

11/03/08

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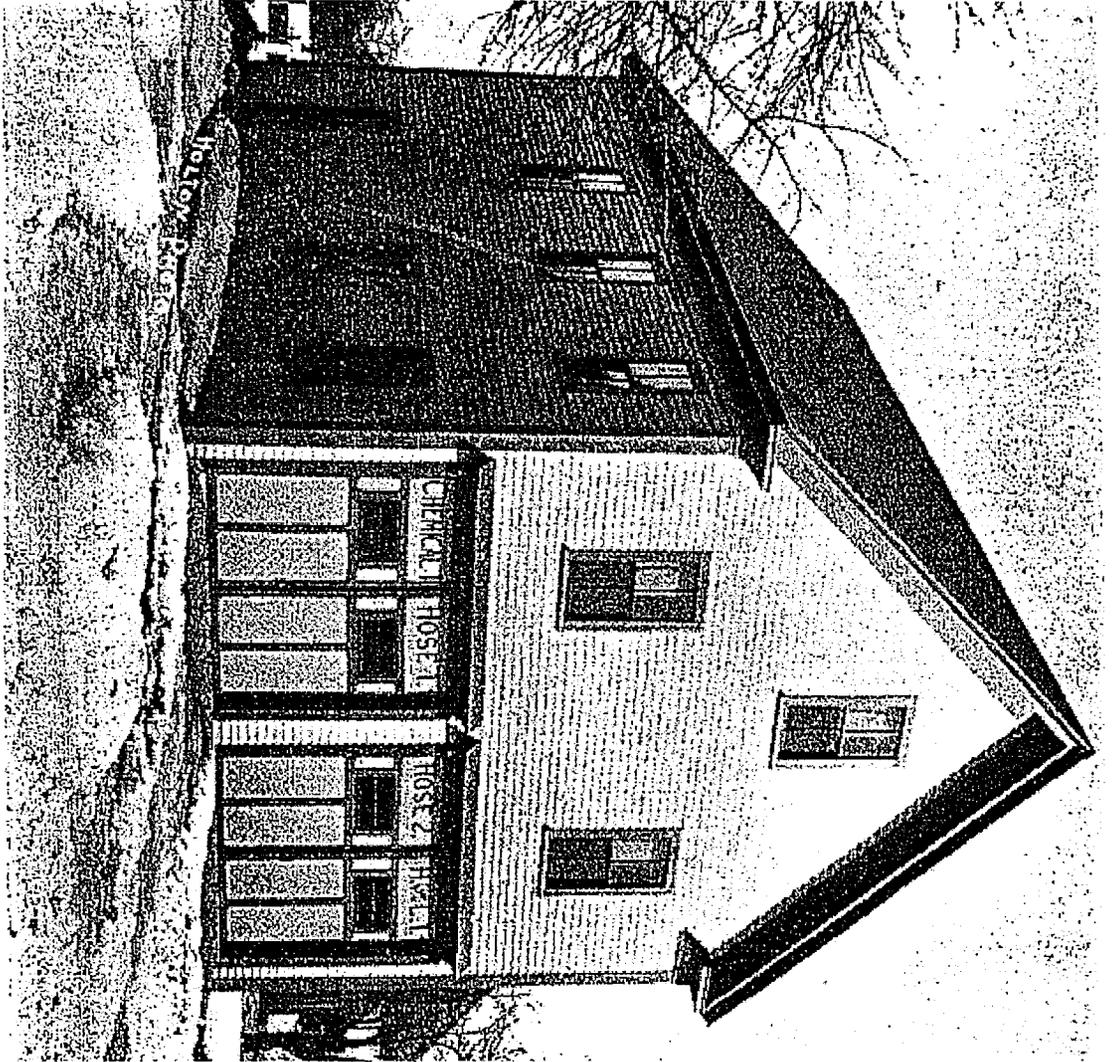
Christine Joyce

From: Dean Charter
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2008 8:13 PM
To: Manager Department
Subject: Windsor Building CPA application

Here is a revised CPA application for the Windsor Building project. Please discard the materials I sent you two weeks ago.

