

## Community Preservation Act Committee FY20 Questions and Answers

### 1. Conservation Land and Trail Maintenance

- a. How does the department rank each of its proposals in priority, and why?

*The Town prioritizes the Open Space CPA applications as: 1. Keet-Haskins, 2. Hickory Ridge, 3. Szala, and 4. Cons Land & Trail Maintenance. Keet-Haskins has received a \$400K LAND Grant which the Town would like to take advantage of to preserve the riparian corridor of the Cushman Brook. The Town is very interested in purchasing a portion of Hickory Ridge Golf Course and would like to use CPA funds to start that process, therefore, it's a priority. The Szala land purchase is part of a much larger land preservation project, Kestrel Land Trust is working with the Szala family to permanently preserve almost 200 acres of farmland (193 acres in Hadley).*

- b. The photos show bridges built by staff—what was done in the parking lot?

*The parking lot in the picture was built by staff at the Wentworth Farm Cons Area.*

- c. Your budget asks for \$10K for improvements to each of five conservation areas and also notes that you continuously seek other funding. Can you provide some indication of the total cost of improvements needed at each of these sites?

*All of our conservation areas require annual maintenance and currently the Conservation Department budget doesn't cover all the costs, therefore, we're asking for supplemental funds for this year from CPA.*

- d. The proposal reports that \$30K appropriated in FY18 was used for the Fort River Farm & the Ricci Conservation area. Was that matched in any way with other funding?

*No.*

- e. Beyond the five areas targeted with this proposal, what other conservation areas are still in need of similar improvements in the coming years, and what is the overall budget or anticipated cost to meet those needs?

*All of our conservation areas require annual maintenance and currently the Conservation Department budget doesn't cover all the costs, therefore, we're asking for supplemental funds for this year from CPA.*

- f. This proposal and last year's suggest staff cannot meet the improvement needs. How long do you expect the \$50,000 to last? When do you expect we will be asked again to fund similar improvements?

*The \$50K will be used over the next couple years to complete work at the listed conservation areas. You may see a similar request to CPAC in a couple years.*

- g. How is the proposed work different from ongoing maintenance costs? Is maintenance of properties disallowed as "support" of open space?

*The proposed work is ongoing maintenance, the problem is the Conservation Dept's budget is minimal and can't cover all the needed ongoing maintenance at all conservation areas. This \$50K will supplement the department's annual budget.*

- h. Given the limited funds of CPAC, how much less would still be helpful?

*\$30,000.*

### 2. Szala Property

- a. How does the department rank each of its proposals in priority, and why?

*The Town prioritizes the Open Space CPA applications as: 1. Keet-Haskins, 2. Hickory Ridge, 3. Szala, and 4. Cons Land & Trail Maintenance. Keet-Haskins has received a*

*\$400K LAND Grant which the Town would like to take advantage of to preserve the riparian corridor of the Cushman Brook. The Town is very interested in purchasing a portion of Hickory Ridge Golf Course and would like to use CPA funds to start that process, therefore, it's a priority. The Szala land purchase is part of a much larger land preservation project, Kestrel Land Trust is working with the Szala family to permanently preserve almost 200 acres of farmland (193 acres in Hadley).*

- b. Has the Town prioritized this parcel for conservation?  
*Yes, this property lies in the North Amherst Agricultural Block identified for conservation on Map 8 Action Plan of the Town's Open Space & Recreation Plan. It is also located between two permanently protected conservation areas (Podick & Kathryn Cole).*
- c. Could funding be split between 2 years?  
*Kestrel Land Trust has indicated to the Town that if needed the funding could be used in FY21. Either way it would all be used in one year, either FY20 or FY21.*
- d. Under other funding, the proposal says that CPA funds would cover the cost of the property purchase, but the budget shows you are also asking for \$38K (25% of the value of the property) for other costs: survey, signs, trails, and a stewardship fund for Kestrel Land Trust. Would it be possible to ask the Land Trust to fund some of these costs? Are there grants the Town could seek for some of these costs?  
*There is a possibility that the Town can work with Kestrel on fundraising efforts to support these additional costs. It's too late to apply for any grants to purchase the property in FY20.*
- e. Please explain the role of the Kestrel Land Trust.  
*Kestrel Land Trust is working with the Szala family to permanently preserve almost 200 acres of farmland in Hadley and Amherst. They are coordinating the overall effort which this land is part of, however, this site will become Amherst Conservation land.*
- f. Why were no grants applied for, and could they still be?  
*The Town was already applying for a LAND Grant for the Keet Haskins property in 2019. It's too late to apply for any grants to purchase the property in FY20.*
- g. Who is the current owner? Has there been any discussion with the owner of a possible bargain sale, to lower the cost to taxpayers?  
*The Szala family currently owns the property and are already taking below market value for the property in order to preserve it.*
- h. Have you considered other methods of protecting this property, such as purchase of conservation easements on the rear of the property, perhaps combined with trail easements, rather than outright ownership?  
*As mentioned, this land is part of a larger land preservation project and the owner would like to sell the land to the Town.*
- i. Is \$10K really necessary for signs for this property? Please justify.  
*The Conservation Department would like to have informational kiosks at all Conservation Areas, in addition signage includes needed boundary marking, and safety signs such as "no hunting".*
- j. What are the tax consequences? How is the land currently taxed? Are there any higher and better uses of all or part of the property (i.e. additional tax revenue) that would be forgone if the property is purchased by the town for open space?

*The property is currently owned by the Szala family and is under Chapter 61 tax status for agriculture. The eastern end of the property adjacent to Sunderland Rd. could be developed as one or two residential lots.*

- k. To the extent that all or part of the property is in a flood plain, provides habitat for protected species, or is otherwise ecologically valuable, how likely is it that these environmental resources would be lost if the town does not purchase the property? That is, is the property likely to remain in its current condition (although perhaps not open to the public) if the town does not purchase it? Is ownership by the town critical to maintaining these environmental resources?

*The natural resources on this land could be impacted if the eastern portion is developed as house lots. In addition, one goal of purchasing these parcels was to create trail connectivity between the Podick and Katheryn Cole conservation areas. That would not happen if it's not owned by the town for conservation.*

- l. Separate from the benefits to wildlife and water quality, is the land important to protecting the town's drinking water supply?

*This land is not located within a Zone II or Interim Wellhead Protection area for any of the Town of Amherst drinking water supply wells, and is not located within a Zone A watershed protection area for Town of Amherst surface water reservoirs. However, it does lie over an aquifer utilized for the Town of Hadley's drinking water supply.*

- m. What are the expected ongoing maintenance costs, and can the town afford them?  
*On-going maintenance costs will be low, they will include trail maintenance activities.*

- n. Is there any particular reason for not submitting this proposal in the Recreation category?

*The land is being purchased for conservation and passive recreational use under Article 97. Therefore, the property can't be developed for more organized recreational use and doesn't fit under the CPA Recreational category*

- o. Will a parking lot be needed?

*There is a driveway and parking at the Podick Conservation Area which will have trail access to the Szala property. The informal parking at Podick might be expanded at some point onto the Szala land.*

### 3. Hickory Ridge Property

- a. How does the department rank each of its proposals in priority, and why? Could funding be split between 2 years?

*The Town prioritizes the Open Space CPA applications as: 1. Keet-Haskins, 2. Hickory Ridge, 3. Szala, and 4. Cons Land & Trail Maintenance. Keet-Haskins has received a \$400K LAND Grant which the Town would like to take advantage of to preserve the riparian corridor of the Cushman Brook. The Town is very interested in purchasing a portion of Hickory Ridge Golf Course and would like to use CPA funds to start that process, therefore, it's a priority. The Szala land purchase is part of a much larger land preservation project, Kestrel Land Trust is working with the Szala family to permanently preserve almost 200 acres of farmland (193 acres in Hadley). This project is being submitted under all three categories – Housing, Recreation, & Open Space. Yes, the funding could be split between two years.*

- b. Area cross hatching not total clear. Does this property cover all 4 habitats?

*In general yes, all four resource areas – NHESP Priority Habitat, NHESP Estimated Habitat, BioMap 2 Core and Critical Natural Landscape follow the Fort River and are overlaid on the Figure 3.*

- c. Based on your knowledge of the property and location, can you provide an estimate of what is appraised value is likely to be? With no money specified, what is CPAC supposed to consider? Will there be a sum soon?  
*There is a current appraisal for the property for \$1 Million+.*
- d. What impact will the proposed solar arrays have on the property's conservation values?  
*The solar arrays would have limited impact on the conservation values of the remainder of the property (the portion of the Town would buy) which includes the Fort River and its associated wetlands, streams, and floodplain. Once installed the arrays won't impact these natural resources that the Town hopes to restore from current golf course conditions.*
- e. Given the existence of state and federally listed species on the property, would the sorts of development envisioned by the owner ever be possible, even if the Town were unable to purchase it?  
*Yes, this is a 150-acre property that includes some upland areas and portions adjacent to West Pomeroy Ln that are developable.*
- f. Are alternative protection strategies, such as the use of a conservation easement for a portion of the property, under consideration?  
*No, the owner would like to eventually sell the property, therefore, discussions of conservation easements has not come up.*
- g. Can the Town purchase only the wetter areas and leave the higher ground available for housing (another Town priority)?  
*There has been discussion of using portions of the property for housing, more precisely the area along West Pomeroy Lane where the club house and parking lot are located.*
- h. What are the tax consequences? How is the land currently taxed? Are there any higher and better uses of all or part of the property (i.e., additional tax revenue) that would be forgone if the property is purchased by the town for open space?  
*The property is currently privately owned and is under Chapter 61 tax status for recreation. If the land is not preserved there are portions that could be developed for housing, or for more organized recreational use.*
- i. To the extent that all or part of the property is in a flood plain, provides habitat for protected species, or is otherwise ecologically valuable, how likely is it that these environmental resources would be lost if the town does not purchase the property? That is, is the property likely to remain in its current condition (although perhaps not open to the public) if the town does not purchase it? Is ownership by the town critical to maintaining these environmental resources?  
*If the property is developed for housing or some kind of commercial use there will be significant impacts to the Fort River and its associated wetlands and streams. Even with the wetland regulations the only way to permanently preserve this amazing resource is for the Town to purchase the land.*
- j. Separate from the benefits to wildlife and water quality, is the land important to protecting the town's drinking water supply?

