

TOWN OF BEDFORD  
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

# COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PROGRAM AND PLAN

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SPRING 2003

FINAL

Revision 1.2

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# I

## INTRODUCTION

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### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT IN BEDFORD

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The Community Preservation Act (the "CPA", MGL 44B) allows any city or town in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to adopt a property tax surcharge with revenues from this surcharge (and state matching funds) devoted to open space, historic preservation, affordable housing, and land for recreational use. Bedford was the first community to accept the CPA, approving this at a Special Town Meeting in January 2001 and a Town Election in March 2001. The surcharge went into effect with the start of Fiscal Year 2002 on July 1, 2001.

Consistent with the terms of the CPA and with a bylaw adopted at Bedford's 2001 Annual Town Meeting, a Community Preservation Committee was formed to study and recommend how Bedford's CPA revenues should be spent. The committee, appointed by the Selectmen, currently consists of three at-large members (Maggie Debbie, Elizabeth Hacala, and Jeff Hoyland) and representatives of the Town's Conservation Commission (Myles McDonough), Historic Preservation Commission (Donald Corey), Housing Authority (Steve Hanna), Housing Partnership (Gene Clerkin), Planning Board (Sandra Hackman), and Board of Selectmen (Cathy Cordes, acting as a Parks Commissioner).

In preparation for Fiscal Year 2004, the Community Preservation Committee has held many meetings to review and analyze the town's community preservation needs and strengths. After consulting with town residents and committees and holding a Public Hearing on these topics, the Community Preservation Committee has prepared this Community Preservation Program and Plan, which contains an update on previously funded projects and recommendations for FY04 CPA spending.

This document is available for review at the Town Hall and the Bedford Free Public Library and also at the committee's web site, [www.bedford-cpc.com](http://www.bedford-cpc.com). The Committee welcomes comments. Please send them to Community Preservation Committee, Town Administrator's Office, Bedford Town Hall, Bedford, MA 01730.

The Committee's recommendations (listed in section V below) will be presented to the Annual Town Meeting in March 2003 for approval. After this, the Committee will begin preparations for the next fiscal year and accept proposals using the form included in section VI below.

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**BEDFORD'S COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY PRESERVATION**

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For years, Bedford residents have expressed a strong interest in preserving our small town character. Our comprehensive plan includes a Bedford Vision Statement, created through a community-wide visioning process. The vision statement (reproduced below) affirms the Town's priority on open space, historic preservation, affordable housing, and recreational activities. These themes have been repeated many times in the last twenty or more years but urgent needs such as sewers and schools have made it difficult for the town to fund longer-term priorities.

It should be no surprise, then, that Bedford residents moved decisively to adopt the Community Preservation Act. The members of the Community Preservation Committee are pleased to help the town carry out its long-standing intent of acting to preserve our small town character. The projects and priorities described in this document reflect our best understanding for how to do so. We are heartened by the town's support for community preservation and welcome input on this topic.

**BEDFORD VISION STATEMENT**

The Town of **Bedford** envisions its **small-town character** enhanced over the next twenty years as it moves into the twenty-first century. This character is distinguished by both the historically significant **architectural resources** and the beauty of the **Center of Town**. The Center of Town is a functional area that emanates from the Town Common at First Parish Unitarian and as the central focus of town includes governmental, educational, recreational and public assembly activities supplemented by small shops and businesses. The Town sees its architectural heritage preserved and the Center of Town strengthened as the central community focus, and that in Bedford:

- **Traffic congestion** is alleviated;
- The Great Road is a **linear, pedestrian-friendly environment** with street trees, attractive signage and stores in scale with the environs and close to the street;
- A **system of sidewalks and trails** provides a network within and between neighborhoods, commercial areas, and public facilities;
- Substantial **open space** is preserved supporting small-town character, providing balance to developed areas, and protecting our natural resources;
- A range of **activities for social interaction and services for social needs** is provided, with particular emphasis on specific activities for youth and seniors;
- **Active and passive recreational needs** are met for residents of all age groups and physical capabilities;
- **Superior public education** is provided by a diverse educational program; and
- **Housing choices** for different types of units are available and affordable for all.