Regards,

Dean



PROJECT APPLICATION FORM – 2009

Applicant: Town of Acton **Submission Date:** 11/20/08

Applicant's Address, Phone Number and Email **Purpose: (Please select all that apply)**

Dean Charter – Municipal Properties Director
472 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720
dcharter@acton-ma.gov / 978-264-9629

- Open Space
- Community Housing
- Historic Preservation
- Recreation

Town Committee (if applicable): _____

Project Name: Historic Restoration and Adaptive Re-use of the Windsor Building

Project Location/Address: 18 Windsor Ave

Amount Requested: \$500,000

Project Summary: In the space below, provide a brief summary of the project.

The Town of Acton would like to complete an historic restoration and adaptive re-use of the Windsor Building. The project has both exterior and interior components.

The proposal for the exterior of the building is to restore the look of the original fire station. This would be accomplished by installing two reproduction engine doors on the front of the building. The doors would not be functional but would provide the façade of the old fire station. The main entrance would be moved to the side of the building and made handicap accessible. Twenty 2/2 windows would be restored and historically appropriate wooden storm windows would replace the aluminum triple tracks. Also included in the exterior work would be necessary carpentry repairs to the building, painting the building the original color and replacing the aging roof. Finally, a new septic system and landscaping would be installed with some labor being provided by Town Staff as an in-kind match.

The adaptive re-use of the interior of the building would include the restoration of the original fir floorboards and bead-board on the walls and ceiling of the first floor. It would also include the outfitting of a handicap accessible bathroom on the first floor. The second floor would see its floors and ceilings restored and a small existing kitchen remodeled and outfitting for use. For safety reasons, the existing emergency exit and fire escape from the second floor would be repaired or replaced. In order to make the second floor space ADA compliant, an elevator/stair tower would be constructed in the rear of the building.

The end result will a beautifully restored building in the West Acton Historic District which houses a much needed, 30 person public meeting room for use by town departments, committees, and community organizations and an accessible second floor available for a variety of public purposes.

Estimated Date for Commencement of Project: May 2009

Estimated Date for Impletion of Project: May 2010

Project Narrative

On behalf of the Town of Acton, the Municipal Properties Director is requesting an appropriation of \$500,000 from the 2009 CPA Funds for the Historic Restoration and Adaptive Reuse of the Windsor Building. The structure, located at 18 Windsor Ave., was built in 1903 as the original West Acton Fire Station. Since then, the building has remained in town hands and has had several occupants. It is currently in a state of disrepair and unfortunately, a once beautiful, stately building in the West Acton Historic District, is now simply an eyesore.

In July of 2008, the building was vacated by the Acton Food Pantry and is now, for the first time in 15 years, available for municipal use. The town would like to seize this opportunity to rehabilitate and restore the building to its former stature and in the process, create some much needed, multipurpose space for use by town departments, committees and community organizations.

Background

In 1903 the Acton Town Meeting voted to appropriate "\$1,200 to build a suitable Fire Engine House at West Acton". The Fire Station was constructed that same year and remained in use until 1957, when the current West Acton Fire Station was built. In the mid 1960s, the Acton Minuteman Company moved into the building, using it for meetings and drills. During their 25 year tenancy, the Minutemen maintained the building although the town maintained ownership. In the early 1990s the Acton Food Pantry moved in and for 15 years, ran a program collecting and distributing food to area families in need. During that time the Town conducted routine maintenance on the building and made any necessary repairs. In July of 2008, the Food Pantry, having outgrown the Windsor Building, moved to St. Matthew's Church, leaving the building vacant.

Upon reclaiming the building, town officials determined two things. First, the exterior of the building was in serious need of rehabilitation and second, that the large open spaces on both the first and second floor, if restored, could be utilized in multiple ways. With little modification, the lower level could be used as:

- a public meeting room for various town boards and committees;
- a space in which the West Acton Citizens' Library could hold children's programs, host speakers and book groups and run periodic book sales.
- an indoor space for Recreation Department programs, workshops and classes
- a meeting room for community organizations

The second floor space is equally adaptable and, if made ADA compliant, could also be used for a variety of public purposes.