*No, this land is not located within a Zone II or Interim Wellhead Protection area for any of the Town of Amherst drinking water supply wells, and is not located within a Zone A watershed protection area for Town of Amherst surface water reservoirs.*

- k. What are the expected ongoing maintenance costs, and can the town afford them?  
*It is hard to answer this question at this time considering the variety of uses proposed for the land (housing, trails, recreation).*
- l. Is there any particular reason for not submitting this proposal in the Recreation category?  
*This project is being submitted under Housing, Recreation, and Open Space.*

4. Keet-Haskins Property

- a. How does the department rank each of its proposals in priority, and why? Could funding be split between 2 years?  
*The Town prioritizes the Open Space CPA applications as: 1. Keet-Haskins, 2. Hickory Ridge, 3. Szala, and 4. Cons Land & Trail Maintenance. Keet-Haskins has received a \$400K LAND Grant which the Town would like to take advantage of to preserve the riparian corridor of the Cushman Brook. The Town is very interested in purchasing a portion of Hickory Ridge Golf Course and would like to use CPA funds to start that process, therefore, it's a priority. The Szala land purchase is part of a much larger land preservation project, Kestrel Land Trust is working with the Szala family to permanently preserve almost 200 acres of farmland (193 acres in Hadley). No, in order to utilize the LAND Grant funding the Town must close on the property in FY20.*
- b. Was the Land Grant funded?  
*Yes, the Town was awarded \$400K from the LAND Grant program towards the purchase of this property.*
- c. Has the town prioritized this parcel for conservation?  
*Yes, this property is located within the Cushman Brook/Mill River corridor prioritized by the Town for natural resource protection and conservation.*
- d. Has there been any discussion with the owner of a possible bargain sale, to lower the cost to taxpayers?  
*No, the Town has not asked W.D. Cows this question.*
- e. If this project is funded, could Kestrel Land Trust be asked to support some of the non-acquisition costs (survey, stewardship, signs, etc.)?  
*There is a possibility that the Town can work with Kestrel on fundraising efforts to support this project.*
- f. Is \$10K really necessary for signs for this property? Please justify.  
*The Conservation Department would like to have informational kiosks at all Conservation Areas, in addition signage includes needed boundary marking, and safety signs such as "no hunting".*
- g. Would Cushman Brook buffer zone restrictions allow for an 11-house development on this property?  
*Yes, the majority of the property is zoned RO which allows for residential development. In addition, the location of the proposed subdivision was outside the 200' Riverfront protection area for the Cushman Brook and in a wooded, upland area that would most likely be able to get permitted by the Conservation Commission.*

- h. What are the tax consequences? How is the land currently taxed? Are there any higher and better uses of all or part of the property (i.e., additional tax revenue) that would be forgone if the property is purchased by the town for open space?

*The property is currently owned by W.D. Cowls, Inc. and is under Chapter 61 tax status for forestry. If the land is not preserved there are portions that could be developed as a single family home subdivision.*

- i. To the extent that all or part of the property is in a flood plain, provides habitat for protected species, or is otherwise ecologically valuable, how likely is it that these environmental resources would be lost if the town does not purchase the property? That is, is the property likely to remain in its current condition (although perhaps not open to the public) if the town does not purchase it? Is ownership by the town critical to maintaining these environmental resources?

*The current owner would like to do something other than forestry on this land and has already submitted a preliminary subdivision plan for 11 single family homes to the Planning Department. The natural resources of this property would be greatly impacted by the construction of this subdivision, therefore, ownership by the town is critical to protecting these resources.*

- j. Separate from the benefits to wildlife and water quality, is the land important to protecting the town's drinking water supply?

*There is a raw drinking water line carrying water from Atkins reservoir to Amherst's water treatment plant that crosses the site (approximately 3,600 linear feet runs through the site). It would be a benefit to the Town to own the water line land instead of having the current easement for maintenance. The land is not located within a Zone II or Interim Wellhead Protection area, or within a Zone A watershed protection area for Town of Amherst drinking water supply.*

- k. What are the expected ongoing maintenance costs, and can the town afford them?

*This property will have very small on-going maintenance costs considering the Conservation Department is not proposing to build a parking lot or trail system.*

- l. Is there any particular reason for not submitting this proposal in the Recreation category?

*In order to use the LAND Grant funds the property must be purchased for conservation and passive recreational use. Therefore, the property can't be developed for more organized recreational use and doesn't fit under the CPA Recreational category.*

5. Community Field Implementation of Strategic Plan

*The Town requests a withdrawal of this CPA application. Staff would still like to provide the CPA Committee a preview of the planned improvements to Community Field and the Regional Schools because this project will be forthcoming in future years.*

6. Groff Park Modernization

*The Town requests a funding increase from \$200,000 to \$250,000. The increased funding is necessary at this time to complete the project as designed. Bid results are due by March 1st, however, there may change orders and contingencies during construction that would increase the project cost. Unspent funds will be returned to the CPA.*

- a. How does the department rank each of its proposals in priority, and why?

*The Town, including the LSSE Department and the Planning Department, consider this to be a very high priority. The project is in the bidding phase with the intention of selecting a contractor this winter for construction during the spring and summer. The CPA funds requested are critical to installing the design strongly supported by the community.*

- b. Please provide the budgets that were presented to CPA for each of the two previous requests that were funded.

*Please see attached budget dated 12-9-2015 prepared by the Berkshire Design Group. This budget was used to develop the CPA requests as well as the grant applications.*

- c. How much of those previous appropriations has been spent? Please provide a report on the use of those funds.

*There were 2 previous appropriations of CPA funds: \$550,000 and \$500,000, for a total of \$1,050,000. The Town has entered into 2 contracts with these funds: Berkshire Design Group and M.E. O'Brien & Sons. The contract with Berkshire Design Group is in the amount of \$54,400 for design, final plans, bidding and construction oversight. The contract with M.E. O'Brien & Sons is in the amount of \$594,035 for the playground equipment, spray pad fixtures and site amenities. The remaining funds--\$401,565—will be used to pay the contractor for installation; for additional construction materials such as gravel, concrete, and piping; and for final landscaping.*

- d. How confident is the Town that this sum is sufficient? Are we cutting costs so much that the end result will be a low-balled version of the original, highly popular design?

*As stated above, the Town requests an increase in this proposal from \$200,000 to \$250,000 for this very reason. This amount of funding will ensure that the Town can install the plan as designed, which has received positive feedback from the community. The Town bid this project in September 2018 and based on those results, determined the need to increase the construction budget.*

- e. Can this plan be modified further to reduce costs?

*The plan has already been modified to reduce costs and to meet the expectations of the community. The final plans were slightly modified but did not significantly change the project because of the support for the project. More information is explained below.*

- f. Has this project gone out to bid yet? How much over budget were the original bids? What was value-engineered out?

*The project was originally bid in September 2018 with an aggressive timeline for construction, including work to be completed before winter. Four bids were received and were more than the budget. The increased costs were a result of a few factors: bidders put a premium on their price because of the timeline; price of materials increased from the original budget developed almost 2 years ago, and there were a few expensive items in the design. In order to reduce costs, a few items were eliminated or modified. The lower level pavilion was originally planned to be replaced—this is no longer part of the project. The spray pad included a custom 'pool and swale' which added significantly to the cost because of the material (gunite) and extra mechanical equipment—this has been replaced by a standard water feature. The upper level pavilion was originally designed as a custom size and with a custom roof—this was changed to a standard size (and a bigger pavilion) at a cost savings. Decorative pavers along the entry path have also been eliminated in favor of standard concrete. There were also adjustments to the*

*color of the playground equipment and surface material as a measure to reduce costs. These steps were taken without changing the overall design or eliminating the equipment in the playground and spray pad, which were strongly supported by the community.*

*The project is being bid again, with results due in late February. In addition to modifying parts of the plan and the materials, the Town has also restructured the base bid and alternates. By including more items in the base bid and simplifying the alternates, the Town expects to be able to make a contract award in March.*

- g. Could the \$200,000 request be spread over a longer time?

