

Town of



AMHERST *Massachusetts*

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE

Date: October 25, 2011

From: Peter Jessop, Chair, Community Preservation Act Committee

To: Distribution List

Subject: Call for Proposals Qualifying for CPA Funding for FY 2013

This is to request proposals for FY 2013 appropriate to the provisions of the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Deadline for submissions is December 9, 2011.

The Community Preservation Act (CPA), adopted by Amherst voters in April 2001, established a local fund based on a 1% tax surcharge (later amended to 1.5%) on property valuations above \$100,000 *for the acquisition, creation and preservation of open space; for the acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic resources; for the acquisition, creation and preservation of land for recreational use; for the acquisition, creation, preservation and support of community housing; and for the rehabilitation or restoration of open space, land for recreational use and community housing that is acquired or created.* The law also established a State Trust Fund, from which annual allocations are made to towns that have accepted the Act, partially or fully matching local appropriations. Local allocations are currently being funded by the state at 26%, resulting in a projected total amount for distribution of more than \$500,000 for this year. It is possible for Town Meeting to authorize long term borrowing using future CPA funds to pay off the debt, so proposals may be submitted even if the amount of money seems to be larger than the amount available.

The Amherst Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC) is charged with assessing the needs of the Town in those areas identified by the Act, and to develop prioritized recommendations for funding to be considered at the Annual Town Meeting next May. By MGL, CPA funds may only be spent on Community Housing, Historic Preservation, Open Space, and Recreation. A minimum of 10% of the available funds (from the surcharge and the state contribution) must be set aside each year, although not necessarily spent, for each of three categories of community housing, historical preservation, and open space. Recreation, the fourth recipient, or beneficiary, is not mandated to receive the minimum 10%.

CPAC Evaluation Criteria:

1. Feasibility of the Project
2. Documentation for Estimated Costs
3. Funding available (including CPA Funding), possibility of multiple sources of funding, and expectations for additional funding in future years
4. Urgency of the Project
5. Estimated timeline from receipt of funding to start and to complete the Project
6. Acquisition and/or preservation of threatened resources
7. Population(s) to be served by the Project
8. Priority of your Project set by requesting Town committees or commissions*.

*Typically, open space proposals are referred to the Conservation Commission, recreation proposals to LSSE, historical preservation proposals to the Historical Commission, and community housing proposals to Housing Partnership and the Amherst Housing Authority.

Submission Process:

1. Complete the attached CPAC Form with your submittal.
2. Attach any relevant documentation.
3. Submit one (1) hard copy, clearly marked *CPAC Proposal* to: Accounting Office, attention Sonia Aldrich, Comptroller, Town of Amherst, 4 Boltwood Ave., Amherst MA 01002. Optional submittal via email to: aldrichs@amherstma.gov
4. **Deadline for all submittals including documentation is December 9, 2011.** Note - early submissions of proposals are encouraged to give the CPA Committee time for review and to receive information from relevant Town boards and commissions.
5. Public Presentations before CPAC will be scheduled for January and February

Please contact me at 413-549-7919 should you have any questions, or email me at peter@integbuild.com

Community Preservation Act Committee Proposal Request Form for FY 13

Date: December 9, 2011

CPA Funding Category

Check all that apply

- Community Housing
- Open Space
- Historic Preservation
- Recreation

Submitting Entity: Hampshire Council of Governments (HCOG)

Contact Person: Todd Ford

Contact Phone: (413) 584-1300, ext. 2

Contact Email: tford@hampshirecog.org

Overview of Proposal:

Hampshire County Courthouse Renovation

The Hampshire County Courthouse has served as one of the County's most recognizable monuments since it was first established in 1886. A century prior to the courthouse's construction, the location was where the first movements of Shay's Rebellion took place. Currently, it serves as the main offices of Hampshire Council of Governments (HCOG) and it also houses the Hampshire Law Library and the Paul Revere Bell, which is on display for schools that tour the building and hold mock trials in the historic courtrooms on the upper level. The building is also used as a gallery space for local artists and Councilors often receive requests from the general public, local media, and nonprofits for the use of the facilities for a variety of functions and fundraisers. The building's historical significance played a major role in gaining approval from the National Register of Historic Places to establish the Northampton Downtown Historic District in 1975.

The courthouse currently suffers from significant areas of deterioration. Mortar on the exterior areas show evidence of deterioration and cracking, interior walls have damage from water penetration, and the structural integrity of the third floor support is weak. The stairs to the main and side entrances have also moved from their original positions and the risers have become uneven, creating potentially hazardous conditions. Although much work is needed, the priority repairs would be to rebuild the deteriorated masonry on the exterior and interior structural walls, add floor and stair support, and make repairs to the roof. As stewards of the courthouse, HCOG is responsible for the preservation and maintenance of the building. Given its historical significance to the County, the cost of the renovation should be a shared responsibility amongst the County's towns and cities. The primary goal of the project is not only to restore and repair the courthouse, which is one of Hampshire County's oldest municipal buildings, but also to ensure its structural integrity so that it can conduct its current operations well into the future. The building is not properly equipped to withstand the harsh climate of this region and the Law Library, which is housed in the basement, is threatened by water damage and flooding. Restoring the Hampshire County Courthouse would preserve a significant part of the County's rich history and it would be a testament to Hampshire County's unwavering dedication to its communities.