Looking at the scope of the project, an historic restoration of the exterior and an adaptive reuse of an historic structure on the interior, it was felt that the project was an excellent candidate for CPA funding.

Review and Recommendation Criteria

The following section reviews the applicability of the Windsor Building Restoration Project in relation to the Review and Recommendation Criteria on page 20 of the Community Preservation Plan.

Consistency with the Town of Acton Community Preservation Plan

Historic preservation is a cornerstone of the CPA. On page 14 of the 2009 Community Preservation Plan there is a list of Historic Preservation Goals. The first bullet on that list reads:

“Protect, preserve, and/or restore historic properties and sites throughout Acton of historical, architectural, archeological, and cultural significance. Work to assist owners with adaptive re-use of historic properties.”

The aim of the Windsor Building Project is just that – to protect, preserve and restore the historic property and to adapt the property for re-use.

The benefits of this particular restoration project are greatly compounded by several “factors to consider” listed on page 19 of the Community Preservation Plan. The building is located in the historic West Acton Village so the restoration can be seen not only as an isolated preservation project, but also through a wider lens as the “revitalization of an historic district”. Secondly, the building is publicly owned and the restoration will create some much needed public meeting space that will be used for town programs, committee meetings and by community organizations as well. The new space will definitely “address a community need” and “serve multiple populations”.

Consistency with Town of Acton Planning Documents

The Town of Acton is heavily promoting sustainable development and smart growth. Part of this plan includes reusing existing structures rather than building new ones. The Windsor Building Project is intended to do just that.

The unique location of Windsor Building also fits nicely into the Town Planning Documents. West Acton Village has excellent sidewalk coverage and is one of the few walkable areas in town. A public meeting room in the Village would provide groups with an alternative option to meeting at Town Hall, creating less traffic and fewer parking issues in the center of town.

Along the same “green” lines, the restoration process will incorporate many energy saving ideas into the building itself, making it more cost efficient to light, heat and maintain.

Economic Feasibility

The amount of money the Town is requesting is well within the range that CPC has given to similar projects. Once the project is complete, no more funding should be needed, as the Town will provide regular maintenance work through the Municipal Properties department.

Population Served

Due to the fact that this project has both an interior and exterior component, there are two aspects to the question of populations served. The exterior restoration of this building celebrates and preserves a piece of the Town’s history thereby serving all citizens’ of the town, present and future.

The multipurpose meeting room to be created on the first floor of the building is intended to serve a wide variety of town committees, civic groups and community organizations. Similarly, the second floor space will be put into public use for the community at large.

Multiple Needs and CPA Focus Areas

As mentioned earlier, the restoration of the Windsor Building should not be viewed in isolation, but in the greater context of revitalization of an Historic District. The historic buildings of West Acton Village have been particularly well maintained by home and business owners alike. Most recently, the Citizens’ Library, located directly across the street from the Windsor Building was restored using CPA funds. By funding this project on the heels of the Citizens’ Library project, CPA has the opportunity to make an enormous impact on the community character of West Acton Village.

Also mentioned earlier, the adaptive reuse of the building’s interior is intended to address multiple space related needs in the community.

Leverage of Funding

The Town has already invested \$5,000 for a preliminary architectural plan for the exterior restoration and a space utilization plan for the first floor. In-kind services will also be contributed by the Town’s Highway and Municipal Properties Departments through project supervision and site work.

Preservation and Utilization of Currently Owned Town Property

The Windsor Building is owned and maintained by the Town of Acton. This project is specifically designed to preserve and better utilize a currently owned town property.

Consistency with Past Town Meeting Actions

The project is fully consistent with recent Town Meeting actions in that many similar restoration projects on municipal properties have been funded in years past.

Competency to Implement

The Town of Acton has successfully demonstrated competency in the implementation of similar CPA funded projects, most currently, the Historic Restoration of the Citizens' Library, located across the street from the Windsor Building.

Site Control

The Town of Acton built the Windsor Building in 1903 and has owned the property ever since.

Notice to Abutters

The Town has not formally notified abutters, but given the current condition of this building - we are quite confident that any and all abutters will be thrilled to learn of a pending restoration project. Proper notification will be given prior to commencing the work.

Attachments

The following documents are attached to this application.

- photograph of the original West Acton Fire House from the 1904 Town Report
- relevant pages from the History of the Acton Fire Department – a compilation of Fire Department expenditures taken from town reports
- Architectural plans and specifications for rehabilitation.
- Site plans and specifications.
- Historic inventory sheet.
- Names and addresses of project architects, contractors, and consultants.
- Other information deemed useful for the Committee in considering the project



TOWN OF ACTON
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Municipal Properties Department

Mr. Ken Sghia-Hughes, Chair
Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee
c/o Planning Department
Acton Town Hall
472 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720

RE: Community Preservation Fund Project Application
Historic Restoration and Adaptive Re-Use of the Windsor Building

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of the Town of Acton, the Municipal Properties Director is pleased to submit the attached Project Application Form for the Historic Restoration and Adaptive Re-Use of the Windsor Building located at 18 Windsor Avenue in the Historic District of West Acton Village.

The Town thanks you for your consideration of this proposal and we look forward to working with the Community Preservation Committee in advancing this proposal to Town Meeting.

Respectfully yours,

Dean Charter
Municipal Properties Director

ACTON MUNICIPAL PROPERTIES DEPARTMENT

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION

To: Steve Ledoux, Town Manager **Date:** 10/29/08
From: Dean A. Charter, Municipal Properties Director
Subject: Windsor Building CPA application

Attached please find some preliminary information in regards to an application for \$500,000 in CPA funds for the historic preservation and adaptive reuse of the Windsor Building, located at 18 Windsor Avenue. This is the original West Acton Fire Station, built in 1903, and most recently used as the Food Pantry.

I have attached only the letter of intent, Project Application Form, Project Narrative, and a rendering of the building as it look in 1904. I am awaiting more documentation from our architect, and will bring that, plus more background information, to the Selectmen's meeting on Monday, November 3.

Christine Joyce

From: Frank Joyner [frankjoyner@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2008 9:06 PM
To: Manager Department
Cc: Paulina Knibbe (comcast); Marcia Rich; Bob Surdel
Subject: AML Civil War Display Enhancement Summary



AML Civil War
Exhibit Summary....

The AML Board of Trustees wish to present a proposal to the CPC to complete some deferred work on and make some improvements in the Library's Civil War Exhibit, "Not Afraid to Go."

Discussion of this proposal is on the agenda for the November 3 meeting of the Board of Selectmen. I plan to be there to present the proposal.

Paulina Knibbe has suggested that a short summary of this proposal be provided to the Selectmen prior to the meeting.

Attached is such a summary that you may wish to include in the packet to the Selectmen prior to the meeting.

Frank Joyner

Acton Memorial Library Civil War Exhibit Enhancement

Amount Requested: \$14,600

Project Summary:

In 2005 we were granted \$30,150 of CPA funding, with \$4,000 being added from Library funds, to design and install a permanent exhibit to tell the story of Acton's unique role as "first to fight" in the Revolutionary War that founded our nation and among the first to fight in the Civil War that preserved it. The exhibit, "Not Afraid to Go," telling this story was dedicated on Patriot's Day this year and, for the first time, the extraordinary artifacts, documents and images given to the Library over the years by veterans and their families have been preserved and made available to the public.

However, the final cost of the exhibit exceeded the original estimate of \$34,150 for several reasons, the major one being the expansion in scope found necessary to adequately display our artifacts, images and documents and fully tell the story of Acton's role in the formation and preservation of our Nation. This caused the exhibit to grow in area, doubled the number of display panels needed, required more lighting and required more layout study to best fit the available space. Another major factor was the unforeseen difficulty and expense of adequately lighting the exhibit in the original library building, while meeting current codes for height clearance and safety. Finally, the additional curatorial work needed took more time than planned, with the delay adding to the cost.