*The funds will be spent by September 1, 2019, as this is a conservative end date for construction. The funds could be borrowed to allow for a longer payback term, but the funds are needed this spring in order to finish construction this summer.*

7. Mill River Recreation Area

*The Town is modifying this request because PARC grant funding was not awarded. The updated request is for \$25,000 to develop a better design and for a public process to help inform the design. The Town plans to submit a PARC grant application again this July for improvements to the Mill River Recreation Area.*

- a. How does the department rank each of its proposals in priority, and why?

*Improvements to the Mill River Recreation Area are a high priority. The Town has fixed things in a piecemeal approach at the park, addressing urgent items that need immediate attention such as the tennis courts and swimming pool. Before undertaking additional improvements to this site, the Town would like to have a comprehensive design of the play areas and incorporate new amenities needed by the community.*

- b. Can you please provide a breakdown of the \$760,374 budget? Why \$750,000 raised to estimate of \$760,374?

*As noted above, the Town is modifying this proposal to develop a more refined concept plan and cost estimate, including construction phases.*

- c. How much was paid to Berkshire Design group for the concept master plan and how was this funded?

*Berkshire Design Group was not paid for their services. They agreed to develop the initial concept plan and cost estimates for the grant, with the understanding that they would then be eligible for consideration if the Town were to bid the design of the project. This process is typical where designers, engineers and consultants often provide a small amount of time for free as a way to help get future business.*

- d. If this project isn't recommended, or appropriated by Town Council, will the originally planned improvements to the basketball courts still go ahead?

*The improvements to the basketball courts will not move ahead until a comprehensive site design has been completed. The concept developed for the PARC grant, which was supported by staff, moved the basketball courts west into the current parking lot. This allowed for more room between the baseball fields for safety, and to separate user groups such as teenagers playing basketball and little kids using the playground. Although the concept design was supported, it is not refined enough to know exactly where or how the basketball courts would change. Until this can be determined, the*



*basketball courts will remain in their current location and be maintained as best as possible. The basketball court funds are also going to be used as part of the local match required for the grant programs. If these monies were spent before the grant, the Town would need use additional funds for the match.*

- e. The town originally requested approximately \$50K for the basketball courts and then came back to request more because that wasn't enough. Similarly, the Groff Park project is coming in much more expensively than anticipated. What confidence do you have that this project, if funded, won't significantly rise in cost? Is the requested sum sufficient?

*The experience with the basketball courts and at Groff Park were important reality checks to help the Town prepare more accurate cost estimates in the future. To develop more accurate cost estimates, the concept design will need to be more refined to better gauge site work and amount of materials, and the estimates will need to take into account a higher contingency for inflation and material costs.*

- f. Please clarify what the PARC grant is. How does this project align with the Groff Park & Community Field upgrades?

*The Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) grant is a state administered program to develop or renovate parks, and acquire land for new parks. The grant program is very popular, offering up to \$400,000 in funds with applications typically due in July.*

*In recent years the Town has made investments to improve major recreation areas, such as Groff Park and Community Field. The Mill River Recreation Area is the most widely used park in town. It offers a variety of active recreation amenities—tennis, basketball, swimming, baseball, playgrounds; it offers area for passive recreation; and it is the gateway to the Puffer's Pond-Mill River greenway. Parts of the park are in need of major repair, and before the Town spends money fixing things as they are, staff would like to have an updated vision for the Mill River Recreation Area.*

- g. LWCF stands for what?

*LWCF stands for Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). LWCF funds are provided by the National Park Service and administered by the State through the same department as the LAND and PARC grants. The Mill River Recreation Area was purchased and developed with LWCF funds. The LWCF is still an active grant program and one the Town would seek for funding to help with the improvements to Mill River.*

- h. What "year-round" uses occur in the winter?

*Winter uses include both formal and informal activities such as hiking/walking, dog walking, birding, and cross country skiing.*

- i. Storage shed causes narrow walkways and other defects. How would that be remedied?

*The impacts from the storage shed were considered and a few remedies were discussed. One possibility would be removing the shed and finding another location (or locations) for equipment storage. A second option, that was not fully explored, was to redesign the parking lot and entry sequence because it does not provide a clear arrival point. The concept plan did not fully address this issue because it went beyond the scope and*

*budget for the project. With more time available before applying for funding, this can be incorporated into revised plans.*

- j. Phase 2 diagram not shown?

*The concept plan shows improvements that would be funded in 2 phases. The \$750,000 cost estimate would not be able to implement everything shown on the plan. The 2nd phase would include a full build out of the concept plan and additional improvements to the southern parking lot and entry.*

8. Development and Consulting for Affordable Housing

- a. Attracting a developer in 2016? Typo—2019? Some of this proposal has not been updated.

*Some of this proposal has not been updated. Yes, our intention is to attract a developer in 2019. And yes, this proposal is quite similar in many respects to the 2016 Housing Trust Proposal.*

- b. How many communities of our size—where a large portion are students—commit to spending \$400,000?

*To the best of my knowledge, there are no other communities in the Commonwealth with 40-50,000 residents of whom 50% are students. In any event, we are not proposing to develop affordable housing for students. The housing is needed for non-student populations who have been squeezed out of housing because students living in the community have driven up both rental and purchase costs of housing.*

- c. Has any study been done regarding hazardous materials on site? Might asbestos removal add significantly to costs? Easier with total destruction or maintain school? No study of this nature has been done. The developer who successfully responds to the draft RFP will have to determine that and make a decision about whether to retain the building or demolish it. Comments from the public forum and at public meetings was mixed with regard to the keeping the school building, with benefits and consequences for both scenarios.

- d. Plans A, C, and D—need to see both exterior and interior views.

*Kuhn-Riddle was not contracted to develop detailed architectural plans for the site. They were only contracted to provide the Housing Trust and the Town concept designs to explore how the site might be used and what potential developments may look like. They did this quite successfully. Further architectural planning will be the responsibility of the developer.*

- e. The proposal seems to suggest two different ways the requested funding may be spent. On the one hand, you report that CPA funding previously provided has been used to hire a consultant and to contract for a variety of studies and surveys related to the potential development of the East Street School site for affordable housing. On the other hand, you note that AMAHT does not anticipate being a developer, and that you intend to use these and future CPA funds as zero interest loans to developers. Can you please confirm if I have correctly understood that both these uses are anticipated, and if so, provide some sense of relative amounts that would be used for each? (For example, if AMAHT were to receive \$300K per year for five years, how might that \$1.5M total be used?) *AMAHT has been careful to segregate the ways in which it has used CPA funds, consistent with the requests that it has made. The \$400,000 request is intended to be*

*used to support a developer who is successful in developing a proposal for the East Street School site or potentially some other site. The \$40,000 request is intended to be used to support a consultant to assist the Housing Trust in bringing new development possibilities into the affordable housing pipeline for Amherst. To the extent that AMAHT requires funding to undertake its own due diligence work in advance of developing one or more RFPs, it will request specific funds to do so.*

*The East Street School site is unique in a number of ways. It is not clear what the requirements of the next project might be. The suggested \$300,000 annual budget needs to be evaluated against our general goals for the development of at least 50 new units of affordable housing over the next five years. We have not done that.*

- f. You report that developing the East Street site will cost \$8-10 Million with an additional soft cost for the developer of perhaps 30%. A more helpful figure would be the portion of this total that you believe will need to be subsidized with public funding (local, state or federal) to make the project feasible for such a developer. Can you provide that?  
*The costs provided are an estimate developed by Kuhn-Riddle as part of our contract with them. Neither we, nor they, can provide any additional, detailed cost information at this point. That is the responsibility of the developer. Moreover, the sources of funding will vary depending upon what the developer plans to do with the property. For example, if all of the housing is affordable, then virtually all of the spending will come from public sources. However, if the developer decides to include market rate housing, then that would change.*
- g. Can you please provide a hypothetical budget showing potential income sources for carrying out this project and reflecting how CPA funds might leverage the other money needed to make the project work?  
*You might look to the budget presented by Valley Community Development for their Studio Apartment project. As we do not have a developer, we cannot provide the estimates you are seeking.*
- h. Your proposal reviews the housing needs of Amherst and points to several different types of housing: rental housing for low- and extremely low-income households as well as affordable owner occupied housing for moderate income families, senior housing and housing for those with disabilities. Is it correct that the AMAHT is focusing primarily on rental housing? Do you anticipate initiating any projects in the next few years that would address the need for affordable home ownership?  
*At the present time AMAHT is focused on rental housing. In the past year we have developed both Guidelines for Application to the Housing Trust for funding and the Draft RFP for development of the East Street site. That does not mean that we are opposed to homeownership projects; just that we are not prepared ourselves to work with that specific goal at this time. We have supported the development of homeownership units as proposed by Valley Community Development in a note transmitted to CPAC last month.*
- i. Why does the AMAHT propose using CPA funds it might receive for housing projects in which affordability restrictions could be allowed to expire after 30 years? What is the justification for such an approach, given the impacts caused by loss of affordable units?

