



KATJANA BALLANTYNE
MAYOR

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE



MINUTES JULY 23, 2025

MEMBERS

Ryan Kiracofe, Chair
Eric Parkes, Vice Chair
Carlos Ayala
Mary Jo Bohart
Jon Bronenkant
Joe Capuano
Heather Heimarck
Michael McNeley
David Turin

STAFF

Roberta Cameron

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) virtually held its annual public hearing and monthly meeting at 6:30 pm on the Zoom Webinar platform in compliance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025 regarding the Open Meeting Law.

- Members Present** Ryan Kiracofe, Mary Jo Bohart, Michael McNeley, Joe Capuano, Carlos Ayala, David Turin, Eric Parkes (late)
- Members Absent** Jon Bronenkant, Heather Heimarck
- Staff Present** Roberta Cameron, OSPCD Director of Finance, Alan Inacio
- Others Present** Lisa Davidson, Director of OSPCD Housing Division

Roll Call

Chair Kiracofe opened the meeting at 6:30. He reminded everyone that the meeting was being held virtually and being recorded in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023. CPA Manager Cameron called the roll.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of Meeting Minutes

Member Bohart noted that a section seemed to be missing from the meeting minutes from 6/25/25. Member McNeley highlighted an error in the roll call section of the minutes. Cameron stated that she would revise and resubmit the minutes to the CPC at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Presentation of AHT Annual Report

Kiracofe introduced Housing Director Lisa Davidson who presented the annual report for the Affordable Housing Trust. She summarized the sources of revenue and the construction projects and programs that the AHT supported over the past year, and provided a status update on recent projects.

Member Bohart asked for clarification about the levels of affordability at the 259 Lowell Street site.

Member McNeley asked how ARPA funding factored into the AHT's work reflected in the report. Davidson responded that the Municipal Voucher Program used a combination of ARPA, City and Trust funding. McNeley expressed that he would support using AHT/CPA funds to bridge the gap to enable the 299 Broadway project.

Kiracofe asked if the AHT funds are given out as loans. Davidson confirmed that all construction and acquisition funding is provided as loans with very low interest rates.

Agenda Item 3: General Conditions for CPA Memoranda of Agreement with AHT

Cameron provided background on the purpose and history of general conditions that apply to MOAs with the Affordable Housing Trust. Since 2018 the general conditions have included a requirement that interest earned on CPA funds that were given to the AHT be returned to the CPC. In consultation with the Law and Finance departments and the CPA Coalition, this provision (which was never approved by the CPC), was added incorrectly and should be eliminated. Further, the Finance Department determined that the CPC owes interest payments back to the AHT which have been retained in the CPA account since the condition was implemented in FY19.

Cameron explained that the Accounting Department has already directed that \$264,327 be transferred to the Trust out of the CPA FY25 interest revenue. Kiracofe asked how the transfer will affect the budget for the current fiscal year. Cameron used the Fall Report from FY25 to show how interest factors into the additional revenue the CPC would see after the end of the fiscal year, explaining that the interest transfer will reduce the amount of unanticipated revenue that would have been added to the Undesignated Fund Balance.

In researching this issue, Cameron reviewed minutes from prior CPA meetings and found two additional changes that ought to have been made to the general conditions based on CPC discussions. 1) The reporting requirement should be changed from twice a year to a single annual report. 2) The requirement for CPA signage at project sites should be modified to allow for project-specific discretion to be made by the AHT and partner organization.

McNelley asked if there was any explanation for why the return of interest was added to the general conditions. Cameron replied that she found no explanation or discussion about this change, but she conjectured that it might have been conflated with a requirement under the legislation that interest on CPA funds must not accrue to the General Fund. However, as the AHT is outside of the general fund, the interest should stay with the grantee.

Kiracofe observed that, as an affordable housing developer he appreciates the discretion being given with respect to signage, but he strongly supports signs showing how CPA funds are being spent. He has not experienced push-back on signage denoting affordable housing. Turin asked where the request to change the general condition came from. Cameron cited minutes from prior CPC meetings and discussions with the Housing Division and their partner organizations who had concerns about stigmatizing homes which would otherwise indistinguishable from market rate housing.

Parkes moved to amend the general conditions for MOAs between the CPC and the AHT as shown in the draft, seconded by McNelley. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Agenda Item 4: Transfer of FY26 funding distribution to Affordable Housing Trust

As a process improvement this year Cameron suggested moving the CPC's recommendation to transfer funds to the Affordable Housing Trust to the July meeting instead of holding the funds until the end of the grant application cycle. The CPC could make a supplemental transfer in the fall to commit a share of unanticipated revenue identified at that time.

Bohart asked whether the timing of the transfer has been an issue in the past. Cameron stated that the CPC's decision this past January was delayed a few months because of an administrative error so that the

Trust finally received the funds in May which had been promised as of the previous July. Turin asked whether there was a specific schedule for submitting recommendations to City Council, and Cameron replied that the Council commonly receives CPC recommendations for off-cycle funding requests or contract extensions throughout the year.

Cameron shared a draft recommendation letter to reflect the CPC's decision.