Eliminating one of the two audio stations planned and deferring the audio programming needed to use the stations reduced cost. We also saved the cost of a computer to provide access to our extensive database on Acton's Civil War veterans by using an old unit slated for disposal. Reusing lighting not suitable for the exhibit in other areas of the library also represented a saving.

Additional funding was sought and received, with the Board of Trustees approving funding from the Lois Parker bequest (a library fund) and generous contributions coming from the Friends of the Acton Libraries, the Acton Memorial Library Foundation and the Acton Rotary and Lions clubs. In spite of this a shortfall still existed that the exhibit designer, Will Twombly of Spokeshave Design, closed by deferring billing for a portion of their services. As their work was exemplary and the added cost was in no way their responsibility we feel the deferred amount should be billed and paid.

This proposal requests funding to add the deleted audio station and do the deferred programming, provide a new stand-alone-computer, add lighting in two areas where it is now inadequate, enlarge some of the graphics in the section on the conduct of the Civil War, improved signage to make the exhibit more visible and pay the deferred bill.

Audio Station/Programming:

While the exhibit includes text describing the actions and feelings of the people of Acton at the time of the start of the Revolutionary War and before, during and after the Civil War, merely reading what they spoke and wrote cannot convey the same immediacy and appreciation as hearing their words. The audio stations were planned to allow their words, at times with appropriate music and sound effects added, to give visitors to the exhibit this visceral feel for the attitudes and feelings of the people of Acton during these times. Two stations were planned. A station near the beginning of the exhibit would cover the start of the Revolutionary War and the lead-up to the Civil War.

The current exhibit has an audio station in the area covering the conduct of the war, what was happening on the home front and the post-war era. It consists of an audio unit manufactured by Nel-Tech Labs of Derry, New Hampshire, mounted in a custom-built cabinet. This unit accepts up to eight audio clips stored on a standard USB memory stick and allows them to be selected with pushbuttons mounted on the cabinet top surface. Adding similar unit near the beginning of the exhibit is proposed. This unit would be identical to the existing unit except that it would use headphones (rather than small speakers as on the existing unit) in order to avoid emitting sound that might disturb library users. (The low level of sound from the speakers on the existing unit is acceptable because the unit is located away from areas of normal library use.) The estimated cost of this unit is \$1,500 (see estimate as Attachment 3).

In addition to adding the unit, doing the necessary narration, reading, recording, adding of music and/or sound effects and audio mixing and editing be done to provide sixteen (16) sound clips of one to three-minute duration is also proposed. The estimated cost for this is \$2,500 (see estimate as Attachment 4).

Some of the words written and spoken that will be considered for inclusion are:

- "I haven't a man who is afraid to go," spoken by Isaac Davis.
- Conversation between James Hayward, as he lay dying, and his father
- Affidavit of Hannah Davis about the day her husband was killed.
- Letter(s) home from 19-year-old George Reed who went through Baltimore with Acton's Davis Guards on April 19, 1861, including quote "it is not so pretty to be a soldier as it is to play one".
- All or some of the resolution passed by the 1851 Acton Town Meeting opposing the Fugitive Slave Act.
- Capt. Daniel Tuttle's recollections of the call-up of the Davis Guards on April 15th.
- James Richardson's page from the GAR book where he describes the trial and execution of the Booth conspirators.
- Excerpts from Aaron Jones Fletcher's diary.
- Quotes from A. J. Fletcher's mother, including the one where she tells him not to re-enlist.
- Selections from the diary of Edwin B. Taft, who served through the War in the 26th Mass. Vol. Infantry.

Project Scope:

The project scope and details of each item included were presented in the Narrative section of this proposal. Project elements and the estimated cost of each are listed below.

1. Audio Station	\$1,500
2. Audio Programming	2,500
3. Stand-alone Computer	500
4. Added Lighting	1,000
5. Enlarged Graphics	900
6. Improved Signage	200
7. Deferred Billing Payment	7,458
8. ~9% Contingency on items 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6	542
Total Project Cost	\$14,600