*Where do you find a proposal from AMAHT that fits this description? All disbursements of CPA funds by the Housing Trust are subject to the same requirements of any disbursements of CPA funds. That being said, the term of affordability is different based on the funding source and amount of funding. And, a developer will often negotiate the position of affordable restrictions based on amount of funds. For instance, if there is a \$10 million project and the developer secures a \$7 million loan with a 45-year affordability limit, and \$500,000 from CPA, the \$7million loan will have a priority position at the registry. The CPA funds will have a permanent affordability provision, but second to the other funding provisions.*

- j. In 2018 a similar request from AMAHT was predicated on the need to have flexibility if a project came to the fore quickly and CPAC could not respond because of the restrictive Town Meeting calendar. That is no longer the case. Why shouldn't CPAC bank the funds you are requesting and disperse them as needed if such a project arises?  
*Even with the change in the form of Town Government, it is not clear that CPAC will be "open for business" throughout the year. Moreover, each year there is competition for CPA funds and with each successive year the competition has increased. Although there are exceptions, we believe that current and future requests for support of community housing are much more likely to require multi-year commitments than other requests. Thus it is imperative that significant amounts of CPA monies be set aside each year in order to assure that the Town can meet its goals for the development of affordable housing. One effective way to do this is to move funds into the Housing Trust. Otherwise, these funds may be drained away by the next best conservation, historical, or recreational project.*
- k. Do we have a report on how funds previously awarded have been used?  
*All disbursements of CPA funds used by AMAHT are promptly reported to Ms. Sonia Aldrich by the Town's Planning Department.*
- l. Could AMAHT continue its work if CPAC awarded a smaller amount for capital projects?  
*The Housing Trust will continue its work as best it can with smaller investments. The result will simply be that fewer affordable housing units will be developed in Amherst. What sort of reporting back to CPAC, documenting that capital funds transferred to AMAHT were used for allowable CPA purposes, is envisioned?  
No change. All disbursements of CPA funds used by AMAHT are promptly reported to Ms. Sonia Aldrich by the Town's Planning Department.*
- Once an affordable housing project is complete, who is responsible for checking that units continue to be reserved for the target population?  
*This will depend upon the nature of the contract between the developer and the Town, as well as other parties. There will be other monitoring parties involved, including the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Banking staff, and Town Planning and Building staff. DHCD and the funders typically require a monitoring agent who will perform an annual review of the affordable units and maintain a waiting a list of income-eligible residents.*
- Will Amherst's net-zero energy requirement affect this project?

*Amherst's net-zero requirement only extends to public buildings. Although public funds are used to support these developments, they are not public buildings built by the Town of for Town purposes.*

- m. Is this all a pass-through grant or is there an admin fee for the Trust? Is the \$40K for the development consultant expected to be an annual expense as well?

*The Trust neither seeks nor collects administrative fees from CPA funds. And yes, we anticipate that the \$40k for the development consultant will continue to be an annual expense until such time as the AMAHT has met its development goals. Moreover, the Trust plans to propose specific housing development goals to the Town Council, the Planning Board, CPAC and other Town bodies so that these are recognized as "Town Goals". They will be based in plans such as the Amherst Master Plan and the Housing Production Plan in which housing goals have previously been stated.*

9. First Time Home Buyers LMI

- a. Which is Valley CDC's top priority, the studio apartment or this homeowner project? *Valley Community Development's top priority is the studio apartments supportive housing development.*

- b. Please spell out all acronyms.

*AMI – Area Median Income*

*CDBG – Community Development Block Grant*

*CFO – Chief Financial Officer*

*CHAPA – Citizens Housing and Planning Association*

*CITC – Community Investment Tax Credit Program*

*DHCD – Department of Housing and Community Development*

*DPL – Deferred Payment Loan*

*DTI – Debt-to-Income*

*EPA – Environmental Protection Agency*

*FTHB – First Time Homebuyer*

*HUD – Housing & Urban Development*

*IT – Information Technology*

*LMI – Low/moderate Income*

*MHP – Mass Housing Partnership*

*MLS – Multiple Listing Service*

*PITI – Principal, Interest, Taxes & Insurance*

*SHI – Subsidized Housing Inventory*

- c. Valley CDC was funded for a similar program in FY2017. At that time the committee requested a change that was accepted and was made a condition of our recommendation to Town Meeting: Instead of using a forgivable 30 year mortgage you were asked to use a "silent second mortgage" to create a permanent subsidy that could be passed on from the original home owner to subsequent income-qualified buyers rather than serve as a windfall for a single family. Was the FY2017 project carried out as agreed? If not, why not? If yes, why does this proposal return to the forgivable mortgage model?

*Below is what was passed at Town Meeting and shared with us by Town Planner Nate Malloy.*

*The affordability of the property is secured with two documents recorded at the Registry of Deeds at time of closing—the deferred payment loan acts as a second mortgage on the property and a promissory note between the buyers and the Town explains the conditions of receiving the funds. Valley implemented the program as described below, except they could not be counted on the State’s SHI. The units were not counted on the SHI for a few reasons, but mainly because the homes in Amherst are too expensive for a household earning 80% of the AMI to afford. CPA funds allow affordable housing projects to serve households earning up to 100% of the AMI, and this flexibility was necessary to find income eligible buyers who could afford a home in Amherst. DHCD also has additional requirements for homes to be included on the SHI, and these requirements are very difficult to meet in Amherst. In particular, the provision that a home must be priced at a level that a household earning 70% AMI can afford. DHCD uses this provision as a safety net to know that the homeowners can handle unforeseen expenses.*

**Valley Community Development Corporation – First Time Homebuyer/Mortgage Subsidy Assistance Program, \$227,248 (CPAC Vote: 6 - 0 - 2)** – Valley Community Development Corporation will provide four (4) \$50,000, 0% interest, 30 year deferred payment loans (plus administrative costs) as mortgage subsidies to write down the cost of a home to LMI (low/moderate income) households earning 100% or less of Area Median Income to assist them with a purchase of a home in the Town of Amherst. Any buyers of these financially assisted homes would be counted on the Town’s subsidized housing inventory. A mortgage and note would be executed by the buyer(s) outlining the terms and conditions of the use restriction(s). This proposal also includes additional costs to administer the program and new homeowner counseling.

- d. Will there be restrictions on any future sale of houses purchased using this subsidy program? What happens if the home buyer sells? Do they pay off the subsidy? Are funds retained by VCD, or returned to CPA funds?

*Valley is proposing the same program as last funded which would include a 30 year Deferred Payment Loan (DPL) which would be forgiven 1/30th per year. There are no restrictions other than repayment on any future sale of these homes. All loan balances are to be paid back to Town at time of sale, transfer of deed, or cash out refinances. The owner and the Town also have the ability to negotiate extending the restriction to a new owner if the property is transferred within 30 years.*

*The \$50,000 mortgage subsidies never come through Valley’s books. After households are approved and all documentation is in order, we work with the Town which cuts a check in the name of the borrower and their attorney and which gets delivered to the buyer’s attorney shortly before closing.*

- e. What are restrictions if any for refinancing of property, or transfer to family members?  
*There is a promissory note and a mortgage and security agreement for each homebuyer(s) between the Town of Amherst and the homebuyer which detail restrictions. All balances from the Town’s \$50,000 mortgage subsidy are to be paid back to the Town at time of sale, transfer of deed or cash out refinances.*

- f. Is the home buyer's income checked annually before 1/30 of the mortgage is forgiven? *As a homeownership program, household income is only verified at initial qualification when applying for the \$50,000 mortgage subsidy. Income verification includes recent paystubs/other income, three years most recent tax returns, asset information, etc. to make sure the homebuyer is income eligible at the time of purchase. The goal of a homeownership program is to help households build assets for the future. See attached list of documents required.*
10. Studio Apartment Housing
- a. Which is Valley CDC's top priority, this or the mortgage subsidy request? *Valley Community Development's top priority is the studio apartments supportive housing development.*
- b. The proposal states: "Following an exhaustive two-year site search, Valley Community Development Corporation ('Valley') is under contract to purchase a single family home located on a .88-acre parcel in January 2019." Has this property now been purchased? *Yes, Valley Community Development purchased the property on Friday, January 18, 2019.*
- c. Please explain who these units are for--Facilities Consolidation Fund Units. *FCF provides funding for the development of community-based housing for clients of the Commonwealth's Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Valley is using FCF funds in this development specifically for clients of DMH. FCF funds help defray the capital cost of developing a proposed 2 units dedicated to DMH clients. Valley will seek project based rental vouchers to pair with these units, as the DMH clients are presumed to be very low income. DMH will refer clients for these units when they are vacant, and Valley will screen these tenants using its standard criteria to ensure a good match. Once placed, these DMH clients will receive on-going services from DMH. Valley has had good success collaborating with DMH at other properties. For these tenants, there is always someone to call for help if a tenant is experiencing challenges. Clients of DMH have an advantage in that they are guaranteed an array of on-going services, as opposed to the many others in our society who have undiagnosed and untreated mental illness and therefore may not receive needed services.*
- d. Will any new construction or reconstruction be done with handicap access/universal design in mind when feasible? *Yes, accessibility and universal design are priorities for this development. The proposed 28-unit studio apartment housing will be fully accessible to anyone entering the building. The building will contain an elevator so all floors will have vertical access. Of the 28 units, we estimate that two units will be fully wheelchair accessible. All units will be visitable, though bathrooms in the non-accessible units are not accessible. The common areas including the laundry facilities (with at least one accessible washer/dryer), meeting/office spaces, visitor bathroom, exterior deck, and parking will be accessible.*
- e. Could CDC continue to develop this project with a smaller CPA award? Would smaller awards over multiple years be equally helpful as a larger, one-time award?

