



**CITY OF GLOUCESTER
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
PROJECT APPLICATION COVER SHEET**

I: Project Information

Project Title:

Bringing Back Burnham's Field – Phase 2

Project Summary:

Five years ago many residents of downtown Gloucester were afraid to spend time in Burnham's Field. The field had not had a major rehabilitation in 30 years. Graffiti, trash, drug use and other bad behavior made it a scary place, especially for children. Today it is on its way to becoming a thriving park – the largest ball field and open space in central Gloucester. Thanks to the Community Preservation Committee and other generous funders, renovations have revitalized the field, including two playgrounds, revamped basketball courts, a paved pathway, lighting, softball backstops and bleacher seat covers. Burnham's Field is by no means perfect but renovations have brought new families into the field – including many low-income downtown families who don't have yards of their own – and sent the message that in Gloucester, open spaces and playing outside matter.

This proposal, "Bringing Back Burnham's Field – Phase 2," would complete the renovation of Burnham's Field by finishing the paved walking loop inside the field along Burnham Street – a loop that now leads bike-riding children and other users out of the field to a sidewalk along a busy street – and adding three lights to the field to make it safer and more welcoming for residents after dark.

To date, the renovation of Burnham's Field has received \$221,791 in Community Development Block Grant funding, \$195,109 from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, \$172,000 from the Community Preservation Committee, \$1,349.47 from a Mass. in Motion grant, and \$1,400 in private donations. This application would be for \$15,000 to pay for completion of the paved sidewalk loop (370 feet) inside the fence along Burnham Street, \$39,000 to add three lights to complete the lighting of the field, and \$1,000 to help the Gloucester DPW with maintenance costs.

The renovation of Burnham's Field has successfully beautified the largest green space and ballfield in central Gloucester and this project would complete the field's renovation.

Estimated start date: March 2017 Estimated completion date: May 2017

CPA Program Area:

Open Space **Historic Preservation**
 Community Housing **Recreation**

II: Applicant/Developer Information

Contact Person with primary responsibility for project: John McElhenny

Organization: The Friends of Burnham's Field

Mailing Address: 19 Allen Street, Gloucester

Daytime phone #: 617-620-9485

E-mail address: jmcelhenny@gmail.com

Federal ID# 04-3521016 (This is the number for the Gloucester Fund, a 501 c(3) charitable organization, which is the Friends of Burnham's Field's fundraising partner).

III: Budget Summary

Total budget for project: \$55,000

CPA funding request: \$55,000

CPA request as percentage of total budget: 100 (The Friends of Burnham's Field also plans to spend approximately \$3,000 from donations and a small amount of previous CPA funding to plant trees— green mountain red maple trees and sweet gums -- to beautify the field this spring but that has not been included in this project.)

Applicant's Signature: John McElhenny

Printed name and Position: John McElhenny, Friends of Burnham's Field

CPA APPLICATION

Bringing Back Burnham's Field – NARRATIVE

Burnham's Field is the largest green space and ballfield in central Gloucester. The field is 6.7 acres in size, surrounded by houses on nearly all sides. In the last three years, neighbors and the City partnered to renovate the field – its first major renovation in 30 years. The renovation reversed years of decline at Burnham's Field, during which families became afraid to play or spend time there due to damaged play equipment, trash, graffiti, and drug and alcohol use. The improvements included a new paved sidewalk, lighting, two new play areas (one for children aged 2 to 5, the other for kids aged 5 to 12), softball backstops, basketball backboards, seat covers for the softball bleachers, trees, and a spray pad feature.

The result has been a surge in use of the field by all age groups, particularly by parents and young children. On a sunny spring weekend or evening, it's not uncommon to see over 100 people in Burnham's Field. Aside from the physical improvements, the renovation of Burnham's Field has also created pride among downtown residents and brought the surrounding neighborhood closer together, with new activities that include neighborhood block parties, volunteer field clean-ups, and even Christmas caroling this past winter.

This project, "Bringing Back Burnham's Field – Phase 2," will keep the momentum going and continue to improve this green jewel in the heart of Gloucester by completing the paved loop inside the field (instead of



forcing walkers and bike-riders outside the field along a busy street, as is now the case) and adding three lights to make the field safer and allow residents to enjoy the field more in the evening.

What Community Preservation criteria – both general and category specific – does this project meet?

