

TOWN OF HINGHAM



**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
JANUARY 7, 2026 AT 7:00 PM
REMOTE MEETING**

Members in Attendance: Ruth Bennett, Elizabeth Dings, Vicki Donlan, David Ellison, Crystal Kelly, Eryn Kelley, Nancy MacDonald, Kirsten Moore

Absent: Philip Edmundson

Also Present: Emily Wentworth, Planning Director, Paula Sjostedt, Administrative Assistant, Tina Sherwood (AdCom), Ben Burnham (AdCom), Mary Power (AdCom)

CALL TO ORDER:

At 7:00 PM, Chair MacDonald called the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) meeting to order and stated the following:

"This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025 and all other applicable laws temporarily amending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. If any participant wishes to record this meeting, please notify the chair at the start of the meeting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording."

Chair MacDonald opened the meeting by thanking attendees for their consideration of this year's grant applications, noting the process began in July. Applicants were invited back to present new information requested since December, with a reminder to use the Zoom "raise hand" function before commencing presentations with the Historical Commission.

Chair MacDonald moved on to a review the current applications.

"Pro Patria et Gloria" (Iron Horse Statue) Restoration

Hingham Historical Commission

Liaison: Kirsten Moore

Presenter: Heidi Gaul, Historic Preservation Administrator

Category: Historic - Restoration

Requested funds: \$30,300

Ms. Gaul outlined the Historical Significance of the "Victory" statue, commonly known as the "Iron Horse," sharing that it is an equestrian memorial dedicated in 1929 to Hingham's veterans. It was created by female sculptors Theo Kitson and her daughter. The statue is situated along Route 3A at Hingham Harbor within the Lincoln Historic District. Due to its coastal location, the bronze is prone to corrosion. The surface was last treated in 2017 and has reached the end of its 8-year coating lifespan. She shared that the statue was recently vandalized with graffiti and scratched initials. While the graffiti was professionally removed, a full restoration is required to stabilize active corrosion and repair surface damage.

Ms. Gaul outlined the scope of work which includes a thorough documentation and installation of temporary fencing, cleaning, removal of degraded coatings, stabilization of corrosion, polishing to remove scratches and application of a hand-rubbed patina, finishing with the application of a protective wax coating and a final report.

Member Moore commended the thoughtfulness and quality of the application. Chair Nancy MacDonald noted the significance of the female sculptors.

No further questions were raised by the committee members.

Grand Army Republic Hall Elevator Replacement

Department of Veterans Services

Liaison: Eryn Kelley

Presenter: Shannon Burke, Director of Veterans Services

Category: Historic - Rehabilitation

Requested funds: 160,000

Ms. Burke presented a financial breakdown showing that repair and maintenance costs paid to Delta Beckwith have consistently exceeded the original budget and that the current fiscal year spending is already over budget due to persistent mechanical failures. She shared that the current elevator is unreliable, forcing the suspension of public meetings in the hall noting the building layout (stairs immediately upon entry) makes the elevator essential for anyone to move beyond the main entrance.

Chair MacDonald noted that the hall is effectively inaccessible when the elevator is down. She Ms. Burke for the thorough application and for her service to the town's veterans.

No further questions were raised by the committee members.

Community Center and Housing Projects

Hingham Community Center / John Thaxter House

Liaison: David Ellison

Presenter: Julia Whitney and Catherine Forbes, Hingham Community Center

Category: Historic - Preservation and Rehabilitation

Requested funds: \$185,500

Ms. Whitney advised the original proposal was for nine sub-projects but has been refined to four priority projects. She also reported that a contractor recently conducted a detailed site review to provide a finer scope of work and more accurate estimates. The HCC Board felt a high confidence in the final figure of \$185,500. A summarized breakdown of the four specific project costs was distributed to the committee late in the afternoon prior to the meeting. Member Ellison noted that while the application had been a "moving target" during the development phase, the HCC board has successfully zeroed in on their specific requirements.

Member Donlan thanked the HCC representatives for their responsiveness to the committee's previous requests. She noted that the current proposal is much clearer and that the John Thaxter House is a vital historic asset that clearly meets CPA qualifications. Chair MacDonald commended the HCC board for their efforts to navigate the Community Preservation Act guidelines, noting that this was a new process for the current board members. She reiterated the importance of the building's central location and historic status.

No further questions were raised by the committee members.

Plymouth River Basketball Court Project

Hingham Recreation

Liaison: Vicki Donlan

Presenter: Vicki Donlan on behalf of Mark Thorrell, Hingham Recreation

Category: Recreation- Create and Rehabilitate

Requested funds: \$333,500

Ms. Donlan started by stating that although located near the Plymouth River School, the "Shed" is a Hingham Recreation property, serving as a unique town asset as the only covered outdoor basketball court in Hingham. She also shared that the Plymouth River PTO has committed \$10,000 toward the project, reducing the final Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding request to \$333,500. She advised that a structural assessment was conducted by Habib & Associates. The assessment confirmed that the steel columns are in good condition, though they require remediation for surface erosion to ensure the structure remains a solid foundation for the new court. She advised attendees that the committee previously conducted a site visit to observe the current condition of the columns and the court surface. No additional information was requested during the December deliberations.

Chair Nancy MacDonald noted that the project details had been thoroughly deliberated in previous sessions.

No further questions were raised by the committee members.

30 Thaxter Street Roof Replacement

Hingham Housing Authority

Liaison: Ruth Bennett

*Presenter: Rick Brouillard, Director of Modernization, Quincy Housing Authority
Kevin Kozlowskis Maintenance Supervisor, Hingham Housing Authority*

Category: Community Housing - Preservation

Requested funds: \$299,572

Member Bennett introduced the team and noted that while the previous meeting was thorough, the applicant wanted to provide additional technical details regarding recent storm damage and budget estimates.

Mr. Brouillard presented a revised presentation featuring updated photos and more detailed data from a design consultant and two contractor quotes. The project involved the complete roof replacement for eight community housing buildings at Thaxter Park. This campus, formerly the West Elementary School, provides 98 total units of elderly, congregate, family, and special needs housing. He presented photographic evidence from a December storm showing shingles lifting off the buildings. Mr. Kozlowskis has been performing emergency patching to mitigate leaks, but the roofs have reached the end of their functional lifecycle. Mr. Brouillard outlined the total project cost, estimated at \$599,144. HHA is requesting half (\$299,572) from the CPC. They intend to apply for a HILAT (High Leverage Asset Preservation Program) match from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC), noting that EOHLC has a strong history of matching such awards.

Discussion among committee members clarified key dates, including the CPC vote on January 14th and the final Town Meeting vote scheduled for April 27th.

No further questions were raised by the committee members.

Hingham Affordable Housing Trust "Opportunity Fund"

Hingham Affordable Housing Trust (HAHT)

Liaison: Elizabeth Dings and Crystal Kelly

Presenter: Jack Falvey, Chair HAHT, and Jennifer Oram, Zoning Administrator

Category: Community Housing – Acquire, Create, Preserve, Rehabilitate

Requested funds: \$800,000

The request is broken into two allocations. The buckets are \$300,000 into the traditional "Opportunity Fund" for the purchase, renovation, and resale of individual affordable homes and \$500,000 to capital projects for preservation and repairs at the Lincoln School Apartments.

Chair Nancy MacDonald reported that following the December meeting, a group including Town Counsel John Coughlin and various town officials reviewed the application. Town Counsel determined the grant proposal complies with Community Preservation Act (CPA) requirements. Member Kelly addressed concerns regarding specific project estimates. She advised as a public entity, the Trust is governed by state public procurement laws. Obtaining formal bids before the procurement process opens is legally precluded; however, the Trust is mandated to select the lowest qualified bidder, ensuring complete transparency.

There was concern that every maintenance or improvement project is significantly more expensive for the Town than it would be for a private owner due to public-contracting requirements. Chair MacDonald noted that while \$500,000 is earmarked for this specific Lincoln School Apartments capital project, the as a public entity, the Trust's application should be treated with the same standards as the Hingham Housing Authority (HHA), where the bidding process is dictated by the state.

At the previous meeting, members asked for details on the "severity of the problem" at the Lincoln School Apartments. The Trust indicated these details were included in a submitted study and would be further clarified during the slide presentation.

Mr. Falvey that the volunteer Board of Managers and town staff have been "stretched" to keep up with the maintenance of the aging 1912 building. He shared that while the Trust requested \$500,000 for critical repointing of the historic brick and mortar, total capital needs are estimated at \$5 million to \$10

million. These needs include overhauling a failing HVAC system, roof repairs, and the urgent need for a second elevator to serve residents.

Mr. Falvey felt that the request aligns with the Town Master Plan's goals to both preserve existing affordable housing (Lincoln School Apartments) and expand availability through new acquisitions.

Neighbors and residents expressed anxiety over the future of the building, specifically regarding air circulation and extreme heat on the upper floors due to non-opening windows. There were also questions about whether a sale to a private developer might lead to future expansion beyond current deed restrictions. Mr. Falvey shared that the Select Board and the Trust are evaluating a potential conveyance to a private developer specifically to secure the millions needed for renovations while maintaining the property’s long-term affordability through deed restrictions.

Chair MacDonald moved on to discuss the process and future meeting schedule.

The Chair advised that the committee will meet in person at Town Hall on Wednesday, January 14th, to vote on final recommendations for the Annual Town Meeting. Following the CPC vote, the Select Board and Advisory Committee (ADCOM) will hold review meetings. Chair MacDonald will notify members of these dates once scheduled and advised members to remain prepared to provide context and information to ADCOM as specific projects move forward. The final decision on all grants rests with the Town Meeting, scheduled for Monday, April 27th.

Chair MacDonald provided a directional update on the funding available for the upcoming grant cycle (final accounting pending):

Estimated Tax Receipts	\$1,537,529
State DOR Match	\$259,540
General Reserve Surplus	46,996
Historic Reserve	5,783
Community Housing Reserve:	35,783
Unspent Administration Fees	2,891
Interest Payments on Reserves:	5,598
Total FY26 Contribution	797,069
Estimated Total Funding Available	384,120

Chair MacDonald advised the total funding requested across the six projects was \$2,058,051. At this time the committee currently has an estimated surplus of over \$300,000 in excess of the total requested amounts.

Chair MacDonald outlined the upcoming vote process including that she will distribute digital scorecards this week for members to provide preliminary allocation recommendations for each project. Member Moore requested that the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust application be split into "Part A" and "Part B" on the scorecard to reflect its two distinct components (Acquisition Fund vs. Lincoln School Apartments). The Chair and Ms. Wentworth took this under advisement.

Chair MacDonald concluded the budget summary, noting that final verified numbers from accounting would be shared as soon as they are received.

Vicki Donlan made a motion, seconded by Crystal Kelly, to adjourn the CPC meeting at 8:57PM

The motion was passed by roll call vote.

- In favor:

Eryn Kelley, Ruth Bennett, Crystal Kelly, Kirsten Moore, Vicki Donlan David Ellison, Elizabeth Dings, Nancy MacDonald
- Opposed:

None