Turin moved to recommend the transfer of \$2,603,071 to the Affordable Housing Trust, seconded by McNelley. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Agenda Item 5: Reviewing Eligibility Determination and Screening Forms

Cameron described Eligibility Determination Forms and a summary of the FY26 application pipeline that were included in the meeting packet. She described that the next step would be for staff to make a determination of eligibility and to send communication to each of the prospective applicants. She observed that the indications are that this will be a highly competitive funding round and invited CPC members to provide any initial comments to help the applicants prepare complete applications and make the best case for their projects.

Member Bohart asked whether applicants typically communicate with the CPA Manager before submitting EDFs. Cameron responded that many of the applicants submit screening forms as an initial inquiry about applying for CPA funds, and the summary workbook includes comments describing the followup conversations. In some cases the inquiries do not progress to an application in this funding cycle, although they may proceed in the future.

Turin asked whether the EDFs are public. Cameron noted that all EDFs and full applications are provided on the CPA web page under Document Library.

McNelley offered some feedback about criteria that may influence his decision on funding recommendations. 1) He would like to see CPA funds be leveraged by funding from other sources. 2) He would likely support projects that have more public engagement or active use by the community. Parkes added that he would like to evaluate the urgency of a project and how critical the CPA funding is to meeting the need.

Agenda Item 6: Historic Preservation Guidelines

Cameron updated the committee that an RFP has been issued to hire a consultant to prepare a study as discussed at the previous CPC meeting. Bids are due August 4. The RFP includes a not-to-exceed budget of \$30,000, although she expects bids to come in much lower. Member Parkes was nominated to serve on a selection panel and to serve on a steering committee to guide the project.

Agenda Item 7: Adams Magoun House Recommendation

Cameron summarized the background of the Adams Magoun House project for which the CPC had recommended funding in FY23, but the applicant did not agree to the conditions in the recommendation so it was never advanced to City Council for approval. Nevertheless, the funds for this project have been carried forward in the past few funding rounds, being held in case the project is finally approved. Cameron shared the application and recommendation letter in the meeting packet. Cameron asked whether the CPC wished to cancel this recommendation, so that the funds could be released back to the available funds. McNelley asked whether the CPC should consider amending the conditions at this time

rather than cancel the project. Cameron suggested that it would be helpful to give the applicant a chance to provide input before the CPC decides on amending these conditions. The biggest sticking point she recalled was the requirement that the grant be repayable upon sale of the building within 50 years. Members agreed that a decision to amend the recommendation could be held off until they have the consultant's findings.

There was further discussion about the requirement for returning funds if the property is sold. Cameron explained that the committee's intention was not to allow the private property owner from receiving a windfall through the public funding to improve her house. Parkes suggested that he would be satisfied with a much shorter timeline because the public benefit would be the maintenance of a historic structure regardless of who owns it. Turin recalled that a declining clawback was another option discussed at the time.

Agenda Item 8: Draft Change to CPA Ordinance

Cameron recalled that the CPC at the last meeting had requested that Cameron inquire about the possibility of amending the CPA ordinance to allow members to serve up to two full terms in addition to partial terms if they are appointed to fill out an unfinished term. Cameron shared a proposal to make this amendment and some other minor changes and invited committee members to give comments or feedback before she advances the request.

Agenda Item 9: Update on Committee Recruitment and Public Engagement

Cameron shared that the committee member opening for next year has just been posted, according to schedule.

Cameron mentioned the schedule of upcoming tabling events. The first event coming up is National Night Out which occurs on Tuesday, August 5. Mary Jo Bohart said that she would be interested in attending this event.

Agenda Item 10: Administrative Budget

Cameron reported that she had updated the administrative budget to reflect the CPC's discussion at the previous meeting. She then asked for the CPC's approval to spend \$10,000 for annual CPA Coalition dues for FY26. Member Bohart asked what kinds of services the Coalition provides. Cameron described that they track data about the CPA program, provide technical assistance, and advocacy at the state house to expand or protect funding for the CPC. There were no objections to the expenditure of admin funds to pay the dues.

Additional Business

Some reminders were shared about upcoming social events.

Adjournment

Parkes moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Turin. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Documents and Exhibits

1. Agenda
2. Draft Minutes 6/25/2025
3. Affordable Housing Trust Spring 2025 CPC Report
4. CPC AHT MOA General Conditions draft amendment
5. CPC Draft Funding Recommendation for transfer to AHT
6. FY26 CPA Financial Worksheet
7. FY26 Eligibility Determination Forms
 - a. Blessing of the Bay Linear Park Improvements
 - b. Buddy's Diner 113 Washington Street
 - c. Construction Phase of Veterans Memorials
 - d. First Universalist Church 125 Highland Ave
 - e. Grace Baptist Church SHA4CD Exterior Renovation
 - f. Kennedy Schoolyard Renovations
 - g. Mystic Development Recreation Improvements
 - h. Open Space Acquisition Fund
 - i. Somerville Armory Property Needs Assessment
 - j. Somerville Museum Collection Care
 - k. Elizabeth Peabody House Structural Stabilization
 - l. Vida Real Broadway Roof Preservation
8. Historic Preservation Guidelines Final RFP
9. Adams Magoun House FY23 Full Application
10. Adams Magoun House FY23 CPC Recommendation
11. CPA Ordinance Amendment Proposal
12. CPA Admin Revised Budget
13. CPA Coalition Dues Letter
14. Summer/fall outreach calendar
15. CPA 2025 Agenda Calendar