

**Northampton Community Preservation Committee Minutes**  
**March 21, 2018**

**Time:** 7:00 pm  
**Place:** City Council Chambers, 212 Main Street

Members Present: Brian Adams, Martha Lyon, Julia Chevan, Jeff Jones, Chris Hellman,  
David Whitehill, Linda Morley  
Staff Present: Sarah LaValley

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM

**General Public Comment**

None

**Approval of Minutes**

November 1, 2017, December 6, 2017. Linda moved to approve the minutes as presented.  
Seconded by Martha, the motion carried unanimously.

**Chair's Report**

Brian stated that a celebration of the First Churches windows will be held on Saturday March 24.  
The Daily Hampshire Gazette published an editorial regarding funding of historic projects at religious buildings, following the Supreme Juridical Court initial decision regarding funding of a church in Acton.

**Meetings with Applicants for CPA Funds**

*Theater Restoration Phase II – Academy of Music*

Tom Douglas, Tom Douglas Architects, and Debra j'Anthony, Academy of Music, provided an overview of the project. Tom stated that the Academy has modified its original request to focus on historic work. Bathroom renovations have been removed, with focus on historic lighting and completion of work within the auditorium.

Debra provided background on fundraising and community outreach. The community has contributed to projects through capital campaigns, the City has contributed to roof and HVAC work, and state finds have gone towards repointing and roof work.

Tom stated that past CPA funds were used on the marquee, curtain, and theater restoration, which is not fully complete. The existing lights are not historically appropriate and hide the building's architecture. The theater work included wiring for historically appropriate pendant lights but funds were not available. Opera box work will allow them to be utilized for performances, and stencils will restore a more historically appropriate look. The overall budget is reduced by \$9,000 for the CPA request.

David asked about priorities. Tom replied that lighting and painting to finish the theater project are priorities, and the lobby and hallway could potentially wait.

Brian noted that the theater appears complete from a visitor perspective. Tom stated that the lobby was redone in the 1940's and hasn't been altered since, and that the proposed theater lights would increase visibility of the restoration work from the current off the shelf lights.

Linda asked what budget items are necessary for the opera boxes to be used. Tom stated that carpet, seating and rails are all needed for use of the boxes. Rails are not required by building code but are necessary for safety,

David asked about future priorities. Debra stated that stage lights (\$100,000), a new fire curtain (\$120,000), and opening the upper lobby completely (a larger capital campaign) would be priorities.

Ms. Lyon asked about future plans for the basement. Debra replied that it has moisture issues and there are no plans to refurbish.

*Conservation Area Signage - Northampton Conservation Commission*

Wayne Feiden, Director of Planning and Sustainability stated that one sign is planned for each large area, the exact location of which will be determined following discussions with partners. The project is a test for now; more can be added later, and a design will be created so they can be replicated. They are not intended to serve as trail maps, but will include orientation and story.

The signs are not part of the downtown wayfinding efforts. Martha asked if they would replace existing signs. Wayne replied that they wouldn't, but are intended to have history and points of interest as appropriate. They won't be designed to be read from vehicles, but could help to draw interest from the road. Chris expressed concern about a possible series of small requests, but noted that the signs are planned for all major areas. Wayne added that the project is a pilot and will proceed with caution at this phase. Immediate expenses are budgeted into larger purchases, and these signs could be built-in if they are successful.

### **Begin funding Recommendations for Round 1 2018 CPA Funds**

Brian noted that there are \$220,000 in total requests, with approximately \$126,000 available.  
Historic Preservation Plan

Chris asked how the plan would help with the loss of historic buildings. Martha stated that there are different tools that can be explored, and expertise would help determine what is best for Northampton.

Julia suggested that residents might have different opinions regarding preservation priorities.

Sarah noted that there is an opportunity to tie-in with the Sustainable Northampton update.

The Commission discussed the current tools available to the Historical Commission, including demolition review and local historic districts.

David stated that a Plan is clearly needed, and that the Commission should be forward-thinking regarding preservation. Martha stated that this is a discussion that the Commission will need to have during the Plan process.

The Committee discussed the benefits of having a consultant lead the process.

Jeff noted that all other CPA areas already have plans, and it seems like there is an urgency to complete a Preservation Plan.

The Committee agreed that the CPA could be a resource to provide the help needed, but that the scope should be defined in a way that is more specific to local needs. It's important to know what the City's historic assets are in order to begin working proactively.

### Conservation Area Signage

David expressed support for efforts to increase awareness of protected areas.

Chris noted that opportunities for institutionalization are possible.

### Academy of Music

Martha noted differences between preservation and rehabilitation, and CPA legislation and National Park Service standards.

### Cemetery Stone Restoration

Martha recused herself from discussion.

Linda expressed support, noting that it seems extremely time-sensitive.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.