We know the Community Preservation Committee gives preference to proposals that address as many of the CPC's criteria as possible. This "Bringing Back Burnham's Field" submission directly fulfills at least **11** of the Committee's general and category-specific criteria:

1. *Consistent with various plans which are relevant to and utilized by the City regarding Open Space, Recreation, Historic Resources and Affordable Housing.*

Gloucester's Open Space and Recreation Committee specifically called for the renovation of Burnham's Field as a key priority in its Open Space and Recreation Plan (2010-2017). Here is an excerpt from that plan:

"Goal 2: Improve Existing Recreation Facilities and Create New Areas to Meet Defined Needs

The City should improve and maintain its recreation facilities paying special attention to:

Burnham's Field: replace damaged facilities and fences, improve lighting and provide better access for residents and police patrols. "

2. *Preserve and enhance the essential character of the City.*

Generations of Gloucester children including Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken grew up playing in Burnham's Field. For many downtown Gloucester children, the field was literally at the center of their childhood. After the *Gloucester Daily Times* published an article about the renovation of Burnham's Field in March 2016, one reader, Phillip Ramsey, captured the meaning of Burnham's Field for many local residents. "I lived on Maplewood Ave. and went to the Babson School," Ramsey wrote in an online comment. "Burnham's Field was where we would play inter-school sports. It was the place where I first met my wonderful wife and where we decided to elope and get married. She was 16 and I was 18. Nice to know the city still cares."

It would be difficult to find a playground more central to Gloucester's identity than Burnham's Field. It deserves "preserving and enhancing."

3. *Protect resources that would otherwise be threatened.*

Before the renovation of Burnham's Field began two years ago, it was apparent how this important resource had been threatened. The field hadn't been renovated in 30 years and had fallen into a state of disrepair and neglect, marred by graffiti, trash, and drug use and drinking. Many families were afraid to go into the field. In the last three years, neighbors and the City have partnered to "bring back Burnham's Field," thanks in part to generous investment by the Community Preservation Committee, but we need to stay vigilant to continue to protect this resource.

4. *Demonstrate practicality and feasibility, and that the project can be implemented within budget and on schedule.*

This project replicates work that has already been done in Burnham's Field – installing lights and extending an already existing paved path – so this won't be "reinventing the wheel." It's limited, well-defined, and very feasible. This project is considerably smaller than the previous renovation of Burnham's Field.

5. Produce an advantageous cost/benefit value.

Investments in open spaces within cities often provide plenty of economic benefits that go beyond the park's borders and Burnham's Field is no exception. The Holy Cow Ice Cream Café opened across Pleasant Street from the opening to Burnham's Field the same weekend that the City held a "grand reopening" ceremony for the field. Since then, the owner of the Holy Cow, Mike Schifino, has renovated five apartments in the Holy Cow building, which had been empty and occupied by squatters for years. "Green space is perhaps one of the most underrated economic tools that is, time and again, proving a catalyst for economic growth within the urban core," according to the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, a nonprofit that focuses on urban economies. Vibrant green spaces in urban settings such as Burnham's Field in downtown Gloucester attract families and young professionals that businesses value.

6. Preserve or improve use or intended purpose of City-owned city assets.

The renovation of Burnham's Field, a city-owned playground and ballfield, has been strongly supported by the City Council and the last two mayoral administrations as a model partnership between residents and the City. The improvements to Burnham's Field have been widely reported in Gloucester (Please see the Sample Media Coverage in the Appendix) and are visible in the dozens and sometimes hundreds of kids enjoying the new field on any weekend day!

7. Receive endorsement by other municipal boards, committees and commissions or departments and broad-based support from community members.

Gloucester's Open Space and Recreation Committee has supported and endorsed the renovation of Burnham's Field including in the Committee's 2010-2017 Open Space and Recreation Plan, cited in point 1 above, that highlighted the improvement of Burnham's Field as a key priority. City employee Steve Winslow, the senior project manager with the City's Community Development Department, has been integral to the improvements at Burnham's Field, which wouldn't have happened without him. The city's Department of Public Works also supports this submission (Please see the letter of support for this application from Gloucester DPW Assistant Director Mark Cole in the Appendix). Finally, the multiple letters of support from neighbors of Burnham's Field attached to this application are a small indication of the widespread support among community members for this project.

