

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

The Community Preservation Committee (“CPC”) is comprised of nine Weston residents. The Historical Commission, the Conservation Commission, the Weston Affordable Housing Trust, and the Planning Board each designate a representative. The Select Board appoints a member to represent parkland interests, and the Moderator appoints four at-large members. The CPC is charged with studying the “needs, possibilities, and resources” of the Town regarding community preservation and with making recommendations to Town Meeting regarding the appropriation of Community Preservation Act (“CPA” or the “Act”) funds, which the Town receives pursuant to Article 31 of the Town By-laws and the CPA. The CPA (M.G.L. Chapter 44B) provides for a participating municipality to adopt and dedicate a property tax surcharge of up to 3% to specified community preservation purposes, with the State matching a portion of local receipts (18%, 21%, and 26% State match in FY18, FY19, and FY20, respectively). Weston surcharges at the maximum 3% with two exemptions allowed under the Act:

1. The first \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of residential real property is exempt.
2. Residential property owned and occupied by any person who qualifies for low-income housing (earning less than 80% Area Median Income) or low or moderate-income senior housing (earning less than 100% of Area Median Income and 60 years of age or older).

In FY20, the CPA surcharge to the median Weston homeowner was \$432.20.

All citizens are welcome to attend meetings of the CPC. Meetings and agendas are posted to the Town’s website.

CPA Funding Requirements and Town Meeting Action

Proposals must fit within the requirements of the Act. The CPA requires that communities spend, or set aside for future spending, a minimum of 10% of annual CPA receipts on each of the following three categories:

- 1) open space including recreational purposes;
- 2) historic resources; and
- 3) community housing.

The remaining 70% of funds may be allocated to any one or a combination of these uses at the discretion of the CPC and subject to the approval of Town Meeting. Any monies not appropriated remain in the CPA Fund (“Fund”) for future allocation. Up to 5% of revenues received in the current year can be spent on CPA-related administrative expenses. Unspent administrative appropriations return to the Fund at fiscal year-end. CPA money cannot be spent on routine maintenance, nor can it be used to supplant funds customarily included in the regular Town budget. A permanent deed restriction must be placed on any "real property interest" acquired using CPA funds.

The CPC is an advisory group only; projects, except those funded with CPC administrative funds, must be approved by a Town Meeting vote. Borrowing for CPA purposes requires a 2/3 vote; appropriations from the Fund for all other purposes require a simple majority vote. Communities may borrow against the local CPA surcharge revenue they can reasonably expect to receive under the CPA in subsequent years. Bonds issued under the CPA are general obligation bonds of the Town, and in the event that CPA local surcharge revenues are insufficient to pay off the principal and interest, these obligations must be met with other municipal funds.

Eligible Projects

With the exception of activities funded with CPA administrative funds, in order for a project to be deemed eligible under the CPA, a project must fit in a “Yes” box below:

	Open Space	Historic Resources	Recreational Land	Community Housing
Acquire	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Create	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Preserve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support	No	No	No	Yes
Rehabilitate and/or Restore	Yes, if acquired or created with CPA funds	Yes	Yes	Yes, if acquired or created with CPA funds

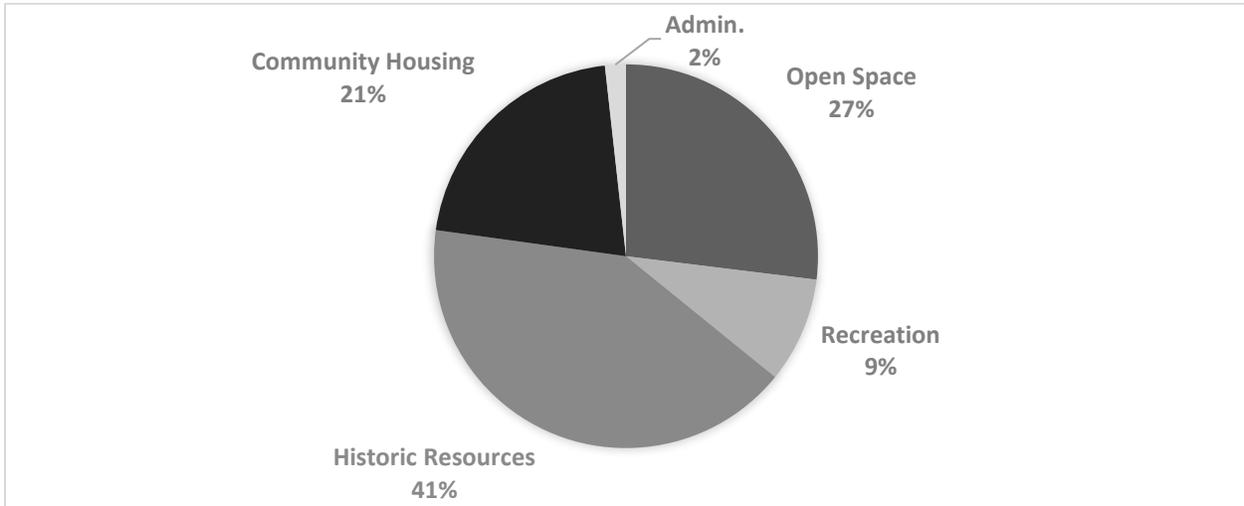
Activities funded with CPA administrative funds must either fund CPC operations or further an eligible CPA activity (e.g., a property appraisal to determine the price of an open space acquisition).