Describe how your request meets the CPA criteria:

1. Description of funding needed including:
 - a. Documentation of cost estimates
 - b. Other sources of funding, e.g., grants, self-funding, fund-raising
 - c. Timeline on how CPA funds, if awarded, would be spent
 - d. Timeline for spending funds; expectation for spending over multiple years
2. Urgency of the Project, if any
3. Estimated timeline from receipt of funds to Project completion
4. Acquisition or preservation of threatened resources
5. Population(s) to be served by the Project
6. How the Project is prioritized by requesting Town committees or commissions
7. Other information regarding the Project deemed necessary for CPAC

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COURTHOUSE RENOVATION
Project Overview

1. Description of Funding

1a.

In 2010, HCOG received a generous gift from the Grousebeck Foundation that was matched by a grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, which was used to perform an evaluation of the structural integrity and needed repairs. Boston Bay Architects performed a Building Survey and Needs Analysis in June 2011. Attached is a breakdown of the projected cost estimates for restoring and repairing the building as determined in the evaluation.

1b.

HCOG is approaching the CPCs of the county's member towns and cities in addition to applying for a matching grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission through their Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund.

HCOG relies primarily on dues received from member towns and cities to pay for its services and programs, as well as the ongoing maintenance of the building. In recent years though, dues have been reduced substantially in recognition of the financial constraints of towns and cities and HCOG has also seen a reduction in the number of member municipalities, both of which have resulted in a significant loss of funding. HCOG does not have the staff or resources available to hold a fundraiser and since contributions are not tax deductible, it is not expected that a fundraiser would be highly successful.

1c.

The Hampshire County Courthouse project will be divided into four stages that are based upon the priority of renovations and repairs as determined by the building evaluation in 2011. Upon notice of a CPA funding award in April 2012, HCOG would assess the priority renovations from the first stage of the project and build a plan for repairs that will be determined by the amount of funding received for the project overall. Once the necessary repairs that will contribute most effectively to the building's stabilization while staying within the first-stage budget have been targeted, HCOG will issue a Request for Quotes (RFQ) in order to find a suitable architectural firm to begin the initial stage of the project. It is HCOG's intent to promote an open and free competition selection of qualified contractors. HCOG will choose the contractor with the highest integrity and experience with preserving historic buildings. HCOG will also encourage small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises to participate if known. HCOG expects to choose a contractor and begin work by fall 2012. A portion of the CPA funding award would be spent issuing the RFQ and initial payment to the selected contractor.

1d.

Given the scale of the renovation, HCOG will approach the project in four specific stages so that the most necessary repairs will be addressed first. HCOG will distribute funds primarily into the first stage of the project but a plan will be outlined for the most effective distribution of funds throughout this multi-year project. Although the 2011 evaluation has largely outlined the four stages of the project, the selection of repairs and at what stage they will be completed will rely heavily on the amount of funding available at each stage.

The first stage of the project will address the following issues:

- 1) Exterior/interior tower masonry to rebuild deteriorated structural walls
- 2) Repair of Northwest structural rafters and slate roof
- 3) Stabilize northwest exterior wall
- 4) Stabilize Main Entrance stair

2. Urgency of Project

As determined by the evaluation in 2011, the Hampshire County Courthouse suffers from significant damage throughout its interior and exterior. Major capital repairs have already been delayed for many years and the scheduled replacement of many components has also been delayed. Although the building is stable enough to conduct its current operations, its current condition contributes to excessive heating costs in the winter due to poor insulation and the exterior is also more at risk of deterioration due to the harsh climate.

3. Project Timeline

April 2012: Notice of CPA funding

May-August 2012:

- Issue RFQ
- Begin selection process to find contractor to begin Stage 1

September 2012:

- Select contractor and begin Stage 1.

Stage 1: 1) Exterior/interior tower masonry to rebuild deteriorated structural walls

- 2) Repair of Northwest structural rafters and slate roof
- 3) Stabilize northwest exterior wall
- 4) Stabilize Main Entrance stair

Stage 2: 1) Replacement of slate roof and repairs to deck

- 2) Replacement of Tower terracotta clay tile
- 3) Replacement of copper flashings
- 4) Rebuild North chimney and flute

Stage 3: 1) Attic insulation

- 2) Replacement of windows and trim

Stage 4: Interior improvements

The renovation will be a multi-year project that will be completed in stages depending on the amount of funding available.

4. Acquisition or Preservation of Threatened Resources

The Hampshire County Courthouse is not only a valuable historical resource but it also has significant architectural value as well. The building was designed by Henry F. Kilbourn in the Richardsonian Romanesque-style, a prominent architectural style found throughout Massachusetts. Stone from Longmeadow, MA was used for the external structure and the roof is comprised of black slate from Monson, ME. The front and side entrance feature granite from Drummerston, VT. The building is a monument to the history of Hampshire County as well as a compilation of New England's finest materials. The building still has many of the original features from 1886 but without proper care and preservation they will be severely degraded.

5. Population(s) to be served by Project

The Courthouse is prominently located within the Northampton Downtown Historic District at the center of the city's institutional and commercial activity. Although it is one of Northampton's major landmarks, it holds historic and cultural significance for the entirety of Hampshire County. Schools throughout the county visit the Courthouse to hold mock trials in the courtroom and to learn more about the county's history. The Hampshire Law Library, housed in the basement, also provides valuable resources to the public. Restoring the building will also allow HCOG to continue to offer its services and programs well into the future.

6. How the Project is prioritized by requesting Town committees or commissions

HCOG will be presenting this historic preservation project to the Historical Commission.