



TOWN OF HAMILTON

APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDING

Date: January 10, 2019

Project Title: The Community House, Renovation and Expansion Project

Name of Applicant: Melissa Elmer, Executive Director

Name of Organization: The Community House

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CPA Category: Historic Preservation

CPA Funding Requested: \$295,000 (\$197,000 – Hamilton, \$98,000 –Wenham)

Total Project Cost: \$2,000,000 – preliminary estimate of total of all renovations and expansion

1. Project Description

The Community House was founded in 1921 by local residents, George and Emily Mandell who lost their youngest son, Samuel while he served as a pilot in World War I. Despite suffering this incredible loss, they exhibited a commitment to making a long-lasting and positive impact on their community. They sought famous architect, Guy Lowell, to design a community center for the townspeople of Hamilton and Wenham to come together after the war. Lowell was the architect and landscape architect for the first Charles River dam which transformed the tidal river into the Charles River Basin. Lowell was also responsible for the landscape design of the Boston Embankment, known as the Esplanade and is most recognized for his design of two public buildings: the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the New York State Supreme Court building in New York City. Local builder Frank Trussell was hired to manage the construction of The Community House which was dedicated in memory of eight local men who lost their lives in WWI: Augustus P. Gardner, Samuel Mandell, Norman Prince, William Collins, Frank Nelson, William Taylor, Lester Hodgson, and Reginald Young. The Community House was accepted into the National Register of Historic Places in 2011, and in 2018, hosted a commemorative event in coordination with the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I, to honor the legacy of the eight men listed above.

Over the span of recent decades, The Community House has made great efforts to make significant repairs to preserve our historic facility for future generations. In 2019, The Community House Board of Directors will take this further by initiating a capital campaign planning process, in coordination with the organization's centennial anniversary, to raise funding to further renovate, improve, and expand the facility to meet current and future uses. The original footprint of the building requires electrical and structural assessments and repair to meet current code and safety standards. The stage and projector room require restoration and additional structure to support modern use and ensure safety for concerts and our busy performing arts program, Stage 284. Elevator access to the basement level of our facility and modification to our main entrance doors may be necessary to comply with ADA. Building systems such as heat, a/c and fire safety have exceeded their life expectancy and rehabilitation to our lower level classrooms will be required after interior wall damage is repaired from previous water infiltration that was corrected on the exterior in 2015. Lastly, we desire to commission a local writer to conduct research and document the history of The Community House in writing and film. As a largely volunteer driven organization until the early 1980's very little information is readily available about our history. As we approach our 100th anniversary, it is the proper time to make this a priority so the rich history of the organization can be preserved forever.

The Community House has been a significant asset and landmark in our communities since 1921. We hope these improvements will help the organization continue to provide meaningful support to Hamilton and Wenham residents through our mission: bringing the arts, enrichment, and unity to our community for the next 100 years.

2. Goals

The primary goals of this project are to protect and preserve the historic Community House and maintain the safety of

the 1,000 visitors that visit the facility each week – many of whom are young children. As we approach the centennial anniversary of the organization in 2021, it is critical that we continue our efforts to preserve this community institution so it may continue to benefit and enrich the lives of our community members for the next 100 years. It is also important that the history of the organization be documented so it may be preserved for future generations as well.

Meanwhile, The Community House Board of Directors will continue to move forward with planning and fundraising for additional renovations and expansion to accommodate future child care and arts programming which will support the growth and development strategies outlined in the organization’s strategic plan. Additional education programs for Stage 284 will be added in the next 3-5 years as well as a child care and enrichment programs for all ages.

3. Timeline

We plan to begin interior renovations and building system updates in July 2019. Construction will be scheduled on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

4. Budget

We estimate that The Community House will need to raise approximately two million dollars to support our vision for renovations and expansion. The portion eligible for CPA funding is one piece (estimated to be approximately \$295,000) of this multi-million dollar endeavor. We are actively soliciting proposals from contractors for the renovation list outlined in the budget and will keep you informed as we receive more information on final figures.

We are seeking support from community preservation funding, with the eligible aspects of our renovation plans, which we hope will support a portion of facility improvements we plan to make through a forthcoming capital campaign.

Renovation List	Estimated Cost
Structural Engineering and Electrical Assessments and Drawings	10,000
Replace heating and cooling systems	\$85,000
Update electrical in original building	\$7,500
Update all sprinkler heads and fire panel	\$10,000
Install dehumidification for wet basement	\$9,000
Install elevator lift to basement	\$25,000
Update front entry doors to meet ADA	\$8,000
Roof - slate and gutter repairs	\$7,500
Address structural damage from former water infiltration in basement’s north facing wall, rehab classroom spaces	\$25,000
Decommission and restore fireplace	\$3,000
Restore projector room	\$15,000
Stage restoration	\$50,000
De-lead lobby, vestibule	\$20,000
Historical research project	\$10,000
Project Management	\$10,000
Total Estimated Cost	295,000

5. Community Support

The Community House Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. We are grateful for the level of support the residents of Hamilton and Wenham have shown both individually and via Community Preservation support on prior projects.