



# City of Somerville Community Preservation Committee

## Minutes

May 27, 2026

**Members Present:** Ryan Kiracofe, David Turin, Eric Parkes, Carlos Ayala, Jon Bronenkant, Joe Capuano, Michael McNeley, Rona Fischman (arrived late)

**Members Absent:** Mary Jo Bohart

**Staff Present:** CPA Manager Roberta Cameron; OSPCD Director of Finance Alan Inacio

**Others Present:**

---

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) virtually held its 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.

### 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 2025. CPA Manager Cameron called the roll.

### Agenda Item 1: Approval of Meeting Minutes

Member Turin moved to approve the meeting minutes from 2/25/26, 3/25/26, and 4/22/26, seconded by member Ayala. The motion passed 6-0 with member McNeley abstaining. Member Fischman joined after the vote was taken.

### Agenda Item 2: Review of Draft FY27 Community Preservation Plan

CPA Manager Cameron provided an overview of the FY27 Community Preservation Plan and explained what has been updated this year.

Cameron reported on the public engagement analysis provided in Appendix 1 of the report, observing that the results from tabling events and the online survey which generated most of the public input over the year were fairly consistent with prior years but showed support for a slightly lower distribution toward affordable housing than what the CPC elected last year (around 43-46%).

### **Agenda Item 3: Review Program Goals and Potential FY27 Uses of the Admin Budget**

Cameron described the program goals in Section 5 of the CPP. This section identifies steps that the CPA Manager should be undertaking to make program improvements over the coming year, as well as ways that administrative funds might be expended to support the CPC.

- Long-term visioning for historic preservation has been suggested through the preparation of a Cultural Heritage Plan which could help to align CPA priorities with broader historic preservation goals and policies. The plan would include an analysis of existing conditions, policies and procedures, and would provide guidance on both investment priorities and regulatory policies. The Planning division of OSPCD is in the process of preparing an RFP for this plan and would seek to combine CPA Admin funding with funds from the City's general budget. Kiracofe asked whether the goal is to identify City-owned assets for investment. Cameron explained that the plan would evaluate historic assets across the city to determine what are the more or less important characteristics that the City should prioritize preserving. Besides the CPC, a goal is also to enable HPC to have a broader vision of what the historic preservation needs are. A regulatory component of the Cultural Heritage Plan would not be CPA funded. Member Parkes recalled that there had been a previous historic preservation plan effort. Cameron confirmed that the prior effort in 2017 had been entirely funded by CPA and was not completed.
- Another goal for FY27 is to develop more interactive mapping tools. First, the SomerVoice page can be updated to provide more information about prior projects that can be linked to the general web page. Second, mapping of historic preservation assets can be integrated across departments and divisions to support monitoring of CPA-funded historic preservation work.
- A further goal has been to measure the impact of CPA investments, particularly through a lens of equitability and inclusivity. The efforts with respect to mapping, planning, and improving our public information tools may help to advance this goal.
- Following the Historic Preservation Guidelines project last year, City staff across divisions are working on implementing new monitoring procedures for historic preservation projects.
- The CPA Manager will continue supporting the recruitment of members to all of the boards that are represented on the CPC.

### **Agenda Item 4: FY27 CPA Budget**

Kiracofe reminded the committee that the CPC had voted in FY26 to increase the affordable housing share of CPA funds to 55% from 50%. Bronenkant suggested that it would be great to get a report back on what the impact was of the additional 5% of funding to the AHT. He noted that there is a greater need for open space funding as exemplified in the bonding for the Kennedy Schoolyard last year and anticipated request for bonding for Artfarm this year. Cameron pointed out that in addition to the increased share going to open space last year, the AHT also benefited from the doubling of the CPA surcharge, so that it would be hard to compare the exact impact of the 5% increase. Parkes suggested that the committee consider how much funding from other sources is available to supplement or substitute CPA for each program area. Parkes favors holding a larger share of CPA funds in the flexible reserve so that they can be used wherever there is the greatest need.

Turin expressed interest in knowing more about how the AHT is using CPA funds. McNeley suggested that an audit or third party report on the AHT could be a helpful use of admin funds.

McNenely observed that his board has reviewed development proposals for increasing density which contribute toward a need for more engageable open space. McNeley also expressed concern about the impact of bonding on the availability of future CPA funds.

Turin asked when the debt service for the Kennedy Schoolyard will have to start being paid. Director Inacio explained that the City can draw down bond funds at any time after the bond is authorized, but that the debt service obligation will not become due until after the bond is issued, which will be done when they are ready to incur expenses on the project. Bronenkant provided an overview of the budget and timeline for the Kennedy schoolyard project, explaining that they do not expect to draw on the bond until next year. Turin asked whether the CPC ought to hold debt service in reserve as the CPC determines the funds that are available to spend. Cameron agreed that she can include this calculation in the "Fall Report" that informs the CPC how much funds are available to spend on projects.