8. Serve a significant number of residents

Burnham's Field serves a large number of city residents, especially children and families. On a warm, sunny afternoon, there are often 100 people in the field at any time, playing on the playgrounds, basketball courts and softball fields, walking the paved path, or playing soccer in the field. It's not uncommon when T-ball or other leagues hold Saturday morning games for there to be 200 or more people in Burnham's Field. The field is surrounded by dense center-city neighborhoods, including the lowest Census tracts in Gloucester, so it's worth noting that Burnham's Field provides a play area and open space for many families who don't have yards of their own. Adding lighting, as requested in this submission, will allow more people to continue these activities, especially walking "the loop," into the evening hours.



9. Preserve and expand the range of recreational opportunities available to city residents of all ages and abilities, including those at-risk of obesity as identified through the Get Fit Gloucester! Community Action Plan.

The range of recreational opportunities undertaken by residents at Burnham’s Field is immense. Here are some of the activities spotted at Burnham’s Field: bike riding, jogging, hacky sack, soccer, croquet (yes, croquet!), dog walking, kite flying, baseball, flag football, softball, volleyball, basketball, snow angel making, constellation watching, walking, picnicking, dunk tanking for charity, Frisbee throwing, lacrosse, rollerblading, stroller-pushing, skateboarding, sidewalk chalk drawing and scooter-riding.

It’s never been more important to encourage kids and families to play outside and exercise. In Gloucester, 35.3 percent of children are classified as obese or overweight, 3 percentage points higher than the state average, according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Completing the Burnham’s Field “loop” will encourage more kids (and adults) to walk, bike, rollerblade, jog, scooter and skateboard in a safe way close to where many of them live.

10. Promote recreational activities.

As noted in point 9 above, completing the paved “loop” will encourage more children (and adults) to do the circuit around Burnham’s Field – on foot, bike, skateboard, scooter, roller skates, etc. – in a way that protects them from oncoming cars on Burnham Street. Adding three lights to the five lights currently in Burnham’s Field will encourage more recreational activities and more use of the field into the evening hours. Moreover, continuing the renovation of Burnham’s Field will encourage more recreational activity by sending a message to the hundreds of children and families that use the field that Burnham’s is a safe, welcoming place to come exercise and play.



11. Maximize the use of land already owned by city

It’s amazing to think that Burnham’s Field was once a landfill where truckloads of fill from East Gloucester and elsewhere in the city were dumped. (Part of the funding for Phase 1 of the Burnham’s Field renovation came from a Mass. Department of Environmental Protection project for former landfills). Today the field is a hub of recreational activity for children and families with playgrounds, swings, ballfields, benches, basketball courts, and 40 raised-bed community garden plots. Talk about maximizing the use of city-owned land!

What community need(s) does this project serve? If the project serves multiple needs and populations, please describe them. If the project serves a population that is currently underserved, please describe.

Burnham’s Field draws children and families from all over Gloucester but particularly from the dense neighborhoods surrounding the field in the center of the City. The City’s lowest-income Census tracts are in the downtown area near Burnham’s Field. The tract that houses Burnham’s Field has a poverty rate of 16.2%, much higher than the overall rate of 11.6% in Massachusetts, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2014 American Community Survey. In addition to housing a high percentage of low-income families, the neighborhood surrounding Burnham’s Field is densely populated, with many of its houses and apartments lacking outdoor space or private yards. A January 2012 clinical report in *Pediatrics* looking at the role of play in child development with a focus on children in poverty noted that outdoor recreational areas are particularly important to give families without yards a place to play and exercise. The report says for under-resourced children to reach their highest potential, we must recognize the importance of lifelong benefits that children gain from play.

Gavin Jenkins, an assistant professor at the University of Alabama Birmingham, has researched play areas in low-income neighborhoods. “Studies have shown that access to safe, well-designed parks provides health benefits to children,” Jenkins said. Amy Maher, who co-authored a study with Jenkins, said, “Improving parks and playgrounds would encourage families to use the play spaces, and that in turn would give children more access to active play, which is central to child development and social, emotional, cognitive, and physical well-being.”

As noted above, in addition to outdoor spaces being crucial to child development, they are essential for children’s health. Gloucester’s childhood obesity rate is over 35%, nearly 3 percentage points higher than the state average, as noted in point 9 above. Obesity trends can be turned around through increased opportunities for physical activity, but our children need safe, clean, easily accessible spaces in which to be active. Burnham’s Field is the largest and most accessible playground and outdoor green space available to the residents of central Gloucester.