CPA Fund Status

On June 30, 2020 (fiscal year ending 2020), the Fund a balance of approximately \$3.2 million. Since its inception in 2002, the Fund has had revenues of \$48.5 million, project appropriations of \$46.7 million, appropriations returned to the Fund of \$2.4 million, and administrative expenses of \$941 thousand. Revenue sources through fiscal 2020 include nearly \$31 million in local property tax surcharge, \$14.2 million in state match (one-year lag), over \$3.3 million in investment income, and \$33 thousand in donations and other receipts. On a life to date basis through fiscal 2020, the Town has received an aggregate state match of 46%.

On June 30, 2021 (fiscal year ending 2021), the Fund is projected to have a balance of approximately \$4.6 million. This figure is derived from fiscal 2021 estimated revenues of nearly \$2.9 million (comprised of \$2.3 million in property tax surcharge and \$464,000 matched by the state, estimated at 21%, and a small amount of investment income) and assumes that all of the \$272,000 in project requests before Town Meeting are approved. The projected fiscal 2021 Fund balance includes debt service on Case Estates, Brook School Apartments, the Old Library/Weston AIC, 500 Wellesley St., and the Josiah Smith Tavern totaling approximately \$1 million and an administrative expense reserve of \$136,000. Notably, the fiscal 2021 projected balance **does not** include project requests that might be presented to a Special Town Meeting in the fall of 2020.

The following pie chart shows net appropriations of CPA funds by category through fiscal 2020 including the principal portion of committed debt service:



Examples of projects receiving CPA funding include:

- Open Space:** Purchase of 4.5-acre Dupont/Nichols parcel; purchase of 23-acre Sunday Woods parcel; preservation of 80 Acre Conservation Area (rehabilitation of Hobbs Pond Dam); Charles River invasive species removal; purchase of 62.5-acre Case Estates; and purchase of 13.3-acre 500 Wellesley St. parcel
- Recreation:** Construction of Varsity Softball Field; rehabilitation of Middle School, High School, Brook School, and Cherrybrook Road Tennis Courts; rehabilitation of High School Field 3 and Burt Field; rehabilitation of Dickson Riding Rings; rehabilitation of Community Gardens; construction of Brown/Winter St. sidewalk; construction of Lamson Playground; and design and construction of Rail Trail amenities
- Historic Resources:** Rehabilitation of Fiske Law Office and Melone Homestead; purchase of historic preservation restrictions on 809-811 Boston Post Rd., 823 Boston Post Rd., 118 Conant Rd., 171 North Ave., 699 Boston Post Rd., 88 North Ave., 55 Coburn Rd., 71 Lexington St., and 120 Summer St.; preservation of historic Town documents (Town Archives construction); exterior preservation/restoration of the Josiah Smith Tavern and the Old Library; Town Center improvement study; rehabilitation of the Old Library into an arts and technology learning center ("Weston AIC"); and rehabilitation of the Josiah Smith Tavern.

Community Housing: Construction of Brook School Apartments Building D (13 units); construction of 23 Pine St. (2 units); construction/rehabilitation of Warren Ave. property (7 units); rehabilitation of 126-128 Viles St. (2 units); and the Affordable Homeownership Opportunity Program

Specific Warrant Recommendations

At the March 23rd online public hearing and the April 27th online meeting, the CPC unanimously approved requests for CPA funds under the following Warrant Articles:

- Article 21 – Rehabilitation/Restoration of Historic Town Cemeteries (\$140,000)
- Article 22 – Regional Housing Services Office & Housing Trust Staff Support (\$32,000)
- Article 23 - COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program (\$100,000)

Members of the Community Preservation Committee

Stephen Ober, Chair	Margaret Dorna, Parkland Representative
Nina Danforth	Kenneth Newberg, Affordable Housing Trust
Nathalie Thompson	Steven Wagner, Historical Commission
J. Barry Tubman	Susan Zacharias, Planning Board