

CITY COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE
Special Budget & Finance Committee Meeting
 Thursday, October 6, 2011 – **5:00 p.m.**
 1st Fl. Council Conference Rm. – City Hall
 CPC Recommendations for CPA Fund Applications 2011
 -Minutes-

Present: Chair, Councilor Steven Curcuro; Vice Chair, Councilor Paul McGeary; Councilor Jacqueline Hardy

Absent: None

Also Present: Kenny Costa; Gregg Cademartori; Deborah Laurie; J. J. Bell; Tom O’Keefe; David Sargent; Sarah Garcia; Charles Crowley

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Kenny Costa informed the Committee of an update on the CPA funds available for FY11 (giving a Committee several handouts placed on file). He informed the Committee that the beginning balance of the CPA account going into FY11 was \$407,692.01. With the FY10 funded projects, at the end of FY11 the fund balance was \$435,249.43. At the end of FY11 there was an appropriation of \$215,000 for the City Hall Restoration Project. \$100,000 came from FY10 funds; and \$115,000 came from the FY11 budget. There is \$546,180 for FY11 budget, and \$115,000 came out of that. They can appropriate now \$431,180 for the projects before the Committee. On the third page of the account balances, there is \$406,453 in projects. **Councilor Curcuro** inquired if they always carry a balance. **Mr. Costa** expressed they carry a balance because of interest income, penalties and fees for late payments; there will always be a little bit of money but not much. He believed there was about \$4,000 extra. For FY11, the City received \$122,041 which is 26.64 of the match. He noted a spread sheet showing all the 143 communities who take part in the CPA program’s awards for this year. In FY10 they got \$118,680; this year they’ll receive \$122,041 on October 15th, which is part of the FY12 budget. The amount they budgeted for FY12 was \$115,725. Last year they had a deficit of \$13,000; and the DOR came in and adjusted their budget at recap time. This money now is part of the \$122,041 award for FY12; they base it on the prior year. **Councilor Curcuro** asked what was the status of legislation at the Statehouse with regard to the easing of certain CPA fund restrictions. **Mr. Costa** passed on information that he’d been told it was too early yet to know. **J.J. Bell**, Co-Chair of the Community Preservation Committee stated spoke to Rep. Ferrante regarding legislation regarding the match bringing it to 75%, currently 50%, which would be an increase for the community. The representative felt cautiously optimistic it could increase. There is talk of building a part of it into the gaming bill where a percentage would go to the CPA to bringing the floor up. They are considering opening up the recreational aspect up for refurbishment as opposed to new acquisition. The only way CPA funds can be used for refurbishment is if a property was previously acquired with CPA funds now as it stands (to use for recreational facilities, for instance).

1. Recommendations from the Community Preservation Committee:

REVIEW OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION APPLICATIONS FOR FY11 ROUND 2 APPROPRIATIONS

A) Gloucester Housing Authority	Sheedy Building Roof Replacement	\$86,453
	Original Funding Request: \$86,453	

The Community Preservation Committee recommended the appropriation of \$86,453 to the Gloucester Housing Authority toward the Sheedy Building roof replacement in order to preserve community housing. The Community Preservation Act spending purpose is to support community housing. **David Holden**, Executive Director representing the Gloucester Housing Authority stated they’re asking for \$86,453 in funds to supplement a grant they are receiving from the State for this project. Built in 1981, the roof now in place is original. This is a single ply membrane roof; the existing 14,751 sq. ft. roof is over 30 years old, having seriously deteriorated and caused the GHA to shutter units due to excessive leaks. He passed around colored photographs of the roof that showed the roof as totally exposed caused by seagulls (made a part of the file). A large portion of the upper part of the roof is now totally exposed. He noted the GHA had a similar situation with the Clark roof, with seagulls doing similar damage. The building has been leaking over the last few years, initially into the fire stairwells, but over the last two years it