What specific guarantees will assure the long-term preservation of the project? Describe the nature and level of community support for the project.

The City has been instrumental in facilitating the renovation of Burnham’s Field so far but neighbors of the field recognize that long-term preservation of the field depends on the community’s commitment to keeping it safe and welcoming. Neighbors have formed the Burnham’s Field Community Garden, for example, that is now in its sixth year, with 20 raised bed garden plots and a partnership with the Backyard Growers. Across the field behind the Yellow Sub sandwich shop, another 20-plot community garden has been managed by the West Parish school community while the students were temporarily staying in St. Ann’s school but will be available for other neighbors to manage this fall, creating another group of residents with a stake in the field’s protection. Neighbors have also created The Friends of Burnham’s Field, which is organized under the Gloucester Fund, a registered 501 c(3) organization, to manage fundraising and other activities. The group has collected money for new trees, for example, which will be planted this spring. (The Friends have a Facebook page with 664 Likes that frequently uses the hashtag #ItsOurField to highlight the need for neighbors to help the City protect Burnham’s Field.) Still other groups of neighbors have organized clean-ups of the field and even a bike parade. In sum, Burnham’s Field now has a wide base of active supporters in the community that, coupled with the City’s support, bodes well for continued momentum and improvement.

How will the success of this project be measured?

The success of the CPA Act investment so far (and those of other funders) in Burnham’s Field can be captured by the continued use of the field by hundreds of children and families. That enjoyment of the field would be increased by the completion of the paved “Loop” and the addition of lights to make the field safer and more welcoming in the evening.

Is ongoing maintenance and upkeep required? If yes, please explain how this will be accomplished.

This Bringing Back Burnham’s Field – Phase 2 project involves the extension of an existing paved pathway and the addition of three lights so the maintenance burden is minimal. As mentioned above, neighbors hold organized

clean-ups of the field – some impromptu ones by individuals and others well-organized clean-ups that involve large groups. Neighbors have taken to erasing graffiti that pops up on a periodic basis, too. Still, we recognize that Burnham’s Field, due to its heavy use and enjoyment by kids and families – a good thing – requires routine maintenance by the DPW so we request if the CPC is amenable that \$1,000 of this \$55,000 grant application be dedicated to DPW maintenance for the field. Mark Cole, assistant DPW director, has endorsed this idea and offered a letter of support for this application. (see Appendix – Letters of support)

Project Budget:

BUDGET FORM

SOURCES OF FUNDING		
Source	Amount	
Community Preservation Act Fund	\$55,000	
*Note – The Burnham’s Field renovation effort overall has obtained funding from numerous sources, as noted in the Project Summary above, including Community Development Block Grants, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, a Mass. in Motion grant, and private donations.		
Total Project Funding for this phase	\$55,000	
PROJECT EXPENSES		
Expense	Amount	Please indicate which expenses will be funded by CPA Funds:
Grade and install paved path		
- \$36 per foot at 370 feet	\$13,320	x
- Paved path contingency	\$1,680	x
Lights		
- \$11,000 per light	\$33,000	x
- 500 feet of trench for electrical	\$5,000	x
- Contingency for lights project	\$1,000	x
DPW – help with maintenance	\$1,000	x
Total Project Expenses	\$55,000	
*Note: Cost estimates are from Heimlich Landscaping and Construction, the company that added the lights and built the paved path in Burnham’s Field.		

PROJECT SCHEDULE

	Activity	Estimated Date
Project Start Date:	Break ground on the section of the paved path inside the fence along Burnham Street and dig the trenches for the electrical for the three lights	March 2017
50% Completion Stage:	Finish grading the section of the paved path and complete laying the wiring for the lights	April 2017
Project Completion Date:	Pave the path and erect the lights	May 2017

APPENDIX: Sample Media Coverage

Gloucester Daily Times

March 9, 2016

“My View: Bringing Back Burnham’s Field”



(Courtesy photo) Daniella Orlando and Ruby McEhenny at the new Burnham’s Field playground.

It wasn't long ago that families in downtown Gloucester were afraid for their kids to play in Burnham's Field, the 7-acre playground and ball field across the street from St. Ann's church. And with good reason.

