

Information for New and Potentially Interested Hamilton Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Members

1/1/18 revision

The following is a brief description of the composition and activities of the CPC and the responsibilities of individual CPC members.

Composition of the Committee and their Responsibilities

The composition of the CPC includes one member of the Conservation Commission, one member of the Historic District Commission, one member of the Planning Board, one member of the Board of Selectmen acting as a Parks Commissioner, one member of the Housing Authority, and four citizens at large appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Each member's length of term is three years with staggered terms. These nine residents with a range of expertise across the project areas are charged with studying the Town's needs, possibilities and resources with respect to community preservation and with making recommendations to Town Meeting with respect to the allocation and expenditure of CPC funds for historic preservation, recreation, both active and passive, open space preservation, and community housing.

Requirements for Applicant Consideration

Application for appointment to the CPC must be made via filling out the prescribed form and sending it along with a resume to the Selectmen. This form is available on the Town website, www.hamiltonma.gov. To locate the form, click on "Where do I go for?" Then click on "Volunteer" to find the form.

Most residents seeking appointment to the CPC Committee are likely somewhat familiar with the basic concepts of the CPC in terms of how the surcharge is derived from the property taxes of the residents of Hamilton and the basic tenets of what can be funded with monies collected. On the job training is supported once appointed. The list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) contained on the CPC webpage of the Town website also provides some pertinent information on the activities of the CPC.

The appointment carries a reasonable commitment to attending meetings. An appointment to the CPC is a three-year appointment to a committee that meets the second Thursday evening of every month, year round, and on rare occasions, other meetings as required.

Operational Information for New Members of the CPC

Requests for CPC project grants consist of a two-step process. The first step or vote decides the Eligibility of the project and the second step determines the amount of Funding. Deliberations amongst the committee as to whether or not to propose funding for a particular project is a very serious endeavor in that a vote in favor with a simple majority of 5 votes allows the project funding request to go directly onto the Town Meeting warrant. While both the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee formally review all projects prior to Town Meeting, they can only form an opinion on it, not prevent it from going to a vote at Town Meeting.

Votes by members of the CPC are their individual opinions and may not be questioned or criticized by other members of the CPC. CPC Members who are appointed by other committees are assumed to represent the will of that committee.

Any CPC member who is absent during the presentation or substantial discussion of an Application for Funding will either review the minutes and listen to the meeting voice recording from that meeting or abstain from voting on that application.

Members of the CPC while unpaid volunteers, are considered Town employees in terms of their required compliance with state ethics laws and Open Meeting laws.

Detailed Information on CPC Activities

The CPC webpage on the Hamilton Town website contains all meeting agendas and minutes of past meetings, selected reference documents, and other pertinent information.

The annually updated Community Preservation Plan, found on the CPC web page, provides comprehensive information about the CPC:

- Overview of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in Hamilton
- History and Introduction of the Community Preservation Act in Hamilton
- Community Preservation Committee: Formation and Responsibilities
- CPA Fund Requirements
- How CPA Funds Can Be Used
- CPA Administration
- Needs and Resource Assessment
 - Open Space
 - Recreation
 - Historic Preservation
 - Community Housing

- General Selection Criteria for Projects
- Community Preservation Application Process
- Current Community Preservation Committee
- CPC Operating Procedures
- CPC Hamilton Town Bylaw
- CPA MA Statute
- CPA Allowable Uses of Grant Monies
- CPC Guidelines for Project Submission
- 2017-18 Timeline for Project Submission
- CPC Application Forms
- CPC Project Evaluation Scoring System
- List of All Past Approved CPC Projects
- Current State of CPC Finances
- Potential Anticipated Future CPC Grants

The CPC Committee has the services of a part-time Coordinator and another person who provides both audio and written records of all meetings. The Coordinator prepares the agenda for the meetings and communicates with both potential and ongoing grant applicants as well as the MA CPA Coalition office for technical assistance to the CPC Committee. The technical assistance is often in the form of advice in determining the eligibility of grant requests.

The MA CPA Coalition maintains a website, www.communitypreservation.org, which provides support to member communities in the form of information on activities of the CPA state-wide including info on selected completed projects, financials for all communities who have adopted the CPA, and technical assistance articles.