust for assistance.
- e. Please provide more detail of anticipated expenditures.

At this time I do not have more details to share about anticipated expenditures however; I do have these recent figures for work we have completed with CPA funds:

- *Survey - \$6500*
- *Phase I (21E) - \$4500*

- f. I thought that the Town was no longer seeking to acquire open space. Why is there a need for surveys and appraisals?

The Town has not stopped acquiring open space rather we are doing a more thorough job of prioritizing what we choose to preserve.

- g. What work was carried out in this category in FY19?

See response e. We also completed appraisals for Szala, Keet-Haskins and Hickory Ridge.

- h. What work in this category was not carried out in FY19 due to lack of funds?

I believe we addressed all of the priorities last year.

- i. Do you expect this to be an annual request to CPA?

Yes, at least for the foreseeable future.

- j. Are there currently any funds on hand for these uses? Has the Town secured CPAC monies for this use previously? Are there any current surveys or other studies in need of funding?

I will ask staff to provide their figures for the Committee.

- k. Can some of the scope of work be completed by current Town employees, student volunteers, or interns?

See previous responses.

11. Recreation Pre-development Funds – ToA

- a. How was the \$25,000 figure determined?

As was the case with other Town Departments, LSSE does not have a budget to cover critical research/due diligence expenses. Past history indicates that \$25,000 has been an appropriate amount of funds to retain in a due diligence/contingency fund.

- b. What projects and surveys are being contemplated?

Current projects and surveys being contemplated include Kendrick Park and Mill River Recreation Area. The funds would be available if new projects became apparent and the Town wanted to pursue initial feasibility studies or apply for grants.

- c. Can you offer examples of specific sites/amenities that might need the pre-development studies you describe? You mention the Kendrick Park playground, but those costs have already been incurred. Does LSSE have a list of priorities for improvements to or development of the town's recreation properties? Might some of the schools' athletic facilities be included?

1. *Other areas identified in the Kendrick Park Master Plan excluding the playground.*

2. *Phase one of the Community Field/High School Fields.*

3. *Community Field and High School fields.*

4. *Possible updates to Kiwanis Park on Stanley Street*

- d. Can some specific examples of prior pre-development, soft cost project expenses be provided?

Parcel/land surveys, conceptual designs, reliable cost estimates.

- e. Will the funding/completion of these pre-development tasks advantage the Town in any possible grant requests for this project?
Yes, it will allow the Town to have the proper research done in order to apply for State and foundation grants. For instance, the PARC grant program requires a concept design and preliminary cost estimates as part of the application, and will not reimburse a community for these expenses.
- f. What would occur if there were a need for pre development, soft cost projects the CPAC the funding request was not approved/allocated?
We could not apply for State and foundation grants because we would be unable to complete the pre-development requirements of the grant.
- g. Please provide some specific examples of prior due diligence spending by the Town.
 - 1. *Conceptual plans – Groff Park*
 - 2. *Survey – Groff Park*
 - 3. *Concept plan and cost estimate for Mill River*
 - 4. *Survey – Plum Brook Recreation Area*
- h. Would this work be contracted? Does LSSE have specific people in mind? Are there UMass resources that could be tapped (landscape, recreation, and other)?
Almost all research and due diligence work would be contracted as the Town currently lacks the capacity to complete these types of projects. We have found UMass to be an unreliable resource for these types of projects.
- i. Can some of the scope of work be completed by current Town employees, student volunteers, or interns?
Town employees, students and interns lack the expertise, resources and capacity to accomplish the vast majority of required due diligence/pre-development tasks.