*The honest answer is no. If Valley does not receive the full request from CPA, it will need to raise the gap financing from other sources not yet identified and not easily found.*

*Valley is proposing a relatively small scale supportive housing development to better serve future tenants and because we believe it is more compatible with the neighborhood and location. This smaller scale development makes using the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program, the largest source of financing for affordable housing, not practicable. That, in turn, requires more creative fund raising from multiple sources.*

*Additionally, Valley will incur approximately 2-3 years of holding costs for the property. Due to the highly competitive Amherst housing market, it took Valley two (2) years to secure an appropriate property along with Valley convincing its affordable housing lender to adjust its lending practices in order for us to compete in the Amherst housing market, with mostly student housing cash buyers. Now that Valley owns the property and occupancy is several years away, Valley will incur interest on the acquisition loan, real estate taxes, and snow removal, landscaping, and utilities costs. Our development budget includes these carrying costs.*

*As noted in the budget submitted with the proposal, Valley has detailed the revenue it needs to raise to complete the renovation/expansion as well as all the soft costs necessary to complete this development. Our budget basically has maxed out what Valley can request from State and federal resources through the MA Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD). For this development to be competitive when we apply for the larger sources of funds from DHCD, Valley must assemble all the local financing (local financing is required to be fully committed prior to the Commonwealth's commitment), prior to applying for the funds from DHCD. No gaps in financing can remain when submitting the request to DHCD.*

f. Will Amherst's net-zero energy requirement affect this project?

*No, it will not. Valley requested clarification from Town Planner Nate Malloy regarding the Town's net zero bylaw. Mr. Malloy confirmed with the Building Commissioner that the net zero bylaw does not apply to Valley's development because it is a private development on private property.*

*Even though not required to meet net-zero standards, energy efficiency is a high priority in all of Valley's developments and we plan to reach near-net-zero standards through the following building features:*

*Enhanced energy efficient building envelope*

- High efficiency mechanical systems*
- Photo voltaics on the roof*
- Good HERS rating*
- Energy Star appliances; LED lighting*

*In addition, we will use best practices for sustainable site design, including minimizing impervious surfaces and using native, drought-resistant plantings.*



- g. Which Sources have already been secured? What is the timeline for all Sources on hand?

*Valley acquired acquisition loan financing from CEDAC (Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation) which was used to purchase the property on January 18, 2019. Valley also acquired a \$100,000 pre-development loan from CEDAC to pay for due diligence tasks including survey, soil testing, asbestos/lead testing, preliminary architectural, civil and landscaping plans, etc. Both these loans will be paid back from the permanent sources of financing detailed in the development budget.*

*The timeline for all sources:*

<i>Kuehn Grant</i>	<i>\$ 11,500</i>	<i>Committed</i>
<i>Amherst CPA</i>	<i>\$ 500,000</i>	<i>Decision July 2019</i>
<i>Amherst CDBG</i>	<i>\$ 200,000</i>	<i>Decision August 2019</i>
<i>FHLBB Grant</i>	<i>\$ 500,000</i>	<i>Application Sept/Award Dec 2019</i>
<i>DHCD Sources</i>	<i>\$3,601,907</i>	<i>Pre-Application Oct/Full App/Dec 2019</i> <i>Award: July 2020</i>

#### 11. Rental Subsidy Program

- a. Which is the bigger priority? This project or the housing vouchers?

*These two programs are responses to the needs of different populations and use different strategies to end homelessness in Amherst. As such, it is difficult to prioritize one over the other because addressing the needs of both of these populations is necessary to end and prevent homelessness in Amherst. This program targets preventing homelessness in our community through focus on addressing the affordable housing gap and extreme rent burden on low-income community members.*

- b. As a client's income rises, is the subsidy decreased? Have any clients lost the subsidy in the past due to non-cooperation with the support services or loss of income?

*Yes, as a client's income rises, the subsidy will decrease. They are responsible to pay 40% of their income toward rent. Due to the fact that this programming has not yet been implemented, we do not have past experience of non-cooperation of support service. However, it is mandatory for clients to meet with ACC's case workers to work on applying for affordable housing, seeking additional employment to increase income and other activities that will help them to become self-sufficient within one year---the duration of their rental subsidy. Those who do not comply with this requirement will lose their rental subsidies.*

- c. Have clients been responsible tenants, i.e. taken proper care of the rental property? Are the property owners satisfied with ACC's management of this program? Are any willing to speak in support?

*Because this program has not yet been implemented, we do not have past program information available. However, we expect that in many cases, the participants in this program will be ongoing leaseholders who have difficulty making full monthly rent payment due to a housing/financial crisis and are "typical" leaseholders in every other respect, whom we do not expect to face unusual challenges with being responsible tenants. Per our eligibility requirements listed in the proposal, participants must remain*

*tenants in good standing to continue to receive the subsidy, and our case management work would support them in this.*

- d. Can you clarify the differences between this rental subsidy program and your supportive housing program using vouchers? Are you targeting different populations? Are you providing different types or levels of support? In what other ways are they different? *The Rental Subsidy Program and Supportive Housing Program are different interventions, targeted at different populations, with different strategies for effecting change.*

*The Rental Subsidy Program addresses the affordable housing gap and rent burden in our community. It uses subsidies and case management to help individuals who have income but are experiencing a housing crisis, are vulnerable to homelessness, or are facing eviction. It functions as both a preventative measure and a rapid-rehousing intervention, with the aim of keeping homelessness rare and brief in our community.*

*The Supportive Housing Program navigates systemic barriers to housing and income stability faced by those experiencing chronic homelessness who have a severe disability. It connects chronically homeless individuals with housing and intensive case management to support increased income, self-sufficiency, and eventual graduation from the program. This program requires collaboration with other service providers to provide wrap-around services to chronically homeless individuals facing multiple obstacles to stability and self-sufficiency. Please see our attached chart for a point-by-point comparison of each program.*

- e. "Landlord or house leaseholder has to agree to participate"—are they willing or unwilling usually?

*As stated above, we have not implemented this particular programming before. From our perspective, most landlords would prefer to maintain stable tenancy rather than experience frequent turnover. This programming will ensure that leaseholders can finish their agreed upon tenancy with ACC's support as they build self-sufficiency for the future, avoiding eviction. In the case of homeless participants, ACC would advocate for these participants with landlords as they apply for housing. We believe that most landlords would be amenable to this arrangement. In our current Housing First programming, we successfully collaborate with our participants' landlords. We are renting six units from Kamins, Eagle Crest and Kendrick Property --all of them are landlords/property management agencies located in Amherst.*

- f. It is not clear—are these subsidies to keep renters in place in time of financial hardship or to search for new housing or both? If the person is staying in a rental, moving expenses not needed.

*Ideally, if a participant is facing eviction, we would help them stay in their current living situation if it meets our budget criteria, with the initial priority being to keep this individual from experiencing periods of homelessness and damaging their rental history. The next step would be to evaluate through case management what that person needs to do to achieve self-sufficiency, whether it be to increase income or find a less expensive apartment, or both. The one year that the subsidy would be provided would allow that*

*person to make long-term plans for financial stability while they have ACC's financial and case management support.*

- g. When a renter qualifies, does the subsidy make up the difference between the amount of rent the renter has to pay or does the whole \$400 subsidy get used? For example, in the last example given, what was the rent total? In the table, the rent show in \$975 – seems high if the subsidy is \$400 –since a person would have to be earning \$1400 a month to provide 40% of his/her income ( $.4 \times 1450 = \$580$ ) to sum to  $\$400 + 580 = \$980$  for rent. Is this right?

*Yes, you are correct in that when a renter qualifies, the subsidy makes up the difference between the rent itself and the amount of the rent the renter has to pay. However, the subsidy can NOT be more than \$400.*

*However, you were incorrect in what you asserted. Since we are not able to locate the situation you described in our proposal, I will use the last example in Scenario #3, Page 11 to demonstrate the calculation. Please refer to Page 11:*

*The rent and income of Mr. Katz in Scenario #3 is \$625/month and \$750/month.*

*40% X \$750= \$300 (Mr. Katz' portion of rent). The subsidy is \$625-\$300= \$325. The whole \$400 does Not necessarily get used.*

- h. I could not get the rental subsidy total (\$400/month per voucher, six vouchers, over 3 years) to add up to the requested total of \$116,280. \$4,800/year per voucher, six vouchers for three years totals 86,400.

*You were partially correct. \$4,800/year per voucher, six vouchers for three years totals \$86,400. However, the budget includes \$1,000 per person for move-in cost (such as last month rent, security deposit, or finder's fees). In addition, it also includes the monthly renter management fee (\$55/unit) that ACC charges in our Phase I and Phase II Supportive Housing programs. .*

*Please refer to the Attachment A: Rental Subsidy Program Budget, FY 2020-2022. We submitted this along with our proposal to Ms. Sonia Aldrich. For your info, I am attaching it in our reply here.*

- i. "ACC has applied for \$10,000 funding from Diocese of Springfield, MA. We are due to be notified soon." Any word if ACC got this award? Could we have a report on what the current status of any previous funding to ACC is?

