



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Community Preservation Committee

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March 7, 2024

To: Northborough Financial Planning Committee

Re: Summary of FY25 CPA Project Recommendations

For this year's Town Meeting, the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is working from a budget of \$820,000 projected new revenue with State match + \$1,340,577 in the CPA reserve accounts. The CPC considered 8 applications based on our customary criteria of: 1) Applicability to CPA guidelines and the goals described in the Northborough CPA procedural sheet; 2) Community support; 3) Affordability; and 4) Urgency to fund this year. In our deliberations, we also considered the potential future needs for CPA funds to support the White Cliffs re-use proposal or other projects resulting from the Downtown Revitalization study. With all that in mind, we reached consensus on the following recommendations.

432 Whitney Street Land Acquisition Project (\$1,700,000): This project involves purchase of 23.77 acres of undeveloped land for open space/recreation purposes and a small-scale affordable housing project consisting of 4-8 multi-family dwelling units. Benefits of the acquisition include the development of affordable housing, protection of important wildlife habitat, a wetland system that is hydrologically connected to Bearfoot Brook, and a scenic vista at the property's high point, and providing an open space connection between the aqueduct to the west and the permanently-protected open space owned by the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Berlin Conservation Commission. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this from **unreserved fund** (\$817,653), **conservation fund** (\$664,073) and **new revenues** (\$218,274).

Pickleball Soundproofing (\$54,500): This project involves installation of ultraviolet (UV) tolerant soundproofing onto the top line of the existing fencing system to block the impact noise generated by pickleball sports. It will reduce noise below nuisance levels. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this from **new revenue**.

Affordable Housing Funds to the Northborough Affordable Housing Corporation (\$126,856): The NAHC has been very effective in adding multiple affordable housing units in Town utilizing CPA funds and partnering with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity. Based on the prospects for several additional projects in the near term, the CPC voted 7-0 to approve this request, subject to a funding agreement consistent those applying to prior year grants to the NAHC.

First Parish Church Steeple Repairs (\$210,000): This project involves replacement of wood stairs, wood flooring, wood trusses that support the flooring and stairs, and wood "cradle" that supports the brass bell. These features have been compromised by age and many years of exposure to the weather and leakage. At its own expense, the congregation will hire a contractor to replace defective materials on the steeple exterior and reseal that exterior to prevent future leakage. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this from **new revenue**.

Wachusett Aqueduct Historic Marker (\$4,729): This duplicate marker will replace one stolen in October 2023. The CPC has been supportive on prior projects for historic markers, as we feel they

contribute to enhancing our community and support goals in the Master Plan and Historic Preservation Plan, all at relatively low cost. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this from **new revenues**.

White Cliffs Bond Payment (\$164,641): This is the 7th payment required for the bond on the White Cliffs purchase, and this also covers the requirement that at least 10% of new revenue be allocated toward Historic Preservation. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this from **new revenue**.

CPA Administrative Expenses Account (\$41,000): In accordance with the CPA legislation, the CPC may allocate up to 5% of new revenue to the administrative account for expenses such as legal fees, appraisals and consultant fees related to CPA projects. Unused amounts from a given year go back to the CPA Unreserved fund. The CPC voted 7-0 to allocate 5% of the projected \$,000 **new revenue**.

Conservation Fund (\$350,000): The Conservation Fund currently has a balance of approx. \$664,000 from CPA funds approved at prior Town Meetings, which is proposed to be spent on the acquisition of 432 Whitney Street. In support of our efforts to plan for future needs for CPA funding and allow flexibility across all categories of historic preservation, affordable housing, open space and recreation, the CPC feels it is wise to keep reserves in the Unreserved Fund at this time. Therefore, the CPC voted 7-0 to deny this application. The Committee's representatives from the Open Space Committee and the Conservation Commission both agreed with this decision.

ENDING BALANCES: Should all of our recommendations above be approved at Town Meeting, the amount unallocated from projected new revenue would be \$0 and the amount remaining in the Unreserved Fund would be \$243,061.

Respectfully submitted,

John Campbell, Chair
Northborough Community Preservation Committee

Cc: Town Clerk, Town Administrator, Finance Director, Financial Planning Committee, Housing Authority