has gone into one unit so badly where they are at the point that they've had to shutter the unit and relocate that tenant. The unit is off-line until the roof is fixed. Two other units have minor leaks; and Mr. Holden believed if the roof is not addressed soon, they anticipate having to shutter those two units as well. In the past they've had to rely on competitive grants to do repairs to their properties. Unfortunately, most of their housing stock is in better shape than inner city housing stocks. When they had an emergency they would have to go to Boston to plead their case. They were successful several years ago to get funding to do the Clark roof. This year the State has changed the funding system and will now get an annual allotment to make capital improvements. The initial grant is \$196,154. The total roof replacement cost is \$282,607. They don't feel they can wait any longer to do this project. CPA funds will be used in conjunction with an anticipated \$196,154 State Formula Funding grant for the projected construction costs. The Sheedy Building has 81 elderly housing units who he felt deserved to have a roof over their heads. They have recently changed their maintenance systems and have been working with a roofing company to train their staff to have them maintain the roof going forward. This is a more expensive roof than a single ply roof; but this is what the State has recommended due to the environmental conditions, the height of the building. Seagulls are extremely problematic on flat roofs, particularly the closer you get to the harbor. The Clark roof replacement was done with a similar roof this past year and is working well; seagulls don't seem to like it. On inquiry by **Councilor McGeary**, **Mr. Holden** stated the new roof is multiple ply system and has a 20 year warrantee. The current roof has ballast of pebbles which has many other issues especially seagulls who use pebbles for digestion and nesting materials. It makes the maintenance extremely problematic. On inquiry by **Councilor Curcuro**, **Mr. Holden** informed the Committee the deterioration had been going on for some time but had gotten worse in the past five years. They had hoped to nurse the roof along until the State went to the new system of funding; but its gotten worse over the past year. **Councilor Hardy** asked if this is the worst roof of their projects. **Mr. Holden** stated this is the worst in the senior housing including the ones in Riverdale on Veteran's Way and Patriot Circle (totaling 12 units). Those roofs are duplexes. They're not leaking into the units. At Sheedy they're leaking into three of the 81 units and is the building within all their projects that is the worst. The cumulative damage would be worse. There are other components, as roofs start leaking, such as elevators, etc. that become involved and get damaged. On inquiry of **Councilor Curcuro**, **Mr. Holden** stated they didn't have snow removal issues (on the flat roof) here, but did on the Clark Building or the McPherson Building. **Councilor McGeary** noted the anticipated State formula funding grant. **Mr. Holden** stated that is what they will be receiving. The final number hadn't been committed at the time of the application but it is now assured that is their entire amount for the year. Their board next Wednesday will approve a five-year capital improvement plan. The State had not dealt with the issue for decades but over the last two years they have been able to identified 35 projects totaling \$10 million. They anticipate they'll get less than \$2 million and will look to do worst case scenario projects. **Councilor Hardy** asked how many vacancies they have at Sheedy Park, to which **Mr. Holden** informed the Councilor it was the one unit off line. **Mr. Holden** also expressed that there are rare vacancies. They have 20 days to prepare the units. He anticipates that the census would increase which indicates there is a healthy market in the Cape Ann Area for senior housing. **Councilor Hardy** asked how they would be able to afford to put more elderly housing on line if there is this current funding crunch. **Mr. Holden** stated they have to move to large scale development. They don't have plans to increase their housing by building new units. They work with developers to increase housing stock; and the GHA could reconfigure their housing stock. Most of the units were built in the 1950's, 1960's, built at a time when families were very different. They built a lot of 3 and 4 bedroom units. They need to reconfigure them as there is a desperate need for 1 and 2 bedroom units. They will work with what they have to reshape it to meet the community's needs. They are not including it in their Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) at this time. They do have a seed grant from the federal government from tearing down 10 Taylor Street and are looking to leverage that but don't have a firm plan at this point. **Councilor McGeary** asked on what kind of scale; which **Mr. Holden** stated they'd concentrate on the reconfigurations and density. As far as new development there is more of a trend to collaborate with non-profits to create more units. They need to have a lot of partners to make it work. **Councilor McGeary** thought the reconfiguration would give them a net increase. **Mr. Holden** didn't think that would be the case that there would be shifting of families, within the units. **Councilor Curcuro** asked what they got from the State last year. **Mr. Holden** informed the Councilor there was nothing. **Councilor Curcuro** stated their main thrust right now is to take care of their buildings. He asked why they didn't take care of Taylor Street. **Mr. Holden** stated Taylor Street was a federal program. The grant they got for 10 Taylor Street had to be for rental units. The neighborhood wanted homeownership units. **Councilor Curcuro** stated they could have used CPA funds for that. **Mr. Holden** stated they didn't apply for this funding last year because the roof had deteriorated that greatly in this short time and were anticipating State funding at that time. **Councilor Hardy** asked about the housing stock at Patriot's Circle and did the money come out of the same funding. **Mr. Holden** stated it does; it's State-aided conventional funding. They were originally built for returning WWII veterans. They're using this housing for families, and they're still giving veterans preference. At

this point they don't have active plans to change the configuration at the Patriots Circle. **Councilor Hardy** asked if there was a plan to change to home ownership for any portion of Patriot Circle. **Mr. Holden** was unable to project what would be done in the near future at this point.

