TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH **Community Preservation Committee**

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February 14, 2023

To: Northborough Financial Planning Committee

Re: Summary of FY24 CPA Project Recommendations

For this year’s Town Meeting, the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is working from a budget of $770,000 projected new revenue with State match + $1,050,576 in the CPA reserve accounts. The CPC considered 10 applications based on our customary criteria of: 1) Applicability to CPA guidelines and the goals described in the Northborough CPA procedural sheet; 2) Community support; 3) Affordability; and 4) Urgency to fund this year. In our deliberations, we also considered the potential future needs for CPA funds to support the White Cliffs re-use proposal or other projects resulting from the Downtown Revitalization study. With all that in mind, we reached consensus on the following recommendations.

**White Cliffs Bond Payment** ($188,000): This is the 6th payment required for the bond on the White Cliffs purchase, and this also covers the requirement that at least 10% of new revenue be allocated toward Historic Preservation. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this from **new revenue**.

**CPA Administrative Expenses Account** ($38,500): In accordance with the CPA legislation, the CPC may allocate up to 5% of new revenue to the administrative account for expenses such as legal fees, appraisals and consultant fees related to CPA projects. Unused amounts from a given year go back to the CPA Unreserved fund. The CPC voted 7-0 to allocate 5% of the projected $770,000 **new revenue**.

**Affordable Housing Reserve Fund** ($77,000): Since there is no other application this year for Affordable Housing, the CPC voted 7-0 to allocate the required minimum of 10% of **new revenue** toward the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund.

**Northborough Dog Park** ($347,500): Phase 1 of this project for the design study received wide community support and was approved at last year’s Town Meeting, and therefore the CPC believes this application for the construction phase is a top priority to bring to Town Meeting 2023. This project also covers the minimum 10% allocation required for open space and recreation. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this from **new revenue**.

**Construction of ADA Accessible Trail at Senior Center** ($370,000): Phase 1 of this project for the design study also received wide community support and was approved at last year’s Town Meeting, and therefore the CPC believes this application for the construction phase is a top priority for TM 2023. The CPC voted 7-0 to fund this with $119,000 from **new revenue** and $251,000 from the **Unreserved fund**.

**First Parish Church Steeple Repairs** ($200,000): While the CPC has been supportive of First Parish on prior applications, we felt that the scope of work and cost estimates for this project are not fully defined at this time, and that there is not the same urgency to fund the project this year compared to several other projects and obligations. The CPC voted 7-0 to deny funding for this application.

**Window Restoration and Preservation of Historical Society Building** ($71,300): While the CPC has been supportive of the Historical Society building on prior applications, we felt that there is not the same urgency to fund the project this year compared to several other projects and obligations. The CPC voted 7-0 to deny funding for this application.

**Funding the Historic Reserves Account** ($350,000): In support of our efforts to plan for future needs for CPA funding and allow flexibility across all categories of historic preservation, affordable housing, open space and recreation, the CPC feels it is wise to keep reserves in the Unreserved Fund at this time rather than allocating to just one fund. Therefore, the CPC voted 7-0 to deny this application. Both the Committee’s representative from the Historic District Commission, and the Commission chair in attendance, agreed with this decision.

**Library Historic Marker** ($5,060): The CPC has been supportive on prior projects for historic markers, as we feel they contribute to enhancing our community and support goals in the Master Plan and Historic Preservation Plan, all at relatively low cost. The CPC voted 5-2 to fund this from the **Unreserved Fund**.

**Aqueduct Multi Use Trail Feasibility Study** ($100,000): Although this project has strong community support and has been a priority for the Open Space Committee for several years, a recent communication from the Mass. Water Resources Authority states that they will not allow pavement or stone dust surface improvements to the aqueduct at this time. Since the surface improvements are a major element of proposed trail design study, the applicants withdrew this application.

**ARHS Athletic Complex Project – Tennis Court Restorations** ($352,701): While the CPC has been supportive of some school recreation facility improvements on prior applications, we felt that there is not the same level of urgency and community support to fund the project compared to several other projects and obligations, and compared to the CPC’s goal of maintaining adequate reserves for the potential needs for White Cliffs and the Downtown Revitalization project. The CPC voted 7-0 to deny funding for this application.

**Conservation Fund** ($77,000): In support of our efforts to plan for future needs for CPA funding and allow flexibility across all categories of historic preservation, affordable housing, open space and recreation, the CPC feels it is wise to keep reserves in the Unreserved Fund at this time rather than allocating to just one fund. In addition, the Conservation Fund currently has a balance of approx. $664,000 from CPA funds approved at prior Town Meetings. Therefore, the CPC voted 7-0 to deny this application. The Committee’s representatives from the Open Space Committee and the Conservation Commission both agreed with this decision.

**ENDING BALANCES:** Should all of our recommendations above be approved at Town Meeting, the amount unallocated from projected new revenue would be $0 and the amount remaining in the Unreserved Fund would be $591,653. The Affordable Housing Reserve Fund would increase to $279,863.

Respectfully submitted,

John Campbell, Chair

Northborough Community Preservation Committee

Cc: Town Clerk, Town Administrator, Finance Director, Financial Planning Committee, Housing Authority