

TOWN OF HAMILTON
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
OPERATING PROCEDURES

Last Revised on September 22, 2016

PURPOSE

To accomplish the duties and tasks for the Town of Hamilton that are described in the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and the local bylaw.

COMPOSITION

Members: The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has nine members, which includes one designated member of the Conservation Commission, one member of the Historic District Commission, one member of the Housing Authority, one member of the Planning Board, one member of the Board of Selectmen who acts as a Parks Commissioner, and four citizens at large appointed by the Selectmen.

Terms: Each member is appointed or reappointed for a term of three years. Any vacancy during a term shall be filled by the appointing committee for the remainder of the term.

Officers - Chairman and Vice-Chairman: Each year, after new appointments or reappointments have been made in June, CPC members will elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Chairman will prepare the meeting agendas with the Community Projects Coordinator and lead the meetings. The Vice-Chairman will perform those duties in the absence of the Chairman.

CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

Schedule: The CPC meets on the second Thursday of each month at Town Hall at 7:30 p.m. The date will be confirmed and posted on the calendar on the Town's website and at Town Hall.

Agendas: The agenda will be drafted by the Chair and the Coordinator with input from CPC members and Town staff. The agenda will be posted as much in advance as

possible, and always at least forty-eight hours before a meeting, in accordance with Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. The meetings will follow the posted agenda.

Quorum: A majority of the nine members, which is five members, must be present to achieve a quorum.

Voting: All actions must be approved by a majority of the members that are present and voting. Members follow the recusal requirements that are described in the Conflict of Interest Law. Any member who is absent during the presentation or substantial discussion of an Application for Funding will either review the minutes from that meeting or abstain from voting on that application. All decisions will require a motion, a second, further discussion, and a vote by voice or hand, as determined by the Chair. The Chair will not make or second motions, but can vote. A hand vote on any action shall be required if requested by any member of the Committee.

Public Participation: Public comment will be taken for each agenda item. Before speaking, members of the public must be acknowledged by the Chair. The Chair may impose time limits on public comment when necessary. Order and decorum shall be observed by everyone present at the meeting. Committee members and members of the public are prohibited from interrupting others and from making personal, impertinent, threatening, or profane remarks.

Sub-Committees: Sub-committees will be appointed by the Chair and shall operate in accordance with Massachusetts Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest Law. Standing sub-committees will act only under the direction of the full CPC and will report out to the full CPC. Furthermore, they will be in consultation with the Coordinator. No CPC sub-committee or individual member shall have the authority to represent or act on behalf of the CPC unless, by majority vote, the body has delegated such authority and such delegation is recorded in the meeting minutes.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Administration: Up to five percent of the annual revenues in each fiscal year may be used to fund administrative support and operating expenses. A part-time Coordinator will prepare for CPC meetings, assist with the CPA application process, review the budget, and approve bills for reimbursement from project applicants. A paid secretary will record meeting minutes. The approved minutes and all hand-outs will be posted publicly on the CPC website.

Community Preservation Plan: Each spring, the CPC will conduct a study of the needs, possibilities, and resources of the town, regarding community preservation. The CPC

will do this by soliciting input from all Town boards, committees, and departments; holding a public hearing; and updating the Community Preservation Plan by the end of the fiscal year (June 30th). The operating procedures may also be updated at that time.

CPA Application Process:

Timeline: The CPC will create a timeline, including meeting dates and deadlines for application submission, annually after ATM. Deadlines for the fall Special Town Meeting should be approximately two months prior to the Meeting, and deadlines for the spring Annual Town Meeting should be approximately five months prior to the Meeting. The Coordinator will post the timeline on the CPC page on the Town website. The timeline will also be advertised in local newspapers and on social media.

Application Review: The CPC will first review the Application for Eligibility. The CPC may request that the Coordinator consult with the Commonwealth, the Community Preservation Coalition, or Town Counsel for their input on eligibility. Once determined to be eligible, the CPC will review the Application for Funding based on the general and specific criteria that are detailed in the Community Preservation Plan. CPC members will also attempt to make site visits to any properties under consideration for CPA projects, in accordance with Open Meeting Law. The CPC will then vote on whether or not to recommend the project to Town meeting.

Funding: Each year a minimum of ten percent of the annual CPA revenues must be appropriated for each of the three project categories: open space, historic resources, and community housing. The ten percent may be allocated to a project or projects, or it may be reserved for future projects. The CPC has a goal of reserving approximately fifty percent of the revenues each year in order to support larger future projects. The CPC may recommend that a project be directly funded or bonded with debt service. On large projects the CPC may request that a clerk of the works be retained to oversee the project or that the applicant demonstrates that proper project management and oversight will be in place to ensure the proper execution and completion of the proposed work. Before preparing a Warrant Article for Town Meeting, the CPC will discuss its project recommendations and funding strategies with the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee.

Grant Awards: Following approval at Town Meeting, the Coordinator will send a formal award letter to each grantee that specifies when funds will be available, billing procedures, semi-annual reporting deadlines and the required deadline

determined by the CPC which will be detailed in the warrant article voted at Town Meeting. The letter will also introduce the CPC member who will act as a liaison to the grantee through the life of the project.

Bills: All bills will be approved by a vote of the CPC, unless the CPC authorizes the Coordinator to pay the bills.

COMMUNICATIONS

All communication should be conducted in accordance with Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. Email communications between a quorum of CPC members will be restricted to drafting agendas, scheduling meetings and confirming attendance. Less than a quorum of CPC members may discuss projects amongst themselves. Applicants should address questions to the Chair or the Coordinator. The Coordinator may provide suggestions to applicants. CPC members will only discuss applications with applicants at public meetings. Once an application has been approved at Town Meeting, the project manager may correspond with the Coordinator and a designated liaison from the CPC.