Graffiti, trash, drug use and other sketchy behavior made it a scary place, especially for children. The field hadn't had a major rehabilitation in 30 years and had a deservedly bad reputation. It was rundown, dark and dirty.

Today, Burnham's Field is a downtown success story. Neighbors and the city of Gloucester have joined to revitalize the field, building two new playgrounds (one for younger kids and one for older kids), a paved sidewalk to walk around and through the field, two new community gardens, new lighting for walking at night, revamped basketball courts, new softball backstops and bleacher seat covers, and new trees.

The renovations have brought new families to the field -- including many low-income downtown families who don't have yards of their own. Senior citizens from Sheedy Park take walks on the new paved path and on most days, the field is full of "kids" of all ages playing soccer, baseball, football or on the playgrounds. It's by no means perfect and there's still plenty of work to do but by renovating Burnham's Field -- the largest open space and playground in central Gloucester -- we've sent the message that in Gloucester, open spaces and playing outside matter.

The improvements at Burnham's Field wouldn't have been possible without the help of Gloucester's Community Preservation Committee, which has approved \$177,000 to help pay for the renovations. (That money has been used to raise other grants, too) Many people don't know much about our city's Community Preservation Act. In 2008, Gloucester residents, like other towns across Massachusetts, voted to approve a 1 percent property tax surcharge (the state kicks in money, too). The money is used to buy or improve historic buildings, playgrounds, affordable housing and open spaces. Nine Gloucester residents make up the Community Preservation Committee that has the difficult job of approving the projects. The committee includes people from the city's Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Historic Commission, Housing Authority, and Open Space and Recreation Committee, in addition to four "at-large" members.

The Community Preservation Committee has helped make possible more than 60 projects in Gloucester since 2010, affecting nearly every resident of our city in some way. From improving our senior housing apartments at Central Grammar on Dale Avenue and Sheedy Park on Pleasant Street to renovating our sports fields at the high school's Newell Stadium and Mattos Field at Veterans School. And from improving the exterior of Gloucester City Hall to preserving Gloucester's heritage by renovating the schooners Adventure and Phyllis A. The list goes on. The Gloucester dog park. The Gloucester skate park at O'Maley Middle School. The Gloucester Writers' Center. Cape Ann Museum. The new Rocky Neck Art Association building. All improved with help from Gloucester's Community Preservation Act.

For those of us downtown residents who live near Burnham's Field, the benefits are obvious every day as the weather warms and we head into spring. In a field where neighbors once feared to go, on any given day now the basketball courts are full of players. The playgrounds teem with kids. The new pathway is abuzz with walking families and bike-riding kids. The field is full of dog walkers and soccer players. And people are no longer afraid. There's still a lot of work to do but together the city and residents who care about Burnham's Field, with a big helping hand from Gloucester's Community Preservation Act, are bringing Burnham's back.

Cape Ann Beacon
May 12, 2014
"Taking Back Burnham's Field"
By Jason Brisbois



The Community Garden at Burnham's Field will soon be joined by other upgrades at the park.

GLOUCESTER

While changes have been made to Burnham's Field in Gloucester over the past few years thanks to the volunteer efforts of community members and city officials, an even more drastic transformation awaits the open space.

Thanks to funding from the Community Development Block Grant, Community Preservation Committee and the Department of Environmental Protection, major renovations are underway for the field located bordered by Pleasant Street, Shepherd Street, Burnham Street and Allen Street. A groundbreaking ceremony was held on May 3 at Burnham's Field to mark the beginning of the work that will be done, with members of Friends of Burnham's Field in attendance, along with Mayor Carolyn Kirk, City Councilor Sefatia Romeo Theken, state Rep. Ann-Margaret Ferrante and Ward 2 Councilor Melissa Cox, one of the driving forces behind the revitalization of the field.

"There will be a walking path from the Pleasant Street entrance, all around the field, to the other side," explains Cox. "It will be ADA-compliant, a lit, walking path. There will be a building with restrooms."

Other changes residents can expect to see include a water fountain as a drinking water source, a new entrance and new fences, resurfaced basketball courts and new playground equipment.

"There will be one section for older kids, and there will be a spot for tots that will be fenced in with age-appropriate things like new swing sets, and a splash pad."

