

Considerations for Applicants to Consider and Address in their Applications for Categories of CPA Projects

Open Space Goals and Criteria

Due to increased and ongoing development pressure in Scituate, the preservation of open space is becoming increasingly important. With property values rising in recent years, the acquisition of open space has become increasingly difficult and urgent. The CPA is a proactive tool for the community to preserve our quality of life, the purity of our water, control property taxes and find a balance between economic development and preservation.

The CPC solicits input from the Town's Open Space Committee, Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission, as well as other Town boards, committees and the public, in identifying goals for open space protection, which include:

- Goal 1: Protecting aquifer and aquifer recharge areas to preserve quality and quantity of future water supply.
- Goal 2: Balancing open space with development demand to reduce service demands and tax burden on the Town.
- Goal 3: Increasing the Town's ability to protect environmentally sensitive, historic and culturally significant properties.
- Goal 4: Improving public access and trail linkages to existing conservation, recreational and other land uses.
- Goal 5: Protecting rare, unique and endangered wildlife habitat.
- Goal 6: Preserving the Town's rural character.
- Goal 7: Utilizing open space protection strategies (purchasing development rights as an option to outright purchases of property) that maximize protection at the lowest public cost.
- Goal 8: Enhancing the quality and variety of passive and active recreational opportunities for all age groups and abilities.

The following are *examples* of the types of open space (and recreation) projects that the CPC might consider funding:

- Purchasing land or interest in land (development rights) to protect public drinking water supply, preserve natural resources, maintain scenic views, build green belts and trail systems, and enhance active and passive recreational opportunities.
- Purchasing community-enhancing green space outright or purchasing development rights through mechanisms such as permanent conservation restrictions or agricultural preservation restrictions.
- Matching or augmenting funds available under various land trust or conservation programs.
- Exercising rights of first refusal when lands are removed from temporary agricultural and forest land restrictions (e.g., Chapter 61, 61A).
- Purchasing land for public active recreation facilities such as community gardens, play grounds, trail networks and ball fields.
- Securing parcels of land that, when preserved, are deemed to have a significantly positive net fiscal impact on town finances.

Historic Preservation Goals and Criteria

The Town of Scituate has a rich diversity of historic resources. The Town's CPA goals for preserving these historic resources include:

Goal 1: Protecting historical resources.

Goal 2: Optimizing the use and enjoyment of the Town's historic resources for residents and visitors

Goal 3: Recognizing, preserving and enhancing the historic heritage and character of the Town of Scituate for current and future generations.

In order for a historic resource to be eligible for CPA funding, it must first be determined to be not just "old" but of historic significance. The burden of proving historic significance is the responsibility of the Applicant. In order to be of historic significance, a property must meet the requirements set forth in the CPA. In deciding whether or not to recommend funding for specific historic resource projects, the CPC may consider:

- Level of historical significance
- Public benefit
- Public support
- Appropriateness & professionalism of proposed work (rehabilitation work is expected to comply with Standards for Rehabilitation stated in the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties)
- Level of additional financial or in-kind services beyond CPA funds committed to the project
- Administrative and financial management capabilities of the Applicant in order to ensure that the project is carried out in a timely manner, and that the historic resource can be maintained for continued public benefit.

Community Housing Goals and Criteria

CPA funds may be used to create or preserve community housing defined as housing for low and moderate income individuals and families, including low or moderate income senior housing.

Individuals and family incomes shall be based on the area-wide median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Low income is defined as an annual income of less than 80% of the area-wide median income. Moderate income is defined as less than 100% of the area-wide median income. Low or moderate senior income is defined as low or moderate income for persons over 60.

At present, well under 10% of Scituate's housing units are classified as affordable housing by the State's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) (for the purposes of M.G.L. Chapter 40B). As long as the Town does not meet or exceed the State's goal of 10% of its available housing stock deemed affordable, the Town will be required to accept applications for additional affordable housing units under the provisions of Chapter 40B.

The CPC's goals for community housing are as follows:

- Goal 1: The CPA requires the Committee to recommend, wherever possible, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings or construction of new buildings on previously developed sites.
- Goal 2: Meet local housing needs for eligible low and moderate-income individuals and families. The preservation and creation of community housing is a proven method for promoting diversity, allowing individuals and families with more limited means to afford to live in Town. The Town can utilize CPA funds to offer current and future residents a wide range of housing options in renovated, converted and existing residential buildings, mixed-use developments, and senior residential developments, supportive housing alternatives and live-work space.
- Goal 3: Ensure the new community housing meets or exceeds surrounding community standards with regard to density, architectural character, landscaping, pedestrian and other amenities, while conserving, as much as possible, the natural landscape.
- Goal 4: Work toward meeting the 10% State standard for community housing. In order to ensure future community housing development is consistent with the needs and character of the Town, the Town should work toward meeting the State's 10% housing standard.
- Goal 5: Leverage other public and private resources to the greatest extent possible: Scituate does not receive federal or state funding for community housing on an entitlement basis. We need to be creative in leveraging public and private resources to make community housing development possible. Combining CPA funds with the various private, state and federal resources that are available on a non-entitlement "competitive" basis will demonstrate creativity.