## II

# FUNDED PROJECTS STATUS REPORT

### **Project Approval Process**

Shortly after its formation, the Community Preservation Committee conducted an in-depth study of the Town's community preservation needs, possibilities, and resources (including interviews with interested citizens, committees, and officials). Based on this study, the Committee prepared a Community Preservation Program and Plan for Fiscal Year 2002, describing the Town's community preservation needs and goals, specific proposals for how CPA funds might be used to address those needs, criteria for evaluating these proposals, and a prioritized list of the proposals. The Program and Plan were circulated widely and the Committee held a Public Hearing where it received many useful comments.

Each year, the Committee reviews and updates the Community Preservation Program and Plan. Presentations are heard on the progress of plans in each of the targeted Community Preservation areas. Proposals are solicited and received, using a well-defined process that allows the committee to hear in-depth presentations from architects and proponents of the various projects. Based on the information gathered during this process, the Committee votes on preliminary recommendations for CPA spending and distributes a draft Community Preservation Program and Plan, incorporating the preliminary recommendations. A Public Hearing is held to review the draft Program and Plan and the preliminary recommendations. In response to comments received at the Public Hearing, the Committee revises its recommendations and the Program and Plan. The final recommendations are submitted to the Town Meeting for approval. Only those recommendations approved by the Town Meeting are actually funded.

### **Project Status Report**

Here are status updates on the projects that have been approved for funding with Bedford's Community Preservation Act funds:

Approved at the Special Town Meeting on October 29, 2001:

- Affordable Housing - The Duplex Conversion Project was approved for \$131, 940 in CPA funding. This project will purchase a duplex in town, renovate it (using some volunteer labor), and convert it into two condominiums which will be sold to moderate-income buyers at an affordable price (about \$125,000). Deed restrictions will ensure that these condos remain affordable forever. CPA funds will be used to fund the renovations and to bridge the gap between the market rate purchase price of the duplex and the affordable sales price of the condos.

The Town has contracted with the Bedford Housing Trust to manage and execute the Duplex Conversion Project. A duplex was purchased in October 2002 and renovation is under way.

- Affordable Housing – The Condo Buy-Down Program was approved for \$161,200 of FY02 CPA funds. This program involves purchasing market rate or previously restricted but unqualified condominium units, deed restricting the units as perpetual affordable “subsidized housing”, and selling the units to a qualified family. The buyer is selected at random from the pool of qualified applicants, with a preference given to those with a Bedford connection. The maximum affordable sale price of \$125,000 assumes a qualifying income of \$56,000 and a family spending 32% of their gross income on total housing costs.

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The Town has contracted with the Bedford Housing Trust for Condo Buy-Down Program services. One condominium was processed through this program in 2002. Approximately \$145,000 remains in escrow for the purchase of more units and to subsidize condominium fees.

- Open Space - The purchase of 133 and 135A Shawsheen Road was approved with \$150,000 of the purchase price coming from Community Preservation Act funds. This 16 acre parcel of land had been listed in the town's Open Space & Recreation Plan as a desirable site to acquire. The 4-acre portion purchased with CPA funds is critical to protecting Bedford's only active water source, the Shawsheen Wellfield. Maintaining and protecting this source lessens the Town's dependence on MWRA water. The entire parcel, 16 acres in total, has additional value beyond watershed protection. There are wetlands and trails through rolling upland portions which are contiguous to a large Town-owned parcel adjacent to the old reservoir. The Town completed the purchase of this land in January 2002.
- Open Space – In addition to the funds used toward the Shawsheen Road purchase, \$72,000 was approved to be placed in Reserves for future Open Space needs.
- Historic Preservation - Old Town Hall restoration – In order to restore the Old Town Hall to productive use, the October 2001 STM approved issuing \$1.6M in bonds. This bond authorization has not been used yet. The delay was due to a legal point in the original legislation regarding the allowed uses of CPA funds as it relates to historic buildings already owned by the Town prior to CPA. This issue has been favorably resolved by a recent amendment to the Community Preservation Act, approved by the legislature and governor. The plans for the work to be funded by the CPA, interior restoration and construction of a rear addition to address code and access issues thereby permitting adaptive reuse of the building, will be finalized soon and put out to bid.
- Historic Preservation - \$72,000 was approved to be placed in a Reserve account for future historic preservation projects.
- Recreation – \$40,000 was approved to be placed in a Reserve account for future recreation projects.