Kiracofe proposed that the distribution be adjusted so that more funds be available for open space and recreation projects to reduce the need for future debt service. McNeley pointed out that historic preservation is already as low as he is comfortable recommending, so that the best option would be to shift funds out of housing to make more available for open space. Parkes suggested that funds be shifted toward Budgeted Reserve to increase flexibility. Member Fischman proposed to reduce the proportion going to the Housing Reserve to 52.5%, and increasing the Budgeted Reserve share to 12.5%.

Turin queried what other major open space projects might be on the horizon. Bronenkant responded that the Open Space and Recreation Plan helps to highlight what the needs are. Kennedy Schoolyard and Artfarm are the biggest priorities in the next five years that we are aware of at this time, although future requests might be influenced by a push for certain types of recreation or availability of other sources of funding. There may also be more small projects to make minor improvements to existing parks.

Member Fischman moved to recommend the following allocation of CPA funding for FY27: 4% for Admin and Operating Expenses, 18% for Open Space and Recreation Reserve, 13% for Historic Preservation Reserve, 52.5% for Community Housing Reserve, and 12.5% for Budgeted Reserve. The motion was seconded by member Parkes and passed 8-0.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Eligibility Determination Forms**

Cameron provided an overview of Eligibility Determination forms that were submitted before the deadline for the FY27 funding round.

- 125 Highland Ave design for adaptive reuse
- Mission Church of Christ condition assessment
- Somerville Armory condition assessment
- Elizabeth Peabody House exterior restoration
- 165 Broadway City of Somerville fire escape and condition assessment
- Somerville Museum building restoration and collection preservation
- 396-398 Broadway exterior restoration of historic residential building
- Kennedy Schoolyard open space additional funding for phase 2 construction.
- Artfarm for construction of new park

- West Somerville Neighborhood School to complete unfinished element of playground renovation
- Spring Street Triangle to expand a neighborhood pocket park

Cameron asked for Committee input on how to determine eligibility of 165 Broadway, Somerville Museum and 396-398 Broadway where there is some ambiguity whether the proposed projects are restoration or maintenance. Cameron asked whether the Committee would prefer to have staff make the determination of eligibility in these cases or if they should be invited to submit a full application and the Committee will decide if these projects merit funding.

- Cameron shared that a relevant criteria in cases where a building is privately-owned could be to evaluate who benefits from historic preservation – whether it is the building owner/occupant being protected from damage, or the public benefitting from the visibility of historic improvements. For example, preserving original windows and replacing missing trim is more beneficial to the public than resealing carpentry and siding. Parkes recalled that the eligibility of improvements to buildings owned by nonprofit organizations has been considered with more leniency than privately-owned buildings where the building will be used for community purposes.
- Cameron pointed out that there may be tasks such as painting which would not be eligible on their own but might be necessary components of a larger restoration project. McNeley posited that removing lead paint is beneficial from a public health perspective.
- With respect to 165 Broadway, the concern is whether the replacement of the fire escape should be eligible if there is no commitment to preserving other historic features of the building. Committee members also questioned why the City doesn't make this repair with other funds.
- Parkes agreed with Cameron's assessment that the Museum's request for funding to investigate their sewer line falls in the maintenance category, and that he would like to see an indication from the applicant of how urgent the other exterior renovation tasks are for the building's preservation. By contrast, the request for sewer reconstruction at Buddy's diner was due to a catastrophic event.

McNeley suggested that the CPC should have the opportunity to deliberate on these projects. Parkes observed that the dollars will be stretched this year.

### **Agenda Item 6: Administrative Updates**

Cameron informed committee members of upcoming ribbon cuttings at Quincy Street Park, Nunziato Field water fountains. Bronenkant added that there will be ground-breakings at Kennedy Schoolyard and Blessing of the Bay Linear Park.

### **Adjournment**

McNeley moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ayala. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

## Documents and Exhibits

1. Agenda
2. Draft Minutes 2-25-26
3. Draft Minutes 3-25-26
4. Draft Minutes 4-22-26
5. Draft FY27 Community Preservation Plan
6. FY27 CPA Financial Workbook
7. Eligibility Determination Forms
  - a. 396-398 Broadway Exterior Restoration
  - b. 125 Highland Ave Adaptive Ruse Design and Stabilization
  - c. Artfarm 10 Poplar St
  - d. 165 Broadway Fire Escape and Condition Assessment
  - e. 277 Broadway Elizabeth Peabody House Clock Tower Repair and Exterior Restoration
  - f. Kennedy Scholyard 5 Cherry Street
  - g. Mission Church of Christ Building Assessment
  - h. Somerville Armory Building Exterior Needs Assessment
  - i. Somerville Museum Historic Building and Collection Care Projects
  - j. Spring Street Island
  - k. West Somerville Neighborhood School Graphics
8. Ribbon Cutting Flyer Quincy Open Space
9. Nunziato Water Fountains Flyer
10. CPC 2026 Calendar

Minutes prepared by Roberta Cameron