Cox estimates the total tally of the funding from grants and donations to be around \$400,000, and adds that work is scheduled to be completed at some point in August. In addition to the aforementioned changes, landscaping elements such as the addition of trees and planters will help provide a new aesthetic to the traditionally more urban location. "This was once known as a bad area, people didn't go there," says Cox. "Basically, with the award of these grants and the renovation of the field, we're telling Gloucester that open space matters, that being outside in recreation matters, and in the words of John McElhenny of Friends of Burnham's Field, 'We're taking Burnham's Field back.'"

Cox is hoping the physical changes can directly lead to a brighter future for the field.

"With the renovation and new equipment, we're hoping families will come back down to Burnham's Field and participate and enjoy it more," says the Ward 2 Councilor. "With more foot traffic there, it's less likely bad people will be there to do bad things. With the lights, it will be easier for the police to patrol."

Even once this current round of changes is complete in August, further changes are planned for Burnham's Field should the funding fall into place. The backstops for the softball fields located at the site are badly in need of repair, but there wasn't enough money in this first round of grants to make the necessary changes to them. Cox is currently working with the Community Development Office to find funding for the backstops, and searching other avenues to do work on the fields themselves.

APPENDIX: Photos

“The Loop” has become a place where many kids learn to ride their bikes.



Completing “The Loop” – The paved path inside the field now dumps kids riding bikes and scooters out of the field onto the sidewalk on Burnham Street, a busy road. Completing the paved path “Loop” inside the fence will make it safer to ride, skate and job around Burnham’s Field.

April 12, 2016

Community Preservation Committee

c/o The Community Development Department

3 Pond Road

Gloucester, MA 01930

Re: Letter in support of the CPA application for Burnham's Field

To the Committee:

As the city councilor for Gloucester for Ward 2, where Burnham's Field is located, I strongly and happily offer my support for the use of Community Preservation Act funding to complete the renovation of Burnham's Field.

I have been involved with the renovations of Burnham's Field for the last five years and have seen the significant positive effect it has had on the residents of downtown Gloucester. Burnham's Field used to be a place where kids and families were afraid to go. Now it is filled with activity – people playing sports, walking their dogs, playing on the playgrounds, tending their community garden plots, talking on the benches, jogging around the paved path.

The renovation of Burnham's Field, the largest open space and ballfield in downtown Gloucester, has been a model partnership between the City and the neighbors. The previous generous investment by the Community Preservation Committee has paid off with lasting, real improvements that provide benefits every day to Ward 2 residents, including many low-income residents who don't have yards of their own to play in. Burnham's Field has been a model investment by the CPC that has helped "bring back" a key park in the heart of Gloucester.

This CPA application would "complete" renovations envisioned in Phase 1 of the Burnham's Field renovation project, including completing the paved path inside the fence along Burnham Street and adding three lights to make the field safer at night. I ask for your support of this very worthy project.

Thank you,



Melissa Cox

Ward 2 City Councilor, Gloucester

Public Works
28 Poplar Street
Gloucester, MA 01930



TEL 978-281-9785
FAX 978-281-3896
mcole@gloucester-ma.gov

CITY OF GLOUCESTER

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

TO: John McElhenny
FR: Mark Cole, Assistant Director, Public Works
DT: April 13, 2016
SUBJ: CPA Project at Burnham's Field

This letter is to notify the CPA committee that the DPW is in support of the proposal to complete the renovation of Burnham's Field by finishing the paved sidewalk walking loop and adding three lights to the side of the field that was left out in the previous project. This projects will enhance the safety of the walking path by installing a section that runs inside the fence along Burnham Street instead of pushing walkers out onto the sidewalk along Burnham Street. The additional lighting will make it safer for walkers in the evening hours.

The DPW requests that some type of funding program for maintenance be established to assist the DPW with the future maintenance of Burnham's Field. This project, along with the first project, has greatly enhance the look and safety of Burnham's Field. The new restrooms, the new water pad, walkways and lights will all need attention at some point in the future. Any funding for this maintenance that can be provided outside of the DPW budget would be greatly appreciated.

April 13, 2016

Community Preservation Committee

c/o The Community Development Department

3 Pond Road

Gloucester, MA 01930

Re: Letter to support the CPA application for Burnham's Field

To the Committee:

My wife and I own a home with our kindergarten-age daughter on Allen Street in Gloucester, next to Burnham's Field. We are members of the Burnham's Field Community Garden and our daughter has grown up playing in the field. We walk our dog every day in the field.