At the March 2002 Annual Town Meeting several new projects were approved for funding from the FY03 CPA revenue, which became available on July 1, 2002.

- Affordable Housing - \$155,000 was approved to be placed in the Affordable Housing Reserve account for future projects.
- Open Space – the Altmann property – An expenditure of \$300,000 of CPA funds is the Town's contribution toward the purchase price of \$835,000. The Conservation Commission negotiated for the purchase of approximately 16 acres of the Altmann parcel off of Dudley Road. This parcel abuts Great Meadows Wildlife Refuge and Huckins Farm. It is adjacent to Two Brothers' Rocks, an historic site. Acquisition and conservation of this property assures a good buffer and improves trail access to Two Brothers' Rocks. The property has a large amount of upland and contains a wide diversity of wildlife habitat, including a certified vernal pool, riverfront area, old stone walls, and cart paths. In this location the width of protected land along the Concord River is extremely narrow; development of this parcel would have been extremely undesirable, as it would have been the only development in Bedford visible from the river and Two Brothers' Rocks.

To cover the remainder of the purchase price, the Conservation Commission pursued a grant from the Route 3 Open Space Acquisitions Grant program, a fund designed to compensate the towns for

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the loss of open space and wetlands due to the Route 3 construction. Since the grant program was competitive, the Town was at an advantage by contributing some funds to support the acquisition price. The grant for \$535,000 was approved in the late spring and the purchase was finalized in August 2002.

- Historic Preservation - \$10,000 of CPA funds were approved for foundation repair work at the Job Lane House. The plans and specifications, the first step, are expected to get underway soon.
- Historic Preservation – Annual Town Meeting approved \$900,000 of CPA funds for the preservation portion of the Town Center restoration and addition. \$828,000 of this will come from the FY03 revenues combined with \$72,000 reserved for Historic Preservation purposes at the Special Town Meeting in October 2001. The project, preserving the building for continued use and constructing additions to serve various community organizations, is proceeding as approved.
- Recreation - Skate Park – The October 2001 Special Town Meeting approved an FY 02 Reserve amount of \$40,000 of CPA funds for future recreation projects. The spring 2002 Annual Town Meeting voted to use these reserve funds as well as a new allocation of \$45,000 from FY03 CPA revenues to fully fund the site development, construction and equipment of a new permanent skate park facility. The skate park opened on July 12, 2002 and has proved to be quite popular.

At the November 2002 Annual Town Meeting several new projects were approved for funding.

- Recreation – The Town Meeting voted to appropriate \$25,000 for use as matching funds for the Springs Brook Park Study.
- Affordable Housing – A sum of \$25,000 was appropriated from the Community Housing Reserve to determine whether town-owned property at 447 Concord Road might be used for affordable housing. An archeological study revealed no barriers on historic grounds. Analysis of wetlands and other environmental factors show that a limited development would be feasible.
- Affordable Housing – A sum of \$25,000 was appropriated for hiring a part-time affordable housing support consultant. This consultant was hired in October and she has already proved invaluable in helping the Bedford Housing Partnership analyze several Comprehensive Permit applications, especially in doing in-depth financial analyses. She has also begun work on administrative work related to Bedford's membership in the Newton HOME Consortium. This will probably result in the Town receiving approximately \$40,000 in affordable housing funds from that group so this was clearly a good investment.
- Historic Preservation – Because of increased costs while waiting for necessary legislative changes, an additional \$250,000 was appropriated for the restoration and preservation of Old Town Hall.

### III

## GOALS, NEEDS, AND PROPOSED PROJECTS

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### ASSESSMENT PROCESS

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As noted above, funds collected under the Community Preservation Act can only be spent for four *community preservation areas*: open space, historic preservation, affordable housing, and land for recreational use. At least 10% of the funds received in any fiscal year must be spent or set aside for each of the first three of those areas (open space, historic preservation, affordable housing). The remaining 70% of each year's funds can be spent in any of the four areas, as determined by the needs of the community. However, CPA funds cannot be spent on maintenance or used to supplant funds being used for existing community preservation purposes. Up to 5% of annual Community Preservation revenues can be spent on administrative and operating expenses of the Community Preservation Committee.