12. High School Track & Field Replacement – ARPS

- a. How was the requested amount of \$157,500 determined?
The estimate for the cost of the schematic design and engineering for the Phase 1 project is \$500,000, based on the estimated total project cost of \$5,000,000. We are asking the CPA committees in each of the Regional School's member towns to contribute a total of \$200,000 toward the schematic design and engineering. The \$200,000 is apportioned to each town using the same methodology as is used in apportioning capital costs to the member towns. As a result, the component share of the \$200,000 for Amherst is \$157,500.
- b. The specific budget for the project is missing. The full budget on page 36 is for more than \$4 million. Would this be just planning or full design and costing out? What happens then?
Yes, this request is to aid in the funding of the schematic design and engineering needed for the full project costing and construction design. The capital plan for the Regional School District has \$5,000,000 in FY22 in anticipation of this funding in FY21. The authorization of the FY22 capital plan by the Regional School Committee and the member towns will occur during FY21 and will fund the remaining schematic design and engineering work as well as the construction.
- c. The Phase 1 budget runs between \$3.9M and \$6.2M, and the Phases 1-7 budgets run between \$12.2M and \$18.7M. What portion of those costs would you expect to be the

responsibility of Pelham, Leverett and Shutesbury? What portion of those costs would likely be requested from future CPA funds?

For those aspects of the phases that are on Regional School property, the expectation would be that the member towns would contribute according to the method used for apportioning capital costs. It is too early to know what would be requested of CPA in the future relative to the additional phases. Certainly, many aspects of the work are eligible for CPA funds.

- d. Who would receive the grant? Weston? What would \$157,500 accomplish?
The Town's procurement process, dictate by state law, would be followed. See the answer to question a regarding the outcome expected from the project.
- e. What is the plan for implementing the much need field improvement? Costs range from \$3.9 million to more than \$6 million for Phase 1 with the track (page 35 of Weston Report). Does the Town have alternatives? Does it plan to proceed?
Regarding alternatives in Phase 1, the Regional School District will be doing some preliminary work relative to alternatives this spring. This evaluation of alternatives will directly impact the scope of work for the schematic design and engineering this request would help fund. As far as the plan to proceed, see the answer to question b. For future phases, when and how will be an ongoing community discussion.
- f. What amount of funding was requested from the other school district towns? What happens if the other towns reject their CPA applications?
\$157,500 from Amherst, \$11,580 from Pelham, \$13,800 from Shutesbury, and \$17,120 from Leverett. We'll move ahead with the moneys made available and likely alter our Regional School capital plan to cover any additional needs.
- g. Given the Town's near-future need for exceptionally high borrowing for capital projects, what impact will the need for additional borrowing for this project have on the viability of the several phases of this project?
The latter phases of the Athletic Facilities Strategic Plan will likely be pushed further into the future than would be desired. However, the immediate needs of the track and its environs has pushed the Regional School Committee to seek action as soon as possible on Phase I.
- h. Please indicate which specific pages of the lengthy report are relevant to your proposal.
I would suggest pages 3-6, 27-29, 34-36, and 56.
- i. The overall plan has multiple other phases, including community fields. Is there a plan to come to CPAC for support? At what level? Any debt financed?
See the answer to question c.
- j. What is the total anticipated expenses associated with the completion of the design work and cost estimates for the Track and Field replacement?
See the answer to question a.
- k. Does the scope of the project design work include all listed multi-use fields from page 29 of the Strategic Plan?
Yes and no; Phase 1 will impact all the field areas shows on page 29, but not all of them will be completely taken to their final state as shown. See pages 34-36 for greater detail about the work to be completed in Phase 1.

- l. What indication exists that funding will be available in the future for the full budget (beyond design) associated with the Track and Field Replacements; in other words, what is the likelihood of the entire project being completed?

The Regional School Committee has expressed strong interest in moving this project forward including starting some preliminary work this spring.

- m. Might the plan include other synthetic field areas separate from Multi-Use Field #1?
Nor currently, but as the additional phases are designed it could be considered.

- n. What limitations exist regarding Town resident access to the high school track and field areas?

The school would have priority use for instructional purposes and for sports, but the general public is expected to have access to these areas in the same way as they do now.