

Community Preservation Act (CPA) Public Hearing – Allocations

July 27, 2017

Meeting minutes

Committee members present: Chandra Harrington, Susan Schlesinger, Kevin Foster, Ellen Shachter, David Kale, Lisa Peterson

Staff present: Taha Jennings, Chris Cotter, Charlie Sullivan, Jennifer Letourneau,

Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager, and Chair of the Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC) opened the meeting. She explained that eligible projects must fall into one of three categories: historic preservation, open space, and affordable housing. Also, at least 10% of the total Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding for that year must be allocated to each category. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to hear from the public about recommended funding allocation percentages for the categories of historic preservation, affordable housing and open space. There was a meeting in June to hear about specific project ideas. She went on to state that the record for submitting projects would be closed. It is anticipated that the CPA handbook, with information and recommendations on projects and funding will be available in early September 2017. On September 12, 2017 the CPAC will vote on funding recommendations to be submitted to the City Council, and a City Council vote on FY18 CPA funding is planned for September 18, 2017.

The meeting was then opened for public comment.

Public Comment

Cathie Zusy – Support funding allocations of 60% for affordable housing, 20% for historic preservation, and 20% for open space projects. There is a need for housing but also to invest in open spaces. Historic buildings also protect the character of the City. Would like to continue investment at Magazine Beach Park and will be requesting \$47.33K this fiscal year. Work will also be done to create an ADA accessible canoe launch and tree cutting and pruning work which is considered part of the park infrastructure. A two to one match in funding is anticipated from the State Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

Silas Weiner – Member of Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association (CNA). Recommend 60% for affordable housing, 20% for historic preservation and 20% for open space. Important to get people out in the community together, and places to access nature. Need to continue to invest in open space, can't do just the minimum.

John Henn – Support continuation of 80% for affordable housing, 10% for historic preservation and 10% for open space. See a strong relationship between housing and historic preservation. However there is a lot of amount of money in City going towards historic preservation of private homes.

Jean Hannan - Support 80% allocation for affordable housing, 10% for historic preservation, and 10% for open space. Many generations of family have lived in Cambridge. Means a lot when thinking about the

meaning of preservation. Want to stay in Cambridge and be able to enjoy my neighbors both rich and poor. Need housing for all income levels.

Peter Daly – Executive Director of Homeowners Rehab Inc. (HRI). Submitted a petition signed by over 200 residents supporting an 80% allocation to affordable housing. Affordable housing is where the need is. There are over 3,000 Cambridge households on the recently opened Section 8 list. The market for housing remains hot, and construction costs are high. Further, the Washington political climate will likely have an impact on the Section 8 program as a result of HUD funding, and negatively impact the value of tax credits.

Deborah Ruhe – Executive Director of Just-A-Start (JAS) and Cambridge resident. Support 80% allocation to affordable housing. Enjoy living in a city that values economic diversity. It is important to have the flexibility that comes with affordable housing funds, which are needed now more than ever.

Peter Munkenbeck – Just-A-Start and Cambridge resident on and off for 45 years. When I originally came to Cambridge most neighborhoods had a range of incomes represented. Everyone had the capacity to rent a house at decent price. Now it has become nearly impossible. Cambridge is distinguished because of the amount of resources dedicated to affordable housing, but still need to swim against the current when it comes to providing housing opportunities. Recommend allocating 80% to affordable housing which is the most allowed, with 10% to historic preservation and 10% to open space.

Cheryl Ann Pizza-Zeoli - Recommend 80% (maximum amount) allocation to affordable housing. Shows that the City is truly committed to save expiring use units and Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) housing. Thousands of applicants on CHA waitlists. Federal policies are not helpful. An 80% allocation demonstrates Cambridge policy priorities.

Tina Alu – Associate Director of Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee (CEOC) and Cambridge resident. Recommend 80% allocation to affordable housing and submitted a petition. CPA is the main source of affordable housing funding for the City. It's critical to have resources available when opportunities like Vail Court come up. Tenants at Fresh Pond are worried. Funding like this is critical to keeping Cambridge diverse. Impressed with what City has done at parks with CPA allocations, but still see homelessness in the City.

Jennifer Ramsey – Born and raised in Cambridge and want to stay. Couldn't do it without programs like Just-A-Start. Family all attended the same elementary school. Just-A-Start helped family get needed medical care. Love it here and wouldn't want my kids to have to go anywhere else.

Hasan Rashid – View affordable housing and US history with equal importance. Never understood how the allocation was broken up. Would like to see 33 ¹/₃% allocated to each category.

James Williamson - Always figured it was a foregone conclusion that the allocation would be 80% to affordable housing, 10% historic preservation and 10% open space, but now feel the need to speak. Neighbors have done an amazing job at Magazine Beach but disagree with allocating less than 80% to affordable housing. Resident preference on affordable housing waiting list includes people that don't live in Cambridge and that should be clarified. Recently, the City has used some general revenue funds for affordable housing which may provide more options. Perhaps increase the range of people who are eligible, including people with somewhat higher incomes.

John Hixson – Lived in Cambridge since 1969 and worked in the affordable housing field. There used to be two opportunities to get tax credits. Now there is only one round. Should maintain allocations of 80% to affordable housing, 10% to historic preservation, and 10% to open space.

Margaret Donnelly Moran – CHA, recommend 80% allocation to affordable housing, 10% historic preservation, and 10% to open space. The waitlist for housing is very long. Current residents have no place to go, and as they climb the economic ladder it can open additional opportunities for others. CPA housing allocation critical to success (petition submitted).

Nancy Porcairo – Community Coordinator at Peabody Terrace. Recommend 80% allocation to affordable housing, 10% to historic preservation and 10% to open space. People using shelters check status daily. There are residents at 402 Rindge Avenue that would like to move out into something bigger, but can't because of a lack of access.

Glenna Wyman - Grateful to have affordable housing in Cambridge. Should keep allocations of 80% to affordable housing, 10% to historical preservation, and 10% open space, which allows expanded options.

Closing and next steps

Lisa Peterson indicated the record will be closed at the end of the night for online project requests. People may still submit written and emailed recommendations for allocations. Meeting attendees were reminded that the next meeting will be September 12, 2017 on project proposals and recommendations to, Council. In regards to the project proposals, it was noted that they will be scanned and posted on the City's CPA website. The petitions that have been submitted will also be summarized and posted on the web. A handbook with FY18 allocation recommendations is anticipated to be available by the September meeting.