In order to translate the town's vision statement (found on page 2) into specifics and determine which projects should be funded, the Community Preservation Committee gathers information and ideas from Bedford citizens and people who are knowledgeable about each of the community preservation areas. For instance, we consult with members of the Planning Board, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Conservation Commission, the Recreation Commission, the Bedford Housing Authority and the Bedford Housing Partnership. In addition, we have Open Hearings, staff a booth at Bedford Day, and hold informational meetings at the Council On Aging.

Based on the information gathered from these sources, we develop an assessment of Bedford's goals and needs in each of the community preservation areas and a list of proposed projects in each of these areas. Some of these projects are ready for immediate action; others are a few years down the road. This allows the Community Preservation Committee and the town to plan for the future.

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### OPEN SPACE

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#### **Open Space Resources**

Bedford enjoys a variety of Open Space resources distributed throughout town. This includes Town-owned properties such as Fawn Lake, the Hartwell Town Forest, Wilderness Park, Elm Brook Conservation Area, and a variety of smaller conservation areas. Bedford also enjoys many scenic vistas, farms, and open fields owned by other parties. However, most of these spaces are not protected in any permanent manner and may fall victim to development pressures at any time.

#### **Open Space Goals**

Open Space resources are highly valued by Bedford residents, as noted in the Vision Statement above. Bedford first had an Open Space and Recreation Master Plan in 1977. This was updated with new input from Town residents in the 1997 Open Space and Recreation Plan, which was then submitted to the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The following are excerpts from that Plan:

There is strong sentiment among Bedford's residents to protect the small town atmosphere and scenic and historic character. Preservation of open space has consistently been a top priority throughout Bedford's master planning activities. However, suburbanization has had a voracious appetite for land. The town's decision in the 1980s to install municipal sewers on a town-wide basis

resulted in the development of large tracts that were formerly unbuildable. As land disappeared, the town lost a portion of its character, history and its most durable economic base. The preservation of agricultural and woodland resources, historic sites and structures, and other remaining open spaces should be pursued, both as a reminder of Bedford's history and earlier character and for protection of natural and scenic resources.

The nine community goals listed below were developed through the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Survey and input at scheduled meetings of the Action Plan Working Group. A detailed series of action items has been developed to implement these goals.

Goal 1: Preserve Bedford's small town image

Goal 2: Protect valuable water resources and unique wildlife habitat areas

Goal 3: Protect aquifer recharge areas for existing and future water supply

Goal 4: Develop and promote a public awareness program for Bedford's conservation and recreation areas

Goal 5: Preserve and protect historic and cultural properties and sites

Goal 6: Preserve large tracts of undeveloped land

Goal 7: Improve access and trail linkages to conservation, recreation and other land uses

Goal 8: Enhance the quality and variety of passive and active recreational opportunities for all age groups and abilities

Goal 9: Increase the town's responsiveness to protect environmentally sensitive and culturally significant properties

The passage of the Community Preservation Act has helped the Town of Bedford to continue to accomplish these goals. As described in Funded Projects Status Report, Community Preservation Act funds have been used to acquire several parcels of environmental or cultural importance, such as the Altmann and Valente properties.

### **Current Proposals**

#### Fawn Lake (Open Space)

Fawn Lake, the most visible and valuable conservation area in Bedford, owes its popularity to the park-like setting with trails around a 12-acre pond, 2-acre lawn and 25-acre forest purchased in 1979 with State Self-Help funding. Its interesting past as a mineral springs health resort and early pharmaceutical center reminds the visitor that the lake has been a scenic and restorative attraction for over a century. Traces of the old mineral springs remain, but present use is more likely to be fishing, ice-skating or strolling around the shore. Native vegetation predominates, and the shore is one of the best places in Bedford to see mountain laurel.

Over the past few decades, Fawn Lake has been filling in with decaying plant matter. This situation has been the subject of several studies over the years. In 1998 Spring Annual Town Meeting approved \$50,000 toward the cost of hiring a consultant to design a solution, conduct meetings with Bedford officials and residents, prepare permit applications and generate final specifications to be advertised.