*We recently were notified by the Diocese of Springfield that we are receiving \$2,000 funding from them. This is our first time being awarded by the Diocese. We met with a representative of the Diocese, and it was suggested that ACC apply for \$10,000.*

*Regardless, the financial difference between what we asked for and what we received will have no impact in our agency's ability to operate.*

## 12. Phase III Supportive Housing

- a. Again, I am not seeing a clear explanation of how the 115,627.50 breaks down into three housing vouchers, over a 3 year period. The proposal seems to state a yearly cost per voucher of 7,000 in CPA funds, but that would only total 63,000.

*The budget includes the rental voucher cost, the broker's fees and the unit subsidy administration fee (which were approved in the Phase (I) and Phase (II)). For explanation, please refer to the budget attachment for Phase (III) Supportive Housing Program: FY 2020-2022 here.*

- b. Which is the bigger priority? This project or the subsidy program?

*As stated above, these two programs serve different populations with different strategies for effecting change. This program responds to the needs of the chronically homeless, while the Subsidy Program responds to the needs of those experiencing eviction due to "rent burden" by paying more than 50% of their income toward rent. Addressing the needs of both populations is necessary to end and prevent homelessness in Amherst.*

- c. Phase II funding, which has already been awarded, seems to provide a continuation of Phase I which is just now ending, so why is there a need for this additional Phase III funding? What are the programmatic differences, if any, between the different phases of this program? Is the application for continuation of an existing program or is there a new element?

*The application is for a continuation of our existing programming, so that we can reach more of the chronically homeless population in Amherst quickly and work toward ending chronic homelessness in Amherst. Our programming has thus far been effective but is currently at capacity. This phase of funding would allow us to continue to implement this program and respond to chronic homelessness within our community with a sense of urgency, rather than making those who have been homeless for years continue to wait for program openings and continue to use shelters and other emergency services as costly, long-term supports.*

*In addition, per Program requirement, the maximum stay of any participant in the program cannot be more than three years. So far, in two years plus time for the Phase (I) Supportive Housing program, seven (7) participants have received permanent housing vouchers from Amherst Housing Authority. The most three participants who are living in ACC leased-units, two began their tenancy in November, and the last one began on January 24, 2019. According to Mr. Nate Malloy, ACC's Phase (I) contract will expire on Sept. 12, 2019, so we hope to secure Phase (III) Supportive Housing Program funding to help these three participants transition out of the Phase (I) to Phase (III). In all likelihood, they may not have received their voucher by September 2019 when the contract expires. However, we are mindful of limited funding, and in the event that the Phase (III) is not funded, ACC will work with them to come up with housing options by the time Phase (I) expires.*

- d. What other sources of funding have you requested for this program or the rental subsidy program in the past several years?

*ACC applied for CDBG funding and received \$40,000 in 2018 for case management for ACC's One-Stop Resource Center. ACC's One-Stop Resource Center has been self-funded since it was established in November, 2015. ACC absorbs the case management and our support services through our use of volunteers and ongoing fundraising efforts in the community. We have provided wrap-around support service since 2016 to the*

*participants of the Phase (I) Supportive Housing with the service from the One-Stop Resource Center funded by ACC completely until Oct. 2018 when the CDBG grant was appropriated to ACC. Whether with or without CDBG funding, ACC is expected to be able to continue to provide the wrap-around service to the participants of the Supportive Housing Programs from both phases.*

*We expect to do the same for the participants of the Rental Subsidy Program. Our ability to recruit, train and support volunteers and interns to supplement the work of the professional staff to provide effective and high quality support service is time-tested since the agency was established in 2009.*

*On the other hand, we are always on the lookout for new grant opportunities. We are looking into funding opportunities from the United Way, Community Foundation of Western Mass, and corporates such as Greenfield Savings Bank, Northampton and Greenfield Cooperative Bank, among others. We received \$18,000 funding from Community Foundation of Western Mass.*

- e. Do you see this as an annual request from ACC?

*ACC is hopeful that the Valley CDC's 28 studio apartment units will help provide additional housing opportunities to the people who experience homelessness. ACC has entered into a memorandum of understanding agreement (MOU) with Valley CDC to provide service support to the homeless. In addition, ACC is participating actively with the Amherst Municipal Housing Trust East Street housing project which will have units for the low income and homeless. With the increase in housing options for the homeless in the next 2 or 3 years, ACC is confident that the chronically homeless population will be reduced such that ACC hopefully will not need to request funds from CPA.*

*In the past two years, ACC has already lowered the number of chronically homeless individuals in the Amherst community by helping 7 participants to receive vouchers for their own permanent housing. A point-in-time count in January 2018 showed that there were 13 chronically homeless individuals living in Amherst. While we may need ongoing support in continuing to implement this program in the future, our goal is to end chronic homelessness in Amherst, reducing the need for continuation of multiple phases of this project. We aim to support our participants in making lasting change, achieving self-sufficiency, and graduating from the program. We believe that population-based, housing-focused interventions will improve chronic homelessness in our community.*

- f. "Income is NOT a requirement to participate in the Supportive Housing program.

*However, commitment to at least once a week one-on-one supportive service is."*

*Perhaps income level should be required. Those with adequate income, could get support but could pay for some services? The support services – aren't many of them really for those who do not have sufficient income?*

*We do not require income as a requirement to participate in this program in order to provide low-barrier access to service to those who need it (in this case, community members who are chronically homeless and have a disability). However, those participants who have income are required to contribute 25-30% of income toward their rent which in turn lowers the funding from CPA. Additionally, the intensive case*

*management that ACC provides in this program includes assisting participants in applying for disability income and other supports. Per the data provided in our proposal, our participants are usually able to increase their income and benefits by \$1,500-3,000/year during their time in the program, thus also increasing their contribution to program costs. Eligibility requirements for this program (e.g. that participants be chronically homeless, have a disabling condition, and are assessed with multiple evidence-based tools) ensure that those receiving this service are truly in need of these supports, and in the case that someone needs less intensive service, we would refer them to other programming.*

- g. Describe what an ACC housing unit is exactly.

*For the purposes of this program, an ACC housing unit is a single-occupant unit-- either a studio or a one-bedroom apartment that must be located on a bus route in either downtown Amherst or in Amherst village centers. ACC rents from reputable property management companies such as Kamins, Eagle Crest and Kendrick Property mentioned earlier. Per the Town's requirement, ACC is the lease holder.*

- h. A time line of each Phase showing completion and overlap would be helpful. Please provide.

*Phase I: 2016-2019 (partially overlap with Phase II, Sept. 2018 - Aug. 2019)*

*Phase II: 2018-2021 (overlap with Phase III, Sept. 2019 - Aug. 2021)*

*Phase III: 2019-2022*

### 13. Preservation Plan Update

- a. How was the 2005 plan funded?

*In 2005, the project was also funded by CPA funds with Martha Lyon being the consultant. Her invoices had an account number of 24000083, with payments from December 2003 to April 2005*

- b. For payments and deliverables, what would be due dates (i.e., Preliminary findings and discussion, due by [DATE])

*Since the project has five areas in which the consultant will need to complete and a total of \$25,000, the Historical Commission would request payment when each item is finished. The project would then have a completion date of June 30, 2020 or FY June 30, 2021*

- c. Do you know how many other towns in Massachusetts have preservation plans or how frequently they are updated?

*Without extensive research, it would be difficult to determine which communities have an updated plan. It is recommended by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, that plans be updated every 5-10 years. Most towns who have historical commissions, or local historic districts are going to require some type of plan to guide their preservation efforts into the future.*

- d. The cost for the plan is based on information from MHC & PVPC about other communities' plans. Do you know what municipalities they are referencing?

*No, I do not know the communities they were referencing. MHC just updated their plan which was much more expensive since their plan would have been more detailed and looking at the entire state.*

- e. How useful has the 2005 plan been? How many of its action items been implemented? Can you give some examples? Is there a need to revise the plan, apart from the recommendation of the MHC to update it every 5-10 years? How is the existing plan inadequate?

*As with any goal driven plan, once the goals are completed or found to no longer fit the needs of the community, it becomes outdated. The 2005 plan encouraged local historic districts which we now have two, it also encouraged additional surveys of homes, outbuildings and other prominent places within the community, these goals have been achieved to the extent possible (staff time, funding etc.). In order to keep the preservation program relevant and up to date, a new plan must be created. The new plan would look at the current views of the citizens in relation to historic preservation. It would look at relevant trends, tools and ideas from the field of historic preservation. In addition, it would focus on areas within the Town that may be vulnerable in loosing historic rescotes, or perhaps buildings that ten years ago, were not considered historic.*

- f. If the MHS recommends a preservation plan be updated every 5 years, does that mean every five years \$25,000 must be budgeted for such a document?

*Not necessarily. The time frame is a recommendation, not a requirement. All towns have different needs, perhaps five years is adequate for one town, while other towns could hold off for several more years. The total budget is also something that may change over time since the cost of consultants would most likely go up. I believe every ten years for Amherst is sufficient.*

- g. How does this Plan align with larger Town planning efforts currently underway or planned? Is it done in concert or separately?

*Historic Preservation planning is a huge part of other planning tools. It can help address design guidelines, adaptive reuse, streetscape standards and many others. The new plan would look at current Bylaw requirements and then address how these bylaws may better reflect preservation efforts. The actual document would be separate from the Master Plan used by the Planning Department, however it would still be a guiding document to assist in long term planning efforts.*

- h. Will it be available online?