B) City of Gloucester Comm. Dev. Little River Stream Habitat & Restoration Project \$15,000
Original Funding Request: \$65,000

The Community Preservation Committee recommended the appropriation of \$15,000 to the City of Gloucester Community Development Department toward legal work and conservation easement in connection with the protection of the wildlife habitat for the Little River in West Gloucester in order to preserve open space. The Community Preservation Act spending purpose for this appropriation is to preserve and protect open space. **Gregg Cademartori**, Planning Director for the City stated that the Community Development and Shellfish Departments staff has been working with the Department of Environmental Restoration on this stream habitat restoration project for the better part of 10 years. Former Councils have supported this project with funding also. The project is located between the City water treatment plant and Wellspring House on Essex Avenue. The project is fully designed and substantial permitting has been completed as a State priority stream restoration project. Many State agencies have been involved with this project over the years. They've identified other grant resources also. Certain elements of the design would be conducted on Wellspring property and require the reworking and purchase of an expanded easement to ensure project success in the long term. The stream/flood plane restoration project within the easement is also an open space/rehabilitation/restoration eligible activity. This CPA request would provide match to several grant programs which would provide the balance of the project funding. The total project budget is \$270,000. When he was presenting to the CPC he informed them that if the \$65,000 was too great, the critical piece was the \$15,000 to resolve the easement issues. They've since learned that some of the project, there is a current easement on the Wellspring House. They want to clarify the boundaries with Wellspring so that it is defined for the project and create an area for a conservation restriction for that portion of the property. They went to a lot of effort to gain the confidence with Wellspring for a collaborative effort. He hoped this would do a lot to address localized flooding, fish passage, which got State agencies involved, the Department of Environmental Restoration. This will also limit some of the flooding on the water treatment plant property also. They're talking of lowering the grade and creating a flood plane to handle the high rain events and a connector. He reviewed his four visualizations and maps of the area on a poster (not made a part of the record but within the application). He noted for **Councilor McGeary** the stream passes under Essex Avenue into Little River. They're trying to create a natural stream channel in this section. **Councilor Hardy** asked if this would impact the fish ladder. **David Sargent**, Shellfish Warden stated this is the improvement they need for Alewife and smelt and provide passage for American eels which are threatened also. **Mr. Cademartori** stated the Wellspring cooperation is good and they have a letter in support from them. The demonstration that this is increasing flood control in the area has helped to gain their support for the project and will improve conditions. **Councilor Hardy** asked if it will involve excavation of paved streets. **Mr. Cademartori** noted a water line connection is proposed to be realigned. He didn't know how invasive it would be but thought it would be on the road's shoulder. There will be a lot of material coming out though. Ideally they have one permit left to accomplish with ConCom. This boundary issue is what is holding this project up. With its resolution, they'll complete permitting this calendar year and apply for funding very soon for fall construction next year. It will depend on the season, how wet it is, during low flow conditions, and be accomplished in less than two months. **Councilor Curcuro** noted the \$15,000 is for the easement clarification. **Mr. Cademartori** stated it is also for acquisition and the City will retain new rights within the easement area. One funding source is the Gulf Maine research. The Department of Ecological Restoration of \$41,000 and there are other federal funds and state grants MA environmental trust. Once they have clarified the issue with Wellspring and their sign on to these applications that will be joining applications with these project entities. They're very confident they can line up the funding sources for construction. There has been great in-kind match and this funding from the CPA will qualify as part of a match. Some don't require 1:1 matching. Because of the other grants they've already gotten, they can apply state to federal entities. This amount of funding as well as some of the utility work for realigning to make the project will make over the project match needed. On inquiry by **Councilor McGeary**, **Mr. Cademartori** stated there are some big grants available for river restoration. Anything they file in the coming weeks and months will come before the Council, and they'll look closely at the matching component and what they've done to satisfy that. **Councilor Hardy** asked if there would be conflict of timing to lower Essex Avenue with the sewer piping. **Mr. Cademartori** stated this water project is fairly discrete. That is one of the things they'll have to coordinate with the DPW. The work is fairly confined off of Essex Avenue. He didn't think it would cause a situation for that project in the future.