In July 2001 the RFQP for design and permitting consultant was issued and in the fall of 2001 a consultant firm was contracted to help the Town with the tasks. GeoSyntec has spent much of the past year working on the alternative analysis and having public meetings to gather input from the community. They are now

developing a web site to provide information and updates to the community, as well as finalizing the permits for proposed solutions, hydroraking and spot herbicide application. In addition to taking steps to remove vegetation, the consultants have identified a series of stormwater management improvements that would serve to limit and diminish the impacts from storm water input. These changes will help to stabilize the situation and begin to decelerate the future accumulation of sediment. The Fawn Lake sub-committee has requested funding from CPA in order to begin these tasks in the spring and early summer of 2003. The plan assumes additional work, in a more modest scope, may need to be done in the next two years as well, in order to truly get a handle on managing the vegetation's growth.

### **Possible Future Proposals**

#### Land Acquisition

Due to the appetite for development in Bedford and the consequential loss of Open Space, acquiring land for Open Space is an important and ongoing issue for the Town. Many parcels have been generously donated to the Town for use as Open Space and Conservation. Others have been purchased by the Town. In recent years, the Town Meeting has set aside funds for acquiring Open Space and Conservation land.

The Conservation Commission and its Land Acquisition Sub-Committee have identified a list of undeveloped lots in Bedford that might be suitable for purchase as Open Space. These lots have been categorized in terms of size, resource areas and potential uses.

In May 2001 and October 2002 the Land Acquisition Sub-Committee sent letters to the owners of these properties informing them that the Town may have an interest in purchasing the property. The committee received response from several land owners and discussions are ongoing.

There has been some success in the past year. Two of the parcels being pursued by the Land Acquisition Sub-Committee, Hughes and Altmann parcels, were successfully acquired this past summer. The Altmann parcel acquisition was partially funded by Community Preservation Act. In addition, another parcel, 133 and 135A Shawsheen Road, which had been in the town's Open Space and Recreation Plan as a desirable site to acquire, was also purchased with partial funding from the CPA.

Property values in Bedford have risen substantially in recent years. This makes land acquisition for Open Space more difficult but even more urgent. If we want to preserve the walking trails, scenic vistas, and wildlife that many residents enjoy, we must act quickly before property values head out of sight. We believe that the Community Preservation Act can help Bedford act on this Town-wide priority before it's too late, taking advantage of state matching funds and issuing bonds if necessary.

Because of the confidential and delicate nature of real estate negotiations, we cannot publish a complete list of parcels under consideration by the Land Acquisition sub-committee at this time. However, here are a few statistics:

- 5 sites are less than 5 acres
- 5 sites are between 5 and 15 acres
- 6 sites are between 20 and 50 acres
- The individual assessed values of these parcels are between several hundred dollars and several million dollars.
- All of the sites are adjacent to Town-owned open space. Acquisition of these sites would help create continuous access for citizens and a broader wildlife corridor.
- Some of the larger sites could accommodate multiple uses and goals: ball fields or other types of recreational activities, affordable housing, and open space.
- Most of the 9 community Open Space and Recreation goals listed earlier can be addressed through acquisition of these sites.

### Wilson Mill Site (Open Space)

In the summer of 2000, the Town of Bedford purchased the land next to the Wilson Mill site from the Zion Alliance Church. This parcel has been combined with another purchased from the estate of Sophie DeVincent and 2 other small parcels already owned by the Town to create Wilson Mill Historic Park. The combined parcels total about 5 acres and are located at the east end of Old Burlington Road. They are bordered by Route 62, Route 3 and the Vine Brook Mill Pond.

This will be a joint project of the Conservation Commission, the Historic Preservation Commission and Recreation Commission, with goals to preserve the historic Mill Site within the Vine Brook ravine, to provide passive recreation opportunities, and to provide access to the mill pond for canoeing and fishing. Currently the site is being cleaned up, and a landscape preservation plan has been completed for the Town. Actual details for implementation of the plan, including costs and potential funding sources, are still being evaluated by a committee that was recently formed.

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## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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### **Historic Preservation Resources**

Bedford has a large number of historic assets. In addition to town-owned properties such as the Job Lane House, Old Town Hall, and Town Center, many private homes and other structures date back to the Revolutionary War era.