*Yes, a copy will be on the Town website and be easily accessible to the public and to other staff members.*

- i. Are there design standards?

*The plan could encourage design standards, but it could not require the public to adhere by them. Actual design guidelines would need to be placed within the Bylaw. The Local Historic District Commission does have this as something they would like to address this year.*

#### 14. Surveys and Appraisals

- a. In the absence of CPA monies, how are surveys paid for? Town's general fund, or does the requesting party pay? Can you provide examples of past surveys of the kind envisioned?

*Most likely they would not conduct surveys since they are not allotted Town funds. These CPA funds may be used for a variety of projects such as conducting a historic structures determination on a home that is slated for demolition, funding for Reconnaissance Level*

*Survey of a specific Neighborhood, assistance with records/archives, etc. This year the money will most likely be going toward a matching grant from MHC for the Commission to hire a consultant to create an updated Significant Structures List.*

- b. How many surveys or assessments does the Commission generally conduct annually?  
Can you describe a typical project where this money would be used?  
*Not that many, in fact last year we did not use any of these funds. An example of a typical project was discussed in the above answer*
- c. Can you provide an accounting of expenses of this sort for the past two or three fiscal years as an example of how future CPA funds are likely to be used?  
*Within the past two fiscal years this money has not been used. When Jonathan was the staff representative for the Historical Commission in FY2016, I understand they used these funds to higher an architect to determine if a structure slated for demolition was built during a specific year and constructed by a prominent family within the community. From what I understood from Jonathan, the requested CPA funds for surveys would roll over each year until it was used, then the Commission would request more – perhaps this was not the case or it is a different process now.*
- d. West Cemetery? Or just Surveys and Appraisals? Am Historical Commission. Would like a little specificity—like what would be surveyed or appraised?  
*As mentioned previously, the funds could be used for any survey work, with this year going toward updating the Significant Structures List. I don't see that funds would be required for the West Cemetery, since other funds are requested for projects in the cemetery.*

#### 15. DPW Historic Building Survey

- a. Can the Historic Building Survey be conducted by another entity, therefore providing a basis for cost comparison by firm?  
*Yes the survey can be performed by any qualified company. There does need to be funds available to advertise or solicit bids for the work. The only advantage the current company has is that they have been through the building several times and have a good deal of backup information to add into the survey.*
- b. The language is not quite clear on how the request meets CPA criteria.  
*It is anticipated that there will be a requirement to perform a historic survey and documentation before taking down the building.*
- c. Is there reason to believe that there are historically important or interesting structures on the DPW site?  
*The DPW building was constructed in 1918 and is the second trolley barn constructed in Amherst. It is the first brick structure built for the trolley system. The original trolley barn and most of the auxiliary structures do not exist. This is the last structure in Amherst that was part of the nationwide systems of trolleys.*
- d. If the historical building survey is required for a replacement structure, why isn't this request being folded into the project's construction budget? How much is the total project cost?  
*The cost of the survey could be folded into the overall construction cost but this is part of the effort to leverage all existing funds for this and other large capital projects.*



- e. Is the point of the survey to document a structure before it is demolished? Is this survey required by the Town or other body before demolition or modification? Is the requirement for the survey new information to the project?  
*The DPW site is the preferred site for the new fire station. The existing structure will have to be removed. Based on past demolition permits it is believed there will be a requirement to document the structure.*
- f. What is the form of the survey: still photographs? Video?  
*The format of the survey has not been determined.*
- g. Is the history and design of the building already described somewhere?  
*Not that we know of.*
- h. Is this property formally deemed Historic by some body (e.g. Amherst Historical Commission)?  
*Not at this time.*
- i. How would this contribute to preserving historic resources in Amherst?  
*This would document the only remaining trolley barn in Amherst.*
- j. Who will conduct the survey? What are the expected results?  
*It has not been decided who will document the structure.*
- k. Can these two surveys be done together, or by the same firm?  
*Yes they can.*

16. Fire Historic Building Survey

- a. Can the Historic Building Survey be conducted by another entity, therefore providing a basis for cost comparison by firm?  
*Yes the survey can be performed by any qualified company. There does need to be funds available to advertise or solicit bids for the work. The only advantage the current company has is that they have been through the building several times and have a good deal of backup information to add into the survey.*
- b. The language is not quite clear on how the request meets CPA criteria.  
*It is anticipated that there will be a requirement to perform a historic survey and documentation before taking down the building.*
- c. This building is very much prominent in the center of the Town. Please provide information about the date this was built and other background that might be helpful.  
*No answer.*
- d. Why is this funding \$5000 more than the request in #15?  
*The budget was estimated by different firms.*
- e. If the historical building survey is required for a replacement structure, why isn't this request being folded into the project's construction budget? How much is the total project cost?  
*The cost of the survey could be folded into the overall construction cost but this is part of the effort to leverage all existing funds for this and other large capital projects.*
- f. Is the point of the survey to document a structure before it is demolished? Is this survey required by the Town or other body before demolition or modification? Is the requirement for the survey new information to the project?

*It is unclear if this building will be demolished or not. It is expected to be repurposed if not demolished and that there will be a desire to document the use as the main fire station and headquarters.*

- g. What is the form of the survey: still photographs? Video?  
*The format of the survey has not been determined.*
  - h. Is the history and design of the building already described somewhere?  
*Not that we know of.*
  - i. Is this property formally deemed Historic by some body (e.g. Amherst Historical Commission)?  
*The building is part of the "Central Business District."*
  - j. How would this contribute to preserving historic resources in Amherst?  
*This would document the main Fire Station and Headquarters in Amherst.*
  - k. Who will conduct the survey? What are the expected results?  
*It has not been decided who will document the structure.*
  - l. Can these two surveys be done together, or by the same firm?  
*Yes they can.*
17. Enos Cook Fountain
- a. The proposal calls for replacing the fountain, a state registered historic object located in the Dickinson Historic District. Is replacement an MHC-recommended approach to historic preservation?  
*It is if the structure is considered beyond repair. That determination has not been made by the Town, but is the opinion of the consultant.*
  - b. Is this request simply to develop repair plans and specs? If so, the request seems quite large.  
*Yes the request is to develop bid plans and specifications.*
  - c. Can you explain more about the "\$100,000 grant in the state budget that could go toward restoration costs?" Is this money that is definitely coming to the Town? What specifically was it granted for? What other uses could it be used for?  
*There was money placed in a prior state appropriation for the replacement of this fountain. While the appropriation was approved it has not been released to the community by the Governor.*
  - d. According to the report provided, the cost of replacing and repairing the fountain is nearly \$600K, yet apart from the state grant mentioned above, no other sources of funding are described. Where will the rest of the money come from?  
*That has not been determined.*
  - e. Why is "severe erosion" occurring? What is the role of chlorine and why/how will chlorine be removed? The proposal mentions Tennessee Marble. Marble is a soft stone—is it the best choice for repairs? Is it possible to use harder stone or to seal the marble?  
*The erosion has been from the chemicals used in the fountain and from the water flowing over the marble. There has been preliminary discussion of using a different material in the replacement.*

- f. How do other municipalities typically winterize fountains? Does the Town have an idea of where the half million (hard costs only presented) capital expense will come from? Does the cost estimate assume a publicly bid project?  
*Other communities winterize their recirculating fountains by draining them as Amherst does. Some communities cover the fountain while others leave them open to the elements.*
18. Wildwood Tree and Monument Preservation  
*The Wildwood Cemetery has decided to withdraw its application. We will work on being becoming recognized as a historically significant site with the MA Historical Commission and then come back to you with a new proposal for future CPA funding.*
19. West Cemetery Headstone Restoration
- a. Are there outstanding Historic Preservation projects for which the AHC was awarded CPA funding but not yet spent it? If yes, what is the total value of the unused funds?  
*Yes, the Historical Commission does have outstanding projects relating to the West Cemetery. These funds include, lighting/security, interpretive signs, and landscaping. The Commission received these funds in anticipation of the new mural being completed on the south wall of One East Pleasant. The Commission reviewed these outstanding funds at their last meeting and felt that with the mural being completed in the Fall, they would be able to finally use this money. All requested funds for repair on the stones themselves have been used each year, with no outstanding amount being carried over.*
- b. Are stones treated to prevent regrowth of lichens, etc.?  
*No, in reviewing the materials from the work that was completed last year this was not part of the restoration process. Stones were straightened, cleaned, repaired and cracks sealed, however nothing was placed on the stones after to prevent lichens from growing.*
20. Farmhouse Window Restoration
- a. Why was the window work not included in the original FY18 budget for the farmhouse exterior work?  
*Our original intention was to have the window restoration work funded by the Massachusetts Historic Commission Preservation Projects Fund. But as we looked more carefully and thoroughly into this program we found that the terms of the MHC PPFund were incompatible with what we were trying to do. For example, they would have required us to use wood clapboards (rather than finger-cement material) for the new siding), and this, whilst perhaps more originally authentic, would have created a much more onerous continuing maintenance problem for the Simple Gifts Farmers, who carry the maintenance obligation as a term of their lease with us. There were other similar incompatibilities as well, but that was the main one. We also realized early in our planning that the window replacement was completely independent of the other restoration and renovation work that we were intending. And also we realized that the best time to remove, restore, and replace windows was during the summer — and we knew that our basic renovation and restoration work would have to be done during the winter because that is when farm activity is more or less dormant and therefore when the farmhouse has fewest people needing accommodation, and therefore when we could best tackle the disruptive renovation work. So we knew that we would be separating the window work from everything else right from the beginning. I have told*

*both the CPA Committee and the Historic Commission members this during our previous meetings with each.*

- b. Can the \$16K left over from the original CPA grant be repurposed for the windows work without a new recommendation from the committee and/or a vote by Town Council?