C) **Essex County Greenbelt Assoc. Tompson Street Reservation Gateway \$120,000**
Original Funding Request: \$170,000

The Community Preservation Committee recommended the appropriation of \$120,000 to the Essex County Greenbelt Association (ECGA) towards their purchase of the 6.75 acres Tompson Street Gateway site in West Gloucester in order to preserve open space, upon the condition that the ECGA conveys a conservation restriction to the City of Gloucester or its designee. The Community Preservation Act spending purpose for this appropriation is to preserve open space. **David Santomenna**, Director of Conservation for the ECGA showed the Committee a topographical map of the Tompson Street Gateway site (not made a part of the record) stated the proposed project would preserve and acquire a 6.75 acres of land on Bray Street that directly abuts the ECGA 300-acre Tompson Street Reservation, a well-used property in West Gloucester with over 5 miles of trails. He reviewed the topographical map. The acquisition of this parcel will enhance the Tompson Street Reservation by improving access and expanding the trail network. It has no formal access point or gateway at this time. It is a much underutilized reservation. They've wanted to bring it to its full potential. A public parking area, kiosk and trail head as well as appropriate signage indicating public accessibility would be created on the Bray Street property. A time-sensitive project, the Tompson Street Gateway is under threat of development, being currently owned by a local developer and having been approved as part of a larger, 4-lot approval-not-required (ANR) subdivision. Preservation of this parcel protects wildlife habitat indicated as supporting core habitat on the MA Biomap MassGIS data layer and water resources that would be detrimentally impacted by development. ECGA has the property under agreement through the end of 2011, at a price of \$220,000 (appraised at \$250,000); the total project cost being \$241,250. Their initial request was \$170,000 and the CPC is recommending \$120,000; a state grant application is pending for the Conservation Contract program of \$50,000; the balance they're seeking to raise through private contributions and through a foundation. The brochure attached to the topographical map that they used for mailers is used for fundraising efforts and are encouraged by the response to their campaign. If they don't get the state grant their fundraising target goes up to \$100,000. Greenbelt has a revolving fund they can use on an interim basis and tap into that. **Councilor Curcuru** asked what the timetable is about accepting and spending the CPA money. **Mr. Costa** stated they discussed the contracts and whether they should be two or three years. **Mr. Santomenna** stated if they don't have the money by the end of the year they won't be in a position to use the funds. They'll either buy or not buy the property. If they go beyond the end of the year they'll have to ask for an extension. The City will be granted a conservation restriction which is a perpetual document and is reviewed and approved by the City and State. Greenbelt would retain the stewardship and maintenance for the property in perpetuity but it also comes off the tax base. **Mr. Bell** stated it would be for the City or its designee. **Councilor Hardy** asked what are the pros and cons of the City holding the conservation restriction. **Ms. Garcia** stated they would want the EGBA to manage the property. For the City they would prefer this arrangement. **Councilor McGeary** stated the City is the enforcement power because they hold it. **Mr. Santomenna** stated it has an existing system of trails on it and expect to create a parking area on the Bray Street frontage for about 8 vehicles which is standard. There would be signage and interpretative materials at that gateway spot. **Councilor Hardy** asked how many trails by miles they have protected by conservation restrictions. **Mr. Santomenna** didn't quite know. **Mr. Cademartori** noted as part of the effort going on in North Gloucester, there are mapping efforts but they'd have to compile that figure. One of the issues this touches on with the private conservation land, some do diverge off their property onto private property that if one goes out there right now it is very apparent where the trails are and meander off into private lands and back to the conservation land. It would be a good number to get. **Ms. Garcia** stated they've identified in the Open Space plan and their need to better manage it. The need is to manage the gateways where access has been difficult. It is to keep the connections going. She was pleased by this project as it is a beautiful piece of property and important to Gloucester's history. **Charles Crowley**, Open Space Committee stated there are overused properties in the City also. They don't have places for people to park. More properties like this will help to alleviate overused properties; a project such as this dovetails into the open space plan. **Councilor Hardy** noted at Poles Hill there is parking there and would maintain the parking area maintenance be taken care of by the ECGA. **Mr. Santomenna** stated they would. The parking lot would be gravel, not paved and would require filing with ConCom. They're upstream from any water body. **Councilor Hardy** discussed with Mr. Santomenna their kiosk for information. **Mr. Bell** noted this is a dramatic piece of property to which **Mr. Santomenna** concurred.

A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana C. Jorgenson
Clerk of Committees

DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING: