

ARTICLE 24

Report and Recommended Vote of the Community Preservation Act Committee Special Town Meeting November 16, 2020

The CPA Committee postponed three projects approved for FY2021 appropriation at Annual Town Meeting this year, in order to only present the most time-sensitive projects at the one-night meeting at Peirce Field on June 15. Those projects, all proposed by the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), are now before this Special Town Meeting.

Minuteman Bikeway Planning (\$80,000)

The Minuteman Bikeway is one of the most frequently traveled non-motorized corridors in the state and is a vital transportation and recreation resource for Arlington residents. Despite its many benefits, Arlington residents have increasingly cited concerns with the Bikeway, including safety, lighting, and points of access. The DCPD will conduct a comprehensive planning project to develop a shared community vision and action plan to consider needs and opportunities related to Bikeway access, safety of users, shared mobility, placemaking and public art, waysides and staying areas, and connections to adjacent and nearby recreation areas.

The study will develop community goals, priorities, and an implementation plan. The implementation plan will prioritize a series of infrastructure upgrades and develop corresponding conceptual designs with preliminary cost estimates that are actionable, and serve as the basis for future grant applications.

The DPCD will work with members of the Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee on this project as well as other stakeholders, such as East Arlington Livable Streets, and Walking in Arlington. Bikeway users, adjacent property owners, and Arlington residents will be invited to engage in focus groups, design charrettes, and public meetings throughout the planning process.

Communitywide Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey (\$60,000)

This project will produce a comprehensive inventory of known archaeological resources in Arlington and identify areas of high potential for further planning and preservation. It is a continuation of CPA-funded historic resources work that identified a number of undocumented archaeologically sensitive historic and cultural landscapes, including Mill Brook, industrial areas near Spy Pond, Elizabeth's Island, and town-owned recreational areas. This project will lay the groundwork for potential additional protections of these historic assets, if necessary. Untold layers of Arlington's history lie beneath the surface, and without focused effort they are likely to remain unknown for many years to come, perhaps when it is too late.

DPCD is applying for matching grant funds from the Massachusetts Historical Commission for this project. If approved, these funds will significantly offset the survey costs and reduce the CPA funding burden by as much as half (\$30,000). Any unused CPA dollars appropriated to this project will return to the local CPA fund for future CPA projects.

Documentation of Historic Municipal Resources (\$35,200)

Before the town can pursue grant funding to help preserve historic town buildings and outdoor spaces, it must engage in a specialized, detailed documentation process to inventory each property. This project will fund such work for the town's older school buildings and several outdoor spaces including Menotomy Rocks Park, Thorndike Park, Spy Pond Field, and Turkey Hill Reservation. Completion of this documentation will allow the town to pursue grant funds for preservation.

(continued)

Budget Considerations

These projects total \$175,200. The CPA appropriations and budget reserves at Annual Town Meeting on June 15th left a projected unrestricted fund balance of \$242,297 for FY21 based on anticipated CPA revenues. These revenue projections have been realized to date and will likely be exceeded due to a larger than expected state match this year. If Town Meeting funds the three projects above, the unrestricted CPA fund balance heading into the new FY22 budget cycle will be at least \$67,097.

Recommended Vote

ARTICLE 24 / APPROPRIATION/COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND

To see if the Town will vote to make appropriations from the Community Preservation Fund for eligible community preservation projects; for community preservation reserve accounts for historic preservation, open space and recreation, and affordable housing; for Community Preservation Act Committee administrative expenses or other eligible expenses; or take any action related thereto.

VOTED (8-0):

That the Town take the following actions to appropriate funds for FY2021 CPA projects, with each project considered a separate appropriation:

(a) Appropriate the sum of \$80,000 for the Minuteman Bikeway Planning project from FY2021 Community Preservation Fund revenues for the rehabilitation of recreational land, said funds to be expended under the direction of the Department of Planning and Community Development and the Community Preservation Act Committee;

(b) Appropriate the sum of \$60,000 for the Communitywide Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey project from FY2021 Community Preservation Fund revenues for the preservation of historic resources, said funds to be expended under the direction of the Department of Planning and Community Development and the Community Preservation Act Committee;

(c) Appropriate the sum of \$35,200 for the Documentation of Historic Municipal Resources project from FY2021 Community Preservation Fund revenues for the preservation of historic resources, said funds to be expended under the direction of the Department of Planning and Community Development and the Community Preservation Act Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Helmuth, Chair

Community Preservation Act Committee

Eugene Benson
Pamela Heidell
Eric Helmuth, Chair
Leslie Mayer
Charlie McCabe
Nick Mitropoulos
JoAnn Robinson
Clarissa Rowe, Vice Chair
Ann Woodward

Arlington Redevelopment Board
Arlington Conservation Commission
Select Board appointee
Arlington Park and Recreation Commission
Select Board appointee
Arlington Housing Authority
Arlington Historical Commission
Select Board appointee
Select Board appointee