



Community Preservation Committee
55 Main Street
Westford, Massachusetts 01886
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Westford Community Preservation Funding Application
Fiscal Year 2022 Project Submission Form

Basic Project Information:

Submission Date: January 14, 2022 _____

Project Name: Conservation Fund Allocation _____

CPA funds requested: \$190,000 _____

Applicant:

Name Westford Conservation Commission (Peter Mahler-Chair) _____

Address 55 Main Street _____

Phone 617-759-7323 _____

Email petmah@verizon.net _____

Sponsoring board/committee(s) Conservation Commission _____

Additional responsible parties – i.e. Property owner, consultant (if applicable) _____

Project manager/contact person:

Purpose: (please select all that apply)

- Open Space
- Affordable Housing
- Historic Preservation
- Recreation

Project location/address:

Assessor information: (map/block/lot id) as applicable: N/A

Ownership/care and custody information: N/A

Deed restrictions required:

- Conservation
- Housing
- Historic Preservation

Budget:

Complete budget (attach as necessary) \$190,000

Percent of total budget requested from Community Preservation funds:

Funds are for allocation to the Conservation Trust Fund for use in future land purchases. No specific parcel is proposed for purchase at this time.

Other funding sources (committed/applied/planned): None

Anticipated annual income/expenses: None

Recurring expenses (i.e. Maintenance): None

Taxpayer impact: None

Procurement: Projects over \$10,000

Please explain how you intend to comply with all applicable public procurement laws for the purchase of supplies/services related to this project funding request.

All funds to purchase property are based on the independently appraised value of the property

Timeline:

Proposed Start Date: N/A

Proposed Completion Date: N/A

Endorsement by applicable boards/commissions/community groups:

- Affordable Housing Committee and/or Housing Authority
- Cemetery Commission
- Conservation Commission
- Historic Commission
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Planning Board
- Water Commission
- Other

Project Description and Goals:

Please describe project. In proposal, please include how this project impacts Westford's citizens and addresses Westford's current and/or future needs? How does this project preserve Westford's character and meet its preservation goals? Why should this project be funded this year? (Use as many additional pages as necessary)

Please see attachment

If this application is submitted outside of the usual funding cycle, please explain why.

List of Attachments: (including but not limited to photos, plans, maps, quotes, costs, estimates, letters of endorsement)

Conservation Fund Allocation Project 2022

Applicant Signatures/Date:

Peter H. Mahler _____

January 14, 2022 _____

For Community Preservation Committee Use Only

Date received: _____

Copies distributed on: _____

Is sufficient data/detail provided? _____

Is timeliness an issue? _____

Is additional information required? _____

Project interview date: _____

Public hearing date: _____

Committee vote:

Yes _____

No _____

Abstain _____

Date _____

Recommendation from Committee:

Recommended for Town Meeting consideration:

Spring _____

Fall _____

Special _____

Year _____

Attachment Conservation Commission Community Preservation Funding Application

Conservation Fund Allocation Project, 2022

The Conservation Trust Fund, authorized by MGL Ch. 40 S8C was adopted by Town Meeting to provide resources for conservation land acquisition and maintenance. Administered by the Conservation Commission, over the years it has played a critical role in the purchase of hundreds of acres of open space land. In addition to covering the cost of the land, it has also been used to pay for appraisals, surveys, title searches and other legal costs of land acquisition

Preservation of the Town's wild and rural heritage has always been an important priority of its residents, as identified by surveys prepared during preparation of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan and Master Plan. This has been a commitment reaffirmed by Town meeting votes for acquisition of such large parcels as East Boston Camps and the Stepinski parcel.

The advantages to placing these monies in a separate account for the Conservation Commission are:

- 1) The Commission works closely with both the Westford Land Preservation Foundation and The Westford Conservation Trust that are continuously looking for property owners who are interested in preserving the rural character of their lands.
- 2) The Commission can act quickly without having to wait for Town Meeting approval if it has available funds to either purchase or place a Conservation Restriction on these smaller parcels.

Prior to the CPA, the Trust fund received appropriations from Town Meeting on a fairly regular basis, so as to maintain a balance of several hundred thousand dollars. In recent years, similar allocations have been approved from the Community Preservation Fund. The Commission submitted proposals for \$150,000 for CPA funding in the fall of 2003, for \$190,000 for funding in the fall of 2004, for \$190,000 in the spring of 2007, \$190,000 each in the spring of 2009 -2014, 2016 -2017 and 2020-2021 to augment the Conservation Fund. These proposals were approved by the CPC and subsequently approved at Town Meetings in the fall of 2003 and 2004 and spring of 2007, 2009-2014, 2016-2017 and 2020-

2021. While these amounts are relatively modest compared to the prices of some land (\$250,000 for buildable single family house lot), they have made it possible to acquire smaller parcels of back land and environmentally sensitive land, often enlarging and offering additional protection to existing Town conservation land.

Having these funds readily available also makes it possible to effectively negotiate with landowners who approach the Commission regarding potential sale of their land. Four parcels purchased using CPA funding are the 1.3-acre Switzer parcel located on Lowell Road, which enlarged the Cider Mill Pond area, the 10.8-acre Genova parcel on Stony Brook Road, which has brought a significant area of the Stony Brook waterfront under permanent protection, the 111-acre Stepinski parcel of which 65 acres are under Conservation and a 10-acre parcel in the Rolling Meadow subdivision. In December 2010 the Commission completed 2 purchases of adjacent land consisting of 42.5 (Schwab) and 22.5 (Lorain) acres located between Hildreth Hills and Rome Drive. Altogether, including existing adjacent town owned land by the Commission, and the conservation overlay zone associated with Hildreth Hills, these purchases will create a nearly 300 acre area of contiguous protected open space. In 2018 the Town approved the purchase of the 47 acre Adams parcel using \$500,000 from the Trust and borrowing \$4.5 million of CPA Funds.

The Town has experienced enormous growth in the past twenty years, attracting new residents with those aspects which the Town's Master Plan has focused on: its excellent schools and its legacy of fields and forests, of clean air and water. Continued acquisition of open space is critical to maintain the balance between development and preservation which has characterized the past two decades and in so doing preserve the not only the health and quality of life of current and future residents, but also the value of the properties acquired by the hard work and diligence of those residents. In these aspects acquisition of land through the Conservation Trust fund benefits all residents. It is important that the Town contribute to this Fund on a consistent basis so that it will always be available to meet opportunities that arise quickly and for which there is not time for Town Meeting to act on.