Since Burnham's Field was renovated in the last few years, it has become a more welcoming place for kids and families. On a warm day you can see 100 to 200 people in the field playing soccer, basketball and softball, playing on the playgrounds, or walking and riding on the new paved pathways. It's by no means perfect but the renovations to the field have made our neighborhood in downtown Gloucester a better place to live and raise a family.

One thing that would make Burnham's Field better would be to finish the paved sidewalk "loop" inside the fence along the Burnham Street side of the field. Our daughter learned to ride her bike on that path, and it's become known as the place where Ward 2 kids learn to ride bikes and roller skates. Senior citizens from Sheedy Park (on Pleasant Street) walk "the loop," too. The paved path makes a full loop around the field except along Burnham Street, where it dumps outside the fence and connects with an old, cracked sidewalk close to traffic. (The initial renovation of Burnham's Field took this step as a cost-saving measure to have enough money for the playgrounds and other improvements.)

This route makes it difficult for young kids to ride their bikes in a complete loop around the field and for many seniors to make the loop on walkers because of the danger of slipping off the sidewalk into an oncoming car. I hope the committee will consider funding the completion of the paved path to make Burnham's Field an even more kid-friendly place for families like ours to play.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ambie Orlando', written in a cursive style.

Ambie Orlando

21 Allen Street, Gloucester

April 13, 2016

Community Preservation Committee
c/o The Community Development Department
3 Pond Road
Gloucester, MA 01930

Re: Letter in support of the CPA application for Burnham's Field

To the Committee:

I grew up across the street from Burnham's Field and now live in a house with my husband and two children on Pleasant Street overlooking the field. I can say with firsthand experience how much Burnham's Field has improved in the last few years. Our son and daughter play all the time on the new playground in Burnham's Field, ride their bikes on the new paved paths, and play sports with their cousins and friends.

But though the new facilities in the field are wonderful, the changes go far beyond the new backstops, benches, jungle gyms and backboards. Thanks in large part to the improvements in Burnham's Field, our downtown area has become more of a neighborhood than it was before. My family joined 19 other families in the Burnham's Field Community Garden. Last Saturday, we cleared an area in the garden and put down peastone to prepare for new picnic tables and benches while my kids picked up litter around the field. A few months ago, neighbors around Burnham's Field walked the neighborhood and sang Christmas carols. Every June, we have block parties where neighbors – some who've lived here for 50 years – share food and catch up with each other. The event gets bigger each year as the neighborhood gets closer.

Burnham's Field is at the heart of our neighborhood. The new CPA application would continue the renovation of the field, adding lights to make it safer and making it more family-friendly by completing the paved pathway "loop" (which my kids both use) inside the field to increase safety for kids so they do not need to go on the street side of the fence to complete the loop. Please consider funding this project. It would mean a lot to strengthening our neighborhood.

Thank you,



Debra Salah

Pleasant Street, Gloucester

April 13, 2016

Community Preservation Committee

3 Pond Road

Gloucester, MA 01930

Re: Letter in support of the CPA application for Burnham's Field

To the Committee:

I grew up in Gloucester and have been a Gloucester police officer for 18 years. I'm also a resident of 20-year Liberty Street resident and I live with my wife and young son across the street from Burnham's Field. So I've witnessed the positive changes in Burnham's Field from multiple perspectives – lifelong resident, police officer and parent.

In any park or playground, light and plenty of activity by law-abiding citizens tend to drive away questionable, illegal behavior. On the other hand, dark "dead spaces" in any park or playground tend to attractive illicit, undesirable behavior.

In Burnham's Field, criminal activity overall seems to have declined due to increased police patrols, more attention by neighbors and more positive activities. Still, the bleachers behind the softball backstop on the Liberty Street side of the field sometime attract illegal activity. In a recent example on Sunday, April 10, one man stabbed another man on those bleachers.

Adding a light near those bleachers as part of the next phase of Burnham Field's renovation would add light to the area, allowing police officers to more easily monitor that trouble spot and helping neighbors to spot and report illegal activity.

Thank you,

Clifford Alves, Jr.

Gloucester Police Officer

Liberty Street, Gloucester