### **Historic Preservation Goals**

The town's Historic Preservation Commission has identified the following goals:

- Goal 1: Preservation and enhancement of municipally owned properties of historic, archaeological and cultural significance;
- Goal 2: Acquisition of threatened properties of particular historical significance, subject to Town Meeting approval;
- Goal 3: Providing technical and financial assistance to private owners of historic properties to encourage their preservation;
- Goal 4: Providing education and community outreach regarding the historic and cultural resources within Bedford.

While some of these goals cannot be supported with Community Preservation Act funds, goals 1 and 2 are clearly relevant and eligible for funding.

### **Current Proposals**

#### Job Lane House Preservation

The Job Lane House (ca. 1720) is believed to date to the period of first English settlement and is among the oldest houses in Bedford. The west parlor retains frescoes of a river scene executed in black and white or gray. These frescoes have been attributed to Rufus Porter, a leading mural painter who resided in Billerica from 1823 to 1843.

The Historic Preservation Commission is responsible for administration of this property, while the Friends of the Job Lane House help maintain the property and provide interpretive programs. Due to the building's

great age and its individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places, on-going preservation work must be done in conformance with appropriate federal and state standards.

Several structural problems have recently been discovered. Repairs to framing in the basement and a tie rod in the attic are required in order to preserve this critical historic resource. The cost is estimated at \$8,000. This work will be combined with the foundation work approved for CPA funding last spring.

#### Community-Wide Archeological Reconnaissance Study

As Bedford approaches full build-out, it is critical that we identify and inventory remaining historic sites, especially those that may be previously unidentified. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has funding available to assist communities that wish to conduct a town-wide archeological reconnaissance survey. This would involve literary research to identify colonial sites and a surface survey to identify Native American sites (since written records on these sites are minimal). CPA funding of \$10,000 is proposed to match \$15,000 from the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

### **Possible Future Proposals**

#### Old Burying Ground

The Old Burying Ground is a significant contributing element to both the Old Bedford Center National Historic District and the Bedford Historic District. The age and condition of the site requires that some investment be made to preserve it for future generations. For instance, stones that have been tipped or damaged should be repaired. A proposal for preservation work relating to the Old Burying Ground will probably be submitted soon.

#### Wilson Mill Site (Historic Preservation)

The Wilson Mill Site area is one of the most historically significant in Bedford, including resources dating to the earliest history of settlement within the present boundaries of Bedford. As early as 1676, John Wilson established a corn (grist) mill on Vine Brook. An application for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places has been submitted to the Massachusetts Historic Commission.

A Historic Landscape Preservation Plan was completed with the assistance of a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management. This will provide for both passive recreation and historic interpretation of the site. Actual details for implementation of the plan, including costs and potential funding sources, are still being evaluated by a committee that was recently formed.

#### Job Lane House

The Job Lane House is described in detail above. Due to its age, ongoing preservation work will be required.

#### Town Hall

The Town Hall currently occupies the former Center School, which underwent major renovations in the late 1980s to convert it to its current use. It is also a significant contributing element to the Old Bedford Center National Historic District.

Periodic major capital projects will be required to maintain the building's functionality in future years. Preservation costs would be eligible for funding under the Community Preservation Act.

### Bacon-Fitch-Clark Mill Site

Michael Bacon III (ca. 1640-1707) operated a corn mill on the Shawsheen River off of Old Billerica Road on the west bank of the Shawsheen River as early as 1675. About 1730, Benjamin Fitch (1703-1770) purchased land and the mill from the Bacon family. The original mill was destroyed during King Philip's War and immediately rebuilt. The mill eventually passed to Herbert Clark, who sold it to the Town of Bedford in 1947. The town demolished the mill as well as the dam in an effort to improve storm drainage.

The site has been evaluated as eligible for listing as a contributing element within a proposed Old Billerica Road National Historic District. A Historic Landscape Preservation Plan study similar to that completed for the Wilson Mill site will be needed before costs can be assigned for this potential project.

### Abbott Farmstead Site (ca 1725)

Existing documents indicate that the location of Obed Abbott's 1725 homestead is in a parcel off of Springs Road that is currently subdivided between the first 3 northerly lots on Copeland Drive. The site includes the foundations of a house and barn, several wells, a silo