*This is a matter for the Town CPA Committee to decide, but I have asked Brandon Topence (the CPAC staff liaison) this question directly, and it is his opinion that if permission is necessary that it would be granted. It is funding for the same project in more or less the same time frame, and flowing to and through the same Applicant.*

- c. Will repair of these original (or old, at least) windows increase the energy efficiency of the building?

*The repair/restoration of the windows will improve their thermal performance, as will the addition of the exterior storm windows that are proposed in association with this Application (and proposed to be paid by NACF funds). But the windows will not be as thermally efficient as a new top-of-the-line European model that are now on the market. The primary goal of this work, for which we are seeking CPA funding through the historic preservation "portal" of the program, is restoration and historic preservation; the energy efficiency enhancement is nice, but it is (I understand) incidental.*

- d. Because this proposal involves energy efficiency, have you investigated energy efficiency related grants?

*We have secured roughly \$8,000 in grants of one kind or another that have paid for improving the building air sealing, and adding cellulose insulation to the exterior walls and roof/attic. These funds have arrived in conjunction with work performed by the Energia Corporation. But as I described above, the degree of improvement in the energy efficiency from the work we are doing on the windows is not sufficient to wrest more dollars from these energy conservation related grant programs.*

21. Data Migration to Collective Access at the Jones Library

*The AHS board has decided that the data migration project is the current priority....*

- a. Is this an eligible CPA project? According to information provided by the Community Preservation Coalition, "a rule of thumb is that CPA can fund projects that deal with tangible historic resources, but not with historic interpretation, education or heightening awareness of history" (<https://www.communitypreservation.org/historic-projects>). This seems to fall into the ineligible area.

*We believe that this project meets the criteria as defined in the 2012 guidelines presented by the Community Preservation Coalition. The Amherst Historical Society collections have been deemed "tangible historic resources" that are "significant in the history, archaeology, architecture, or culture" of Amherst. The verb that justifies this request for funding is "preserve." The move from an excel spreadsheet and related files of digital images to an online database is the culmination of the project started with CPAC funding (1321G) in early 2013 to discover and record the museum's history of acquisition and ownership, location and condition on a spreadsheet and achieve the standard of intellectual control that encompasses an object's history within an institution.*

*This proposal is the next step of that project. The Historical Society received funding from CPAC to create an electronic database describing the artifacts owned by the Historical*

*Society. Consulting curator Marianne Curling has worked over the past several years supervising work-study students (paid by Hampshire College) to transcribe records from index cards or to create new descriptions on an Excel spreadsheet and to photograph individual objects—final review and edits for that project will take place during the first 6 months of this year closing that grant.*

*This is not an interpretative project; it lists the holdings of the Historical Society in an online database that provides for easily adding to the record by multiple volunteer users. The Historical Society is a volunteer organization assisted by student workers—CollectiveAccess will allow ongoing work to update the database by multiple volunteers as related information is discovered, objects are moved, and physical condition is recorded, and as new items are added to the collection.*

*We want to document the significance of the collection items as individual records that are part of a larger whole. CollectiveAccess incorporates aspects of electronic databases not part of a spreadsheet making the migration project essential to our collection care and intellectual control. One example is an authority file for names. One of the better-known residents of Amherst was Orra White Hitchcock—objects related to her might be listed under that name or Mrs. Edward Hitchcock, Orra White, or Mrs. Hitchcock. With CollectiveAccess we will be able to standardize the name and add a related biographical statement that can be seen with any single record.*

- b. Does this cover the total cost of the project? Will there be ongoing, annual costs, or other future costs that may involve CPA?

*We believe that the budget will cover the entire cost of the project. The Historical Society will cover any ongoing annual costs. Because CollectiveAccess is an open source program, updates will be available without charge.*

- c. Who will be accessing the materials and for what purposes?

*This request covers the needs of the historical society to migrate records into the online database system and assure that that system can be maintained by volunteers. For the purposes of migrating the collection records of the Amherst Historical Society from the Excel spreadsheet and digital image system, access will be by the consulting curator, the student assistant and the board committee members. Volunteers will then be given access to make sure that the program is functioning as designed and that the instruction manual covers all contingencies.*

*Following migration of current data into CollectiveAccess, the database will serve the same purposes as the card and record files currently on hand at the historical society—more easily and in a more relational manner that we currently are able to maintain.*

## 22. Archeology at Amherst Historical Museum

*This proposal is being withdrawn. UMass Archeological Services has been disbanded. The Historical Society will reapply in the next round of applications.*

## 23. Textile Restoration

- a. How is the textile collection used and how will it be used in the future?

*The textile and costume collection is integral to understanding life in Amherst from the mid-18th into the 20th centuries. These donations were given by Amherst residents documenting their family histories. Portions of this collection have been exhibited at the*

*Simeon Strong House for many years and visitors find a direct connection and understanding when garments and household textiles are included in exhibits. For example, one display featured homemade dolls' clothing; another featured baby clothes. Emily Dickinson's dress is safely exhibited on a purpose built mannequin (CPA FY14) and examples of Mabel Loomis Todd's hand painted textiles and clothing are likewise on shown on a regular basis. The Historical Society will feature garments from the collection next year in an exhibition curated by one of the work-study students at Hampshire College as her Div III project. The future will hold similar inclusion of textile items in our themed exhibits.*

- b. What has been total CPA funding for the collection survey and documentation?  
*Total CPA funding for textile collection survey and documentation is \$17,660. (FY18 \$8980. and FY19 \$8680). An additional \$4900. was awarded in FY 19 for cleaning and conservation.*
- c. Does cleaning just make the items look better or does it also prolong their life? Is intervention urgently needed to prevent destruction of any of these items?  
*Cleaning and repair are essential to prolong the life of textiles. Surface dirt, salts, oils and other impurities abrade and weaken the fabric and attract insects and rodents. Removing these elements is a necessary step in preserving the effected objects. Yes, intervention is needed to preserve these pieces for the future, particularly those that have tears and need stabilization.*
- d. You describe these textiles as rare. Can you please explain a bit more about the importance of the collection? How does the Historical Society prioritize these CPA requests?  
*The textiles in our collection are rare by their very survival. The baby dress made by Orra White Hitchcock and donated by her granddaughter is unique. Not every item has such a compelling provenance, but each has a significant role in our understanding life in Amherst. The two CPA Textile Evaluation project grants have allowed us to set priorities for what is most essential for the continued survival of this collection. We were able to evaluate items individually for their role within the collection and condition. We then listed pieces according to priority.*

#### 24. Poetic Dialogue Restoration

- a. While I am new to the field of Historic Preservation, it is not clear to me from the application how this project which is only 20 years old falls under Historic Preservation.  
*The Amherst Public Art Commission regards the restoration of Poetic Dialogue worthy of historical preservation funding because of the prominent roles its two figures—Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost—play in Amherst's distinguished history. The sculpture represents a significant element of the Town's past and the Commission hopes it merits the same consideration the CPA has generously given to the restoration of other artworks and artifacts at the Jones Library.*
- b. As the proposal notes, this is not an historic artefact. Has the Amherst Historical Commission made a determination that the sculpture is significant in the history or culture of the Town?  
*Amherst Public Art Commission member Ellen Keiter will meet with the Local Historic District Commission on Monday, January 28, followed by a second meeting with the*

*Historical Commission on Wednesday, February 6 to review the proposal. This will allow both commissions to ask questions and, ideally, lend support to the project.*

- c. This is part of a public park. Why doesn't DPW maintain the path and landscaping out of its annual budget?

*The Department of Public Works has generously agreed to reconstruct the semi-circular gravel path pro bono as part of the restoration project. Commission chair Eric Broudy will request DPW to maintain the path, edging, and mowing around the sculpture as part of its ongoing care of Sweetser Park.*

- d. Because this is only tangentially related to historic preservation and is a relatively low cost project, it seems perfect for private fundraising and in-kind donations from Cows, Leader, Home Depot etc. Has this been pursued?

*The Amherst Public Art Commission has not been permitted to fill commission vacancies due to the government transition to Town Council and is therefore not currently prepared to assume the fundraising responsibilities suggested. Further, Cows and Leader made in-kind donations last year to the Commission for its utility box painting project and it is not reasonable to approach them again for a purpose more clearly the responsibility of the Town as owner of Poetic Dialogue. In the future, when the Percent for Art bylaw begins to provide some public art funding through renovation and capital improvement projects, some of those funds can be allocated for maintenance or restoration of existing public art.*

- e. Can/will the metal be treated to slow corrosion?

*In a letter dated September 30, 1996, artist Michael J. Virzi specified the means by which to restore Poetic Dialogue: "Maintenance of the steel figures and hardware is also relatively simple. Chipped areas or vandalism can simply be sanded to abrade the surface and a typical black matte Rustoleum brand spray will match the existing finish." The Commission will follow the artist's instructions; it is the process for which the project is budgeted.*