



Community Preservation Committee Littleton, Massachusetts

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LITTLETON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN



Community Preservation Committee

October, 2008



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LITTLETON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN

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MISSION STATEMENT

In alignment with the Town of Littleton Master Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Conservation Commission Mission, the Littleton Park and Recreation Mission, and the Housing Authority Goals, **it is the mission of the Community Preservation Committee to:**

- Preserve the “small town feel” found in the historic, clustered village centers, surrounded by interconnected natural and agricultural open spaces. Specifically,

- *preserve Littleton's historic resources and structures*
- *preserve and enhance Littleton's open space for both conservation and recreation*
- *preserve and increase Littleton's affordable housing in order to foster economic, racial/ethnic and age diversity among its citizenry.*

PRINCIPLES

The community preservation committee meets to discuss its role as a facilitator for community preservation in Littleton and strives to:

- Be a catalyst for projects
- Be a funding source, not a developer
- Utilize community goals previously set forth in other public documents that have received wide scrutiny and public input
- Attempt to meet multiple community preservation goals in each project
- Communicate its mission and goals to the general public

POLICIES

The community preservation committee shall study the needs, possibilities, and resources of Littleton regarding community preservation. The community preservation committee (CPC) will meet regularly, when a quorum, e.g. majority, of its members is present. The CPC shall consult with existing municipal boards, including the conservation commission, the historical commission, the planning board, park and recreation and the housing authority, or persons acting in those capacities or performing like duties, in conducting such studies. As part of its study, the CPC shall hold one or more public informational hearings on the needs, possibilities and resources of Littleton



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(**POLICIES**, cont.) regarding community preservation possibilities and resources, notice of which shall be posted publicly and published in a newspaper of general circulation in town for each of two weeks preceding a hearing.

The community preservation committee shall accept applications regarding projects that they think merit use of community preservation funds. The CPC shall make recommendations to Town Meeting for the acquisition, creation and preservation of open space; for the acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic resources; for the acquisition, creation and preservation of land for recreational use; for the acquisition, creation, preservation and support of community housing; and for the rehabilitation or restoration of open space, land for recreational use and community housing that is acquired or created with CP funds. With respect to community housing, the CPC shall recommend, wherever possible, the reuse of existing buildings or construction of new buildings on previously developed sites.

The community preservation committee may include in its recommendation(s) to Town Meeting a recommendation to set aside for later spending funds for specific purposes that are consistent with community preservation but for which sufficient revenues are not then available in the Community Preservation Fund to accomplish that specific purpose or to set aside for later spending funds for general purposes that are consistent with community preservation.

Members:

Conservation Commission (1 member)
Historical Commission (1 member)
Park & Recreation Comm (1 member)
Planning Board (1 member)
Housing Authority (1 member)
Board of Selectmen (4 appointees)

Dan Lord
John Bowers
Geraldyn Miller
Gregg S. Champney, CPC Chairman
Michael Morey
Jef Feehan (6/30/2011)
Doreen Morse (6/30/2011)
Timothy "Mit" Wanzer (6/30/2010), Vice Chair
Elliot Putnam (6/30/2009)

Contact:

Keith A. Bergman, *Town Administrator*
Town Offices, 3rd floor
37 Shattuck Street, P.O. Box 1305, Littleton, MA 01460
978 952-2311



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LITTLETON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION OVERVIEW

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a tool to help communities preserve open space and historic sites, and create affordable housing and recreational facilities. Towns that enact this legislation are able to fund projects, when approved by the Littleton Community Preservation Committee, using monies collected by a town real estate tax surcharge and assigned by state grant from a trust fund, The Community Preservation Fund. The CPA (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44B, section 5(b)), requires that at least 10 percent of the CPA funds received by Littleton in each fiscal year be spent or reserved for each of the CPA's three main purposes:

- open space
- historic resources
- community housing

The remaining 70 percent of CPA funds in each fiscal year are available to be appropriated or banked, according to the Town's discretion, for one or more of four purposes: the three listed above, as well as for recreational uses. In addition, subject to certain restrictions, up to five percent of the CPA funds raised annually may be used for administrative activities related to the work of the Littleton Community Preservation Committee (CPC).

The CPC has articulated a set of overarching guidelines that apply to all projects, regardless of the categories under which they fall. The CPC will use these guidelines in its review and decision-making process. They are intended to provide guidance to those preparing applications for funding. Not all guidelines will be appropriate for every project.

DECISION GUIDELINES

The Littleton Community Preservation Committee will only consider proposals that are eligible for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding according to the terms of the CPA legislation; specifically, proposals for:

- The acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space.
- The acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources.
- The acquisition, creation, and preservation of land for recreational use.
- The creation, preservation, and support of community housing (including items such as annual payments to the housing authority to preserve or expand the affordable housing supply).
- The rehabilitation and restoration of open space, land for recreational use, and community housing that is acquired or created using monies from the fund.

(note: many of the terms used in these guidelines are defined in the glossary)



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COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND ALLOWABLE SPENDING PURPOSES

	OPEN SPACE	HISTORIC RESOURCES	RECREATIONAL LAND	COMMUNITY HOUSING
DEFINITION	Land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh and salt water marshes and other wetlands, ocean, river, stream, lake and pond frontage, beaches, dunes and other coastal lands, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve and land for recreational use	Building, structure, vessel or real property listed or eligible for listing on the state register of historic places or determined by the local historic preservation commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture or culture of the city or town	Land for active or passive recreational use including, but not limited to, the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field Does <u>not</u> include horse or dog racing or the use of land for a stadium, gymnasium or similar structure	Housing for low and moderate income individuals and families, including low or moderate income seniors Moderate income is less than 100% , and low income is less than 80%, of US HUD Area Wide Median Income
ACQUIRE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (effective 12/5/2006)
CREATE	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
PRESERVE Means protect from injury, harm or destruction, not maintenance	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SUPPORT	No	No	No	Yes, includes funding for community's affordable housing trust
REHABILITATE/RESTORE Means remodel, reconstruct or repair (extraordinary, not maintenance) to make property functional for intended use, including improvements to comply with federal, state or local building or access codes or with federal standards for rehabilitation of historic properties	Yes, if acquired or created with Community Preservation funds	Yes	Yes, if acquired or created with Community Preservation funds	Yes, if acquired or created with Community Preservation funds

Chart courtesy of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue



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PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

The Community Preservation Committee will give preference to proposals which **address as many of the following general criteria as possible**:

1. Are eligible for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding according to the requirements described in the CPA legislation; specifically
 - a. The acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space.
 - b. The acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources.
 - c. The acquisition, creation, and preservation of land for recreational use.
 - d. The creation, preservation, and support of community housing.
 - e. The rehabilitation and restoration of resources that have been acquired or created using CPA funds.
2. Demonstrate practicality and feasibility; demonstrate that the project can be implemented expeditiously and within budget;
3. Produce an advantageous cost/benefit value;
4. Leverage additional public and/or private funds;
5. Preserve or utilize current town-owned assets;
6. Receive endorsement by other municipal boards or departments;
7. Are consistent with the Littleton Master Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, and the mission statements of the Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, Littleton Park and Recreation, and the Housing Authority, and other planning documents that have received wide scrutiny, public input and have been adopted by the Town. (see excerpts, below)



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TOWN OF LITTLETON PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND STUDIES

The CPC is required to study the “needs, possibilities and resources” for community preservation in Littleton. To that end, we have reviewed existing plans and documents bearing on the four purposes designated for funding under the CPA: open space, recreation, historic resources and community housing. Excerpts of these documents are included as part of this plan, as follows:

Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2003:

“The community, the Implementation Committee, and the Clean Lakes Committee are committed to preserving the rural character that has historically, and currently describes the Town of Littleton. The Town is planning on making critical land purchases in the future to preserve this character and add to the existing contiguous parcels of open space in the town, as well as improving the quality of life. The emerging green belt can be traced from our border with the Town of Acton, across Littleton to the border of Groton. Over the past five years we have engaged in many regional efforts with our neighbors to expand trail systems, contiguous open spaces, and wildlife corridors.”

Conservation Commission:

“Mission: The Conservation Commission strives to administer the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act in a fair and timely manner. The Commission also maintains conservation lands owned by the town. Volunteers are active in trail maintenance, sign installation, and creating and publishing brochures for specific parcels i.e.: Oak Hill, Mill Hill, Newtown, and Bumblebee Park.”

From website: “We hope to preserve the lovely habitats and vistas that make Littleton a beautiful place to live and to raise a family.”

Historical Commission:

Mission: “to preserve and maintain the unique history of Littleton. Our responsibilities include: Organizing and presenting the annual Patriot's Day Ceremony on April 19; Enforcing the Town's demolition delay bylaw; Maintaining the old Burial Ground in collaboration with the Cemetery Commission; Placing Markers on historic houses, building and places; Maintaining a file of historic houses surveyed by a professional preservationist; Respond to requests for information about historical areas; Protecting sensitive historic sites from degradation; Make appropriate suggestions to the Board of Selectmen and other Town boards about protecting and preserving historic sites and areas of Littleton.”

Littleton Park and Recreation:

“Our Mission: The Littleton Park and Recreation is a town funded department that provides year-round high quality indoor and outdoor recreation activities for children and adults in Littleton and the surrounding communities. The department is responsible for providing year-round high quality indoor and outdoor recreation activities for children and adults. The goal is to deliver programs that are cultural, social, mental, and physical based which are presented at well maintained parks and facilities. We are concerned with meeting the



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appropriate community based needs, and are cost efficient, while providing the highest level of participant satisfaction.”

Littleton Planning Board: Littleton Master Plan, Adopted August 2002

“Land Use : Strictly speaking, Littleton is no longer a rural town with an agricultural base. Still, we enjoy a "small town feel" thanks to roadside views of open fields, low-density residential development, historic buildings in the center of town, and affordability of homes. We are what other towns used to be. We want to continue Littleton's New England-style settlement pattern of clustered civic and business centers interspersed with fields, woods, and low-density homes.

Land Use Goal:

- Littleton will continue to be a New England community enjoying small town life in a setting of small scale, clustered village centers with intervening open fields, woods, and low density homes.

Land Use Policies:

- To avoid sprawling development, instead encouraging clustered forms of development that retain a pattern of intervening fields, woods, and surface water features.
- To retain wherever possible roadside views of fields, stone walls, fence-row vegetation, shade trees, and other reminders of Littleton's agricultural heritage.
- To shape future development to reflect Littleton's pattern of natural resource systems, for example by respecting the constraints of topographic and hydrologic features and by maintaining vegetation and wildlife corridors.
- To solidify and enhance Littleton's distinctive elongated town center as the civic, service, and social heart of the community.
- To maintain a balance of residential, commercial, and industrial development to support the amenities and quality of life desired by townspeople.

Housing: We are proud of Littleton's tradition of being an affordable place where young people can set down roots and build a good life. We are concerned that our community may be losing its economic diversity due to the region's escalating housing prices. We recognize that it will be a challenge to retain both low-density housing development and affordability. We intend to do so and believe that the opportunity exists for appropriate accommodation within the New England pattern of focused centers separated by low intensity development and open space. We also recognize that increasing numbers of our older residents need new housing alternatives both in terms of cost, and in terms of home size and maintenance requirements. We will seek ways to gain these alternatives within our settlement pattern, so that senior residents can continue to be a key part of our community life.

Housing Goal: Littleton will continue to be a community of homes that meet the needs of economically diverse households and people of different ages.

Housing Policies:

- To encourage alternative forms of development and ownership that can provide needed housing choices within our New England town setting while respecting the community's preference for single-family homes
- To pay particular attention to the housing needs of moderate income Littleton households whose level of income does not qualify them for purchase of housing in Littleton, young people or first time home buyers, older people who need options for smaller and easier maintenance homes, and town employees who desire to live in Littleton
- To work cooperatively with public agencies, private efforts, and non-profit institutions to serve Littleton's housing needs



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- To conserve our historic homes and traditional scale of homes while acknowledging that a community's housing stock evolves over time in response to changing needs and resources
- To work towards the state goal of 10% of affordable housing”

Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory Program, LITTLETON RECONNAISSANCE REPORT, June, 2006

“GENERAL PRESERVATION PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS:

This [following] section of the Reconnaissance Report offers general recommendations relevant to preserving the character of the community that would be applicable to a wide range of community resources:

Littleton’s residents place high value on the community's strong sense of place, which is created by its varied natural features and land use patterns that made use of the fertile land. The town has already taken measures to document and evaluate its most significant buildings and natural areas. It is now looking beyond the traditional resources to the landscapes, streetscapes, rural roads, neighborhoods and other natural and cultural assets that define the overall fabric of the community. Like most municipalities, Littleton is facing multiple pressures for change that threaten land-based uses and natural resources, especially its remaining farming areas. Special places within the community that were once taken for granted are now more vulnerable than ever to change.”

Recommendations pertaining to priority heritage landscapes can be found

[in the report’s details, the example given, below, is for “agriculture”].

“Recommendations [Agriculture]

As preservation of agricultural land is such a major concern in Littleton, it is important for the town to address the issue comprehensively and to establish priorities. These will depend on the physical attributes of each farm; its economic viability; the wishes of the owner; and the importance of the farm to the community. For specific recommendations regarding agricultural landscapes see the General Preservation Planning Recommendations section of this report. Some recommendations lead to the preservation of farming; others focus on ways in which to reduce the impact of development if there is no alternative to abandoning farming activities and selling the land.”



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NOTES:

Littleton Planning Board
Littleton Master Plan, Adopted August 2002
<http://www.littletonma.org/content/49/3596/93/1148/default.aspx>

Conservation Commission
<http://www.littletonma.org/content/49/3594/75/default.aspx>

Historical Commission
<http://www.littletonma.org/content/49/3594/75/default.aspx>

Littleton Open Space and Recreation Implementation Committee
Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2003
<http://www.littletonma.org/filestorage/533/OpenSpaceRecreationPlan1-7.pdf>

Note: The plan refers to an “emerging green belt” of publicly owned open space. After this writing in 2003, Town Meeting approved the purchase of 87 acres of Hartwell property, situated between Conant Park and White Tail Woods, and a conservation restriction on 85 acres of Prouty Woods, situated between Long Lake Park and the “Morgan” land. These acquisitions define the emerging green belt as cutting across town in a general southeast to northwest direction. -TEW

Littleton Housing Authority
<http://www.littletonma.org/content/49/3596/85/default.aspx>

Littleton Park and Recreation
<http://www.littletonma.org/content/53/123/1718/1730/default.aspx>

The Department of Conservation and Recreation's Historic Landscape Preservation Initiative
<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/histland/histland.htm>

Littleton Conservation Trust
<http://littletonconservationtrust.org/>

Community Preservation Coalition
<http://www.communitypreservation.org/index.cfm>

Littleton Reconnaissance Report
<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/histland/reconReports/littleton.pdf>



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GLOSSARY (definitions from Community Preservation Act):

"Acquire", obtain by gift, purchase, devise, grant, rental, rental purchase, lease or otherwise. "Acquire" shall not include a taking by eminent domain, except as provided in this chapter.

"Annual income", a family's or person's gross annual income less such reasonable allowances for dependents, other than a spouse, and for medical expenses as the housing authority or, in the event that there is no housing authority, the department of housing and community development, determines.

"Community housing", low and moderate income housing for individuals and families, including low or moderate income senior housing.

"Community preservation", the acquisition, creation and preservation of open space, the acquisition, creation and preservation of historic resources and the creation and preservation of community housing.

"Community preservation committee", or "CPC" the committee established by the legislative body of a city or town to make recommendations for community preservation.

"Historic resources", a building, structure, vessel, real property, document or artifact that is listed or eligible for listing on the state register of historic places or has been determined by the local historic preservation commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture or culture of a city or town.

"Low income housing", housing for those persons and families whose annual income is less than 80 per cent of the areawide median income. The areawide median income shall be the areawide median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"Low or moderate income senior housing", housing for those persons having reached the age of 60 or over who would qualify for low or moderate income housing.

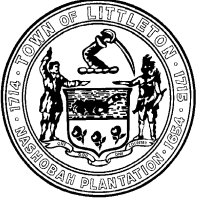
"Maintenance", the upkeep of real or personal property.

"Moderate income housing", housing for those persons and families whose annual income is less than 100 per cent of the areawide median income. The areawide median income shall be the areawide median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"Open space", shall include, but not be limited to, land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh and salt water marshes and other wetlands, ocean, river, stream, lake and pond frontage, beaches, dunes and other coastal lands, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve and land for recreational use.

"Preservation", protection of personal or real property from injury, harm or destruction, but not including maintenance.

"Real property", land, buildings, appurtenant structures and fixtures attached to buildings or land, including, where applicable, real property interests.



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"Real property interest", a present or future legal or equitable interest in or to real property, including easements and restrictions, and any beneficial interest therein, including the interest of a beneficiary in a trust which holds a legal or equitable interest in real property, but shall not include an interest which is limited to the following: an estate at will or at sufferance and any estate for years having a term of less than 30 years; the reversionary right, condition or right of entry for condition broken; the interest of a mortgagee or other secured party in a mortgage or security agreement.

"Recreational use", active or passive recreational use including, but not limited to, the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field. "Recreational use" shall not include horse or dog racing or the use of land for a stadium, gymnasium or similar structure.

"Rehabilitation", the remodeling, reconstruction and making of extraordinary repairs to historic resources, open spaces, lands for recreational use and community housing for the purpose of making such historic resources, open spaces, lands for recreational use and community housing functional for their intended use, including but not limited to improvements to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other federal, state or local building or access codes. With respect to historic resources, rehabilitation shall have the additional meaning of work to comply with the Standards for Rehabilitation stated in the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties codified in 36 C.F.R. Part 68.



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GUIDELINES FOR PROJECT SUBMISSION

1. The application process for Community Preservation Funding is twofold. The Community Preservation Eligibility Request will introduce your proposal to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) so that it can determine the project's eligibility and offer guidance. If the CPC agrees that your proposal is eligible, a Community Preservation Application for Funding must be completed. The CPC will review both the Eligibility Request and the Application for Funding according to the General Criteria outlined below.
2. In order to be considered for recommendation for the annual May Town Meeting, the CPC requests that you submit an Eligibility Request in December of the preceding year (see schedule, next page).
3. Upon approval of the Eligibility Request, an application must be submitted to the CPC using the Community Preservation Application for Funding form and a copy of the Eligibility Request form as a cover sheet.
4. Applications should be submitted in ten (10) copies of all project materials (double sided preferred) to the attention of:
Keith A. Bergman, Town Administrator, Town Offices,
3rd floor, 37 Shattuck Street, P.O. Box 1305, Littleton, MA 01460 (978) 952-2311
5. Please include any maps, diagrams, and/or photos that pertain to your project.
6. All applicants will be expected to be present at a CPC meeting to answer questions about their proposals. Applicants will be notified regarding the date of the meeting they should attend.
7. The CPC will discuss its project recommendations with the Selectmen and Finance Committee before preparing a Warrant Article with project recommendation for Town Meeting approval.
8. If approved, project funding will be available 30 days following approval at Town Meeting.



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Community Preservation Act Application Schedule

This schedule outlines two possible courses for the progress of an applicant's project.

Town Meeting	Open Meeting	Application for Eligibility Due	Application for Eligibility Review	Applicants Notified	Application for Funding Deadline	Application for Funding Review	Applicants Notified
Fall - October	6/1	6/15	7/1	7/15	8/14	9/1	9/15
Spring - May	12/1	12/15	1/5	1/15	2/15	3/1	3/15

Time sensitive proposals will be reviewed throughout the year as needed. However all final decisions for approval of funds are made by Town Meeting.



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To Applicant: Please circle the area(s) for which your project meets eligibility (see pg. 6).

Determining Project Eligibility

	Open Space	Historic	Recreation	Housing
Acquire	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Create	Yes	—	Yes	Yes
Preserve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support	—	—	—	Yes
Rehabilitate and/or Restore	Yes - if aquired created with CPA \$\$\$	Yes	Yes - if aquired created with CPA \$\$\$	Yes - if aquired created with CPA \$\$\$

Attach this table to your completed "Community Preservation Eligibility Request" and submit both to:

Keith A. Bergman
(978) 952-2311
Town Administrator
Town Offices, 3rd floor
37 Shattuck Street
P.O. Box 1305
Littleton, MA 01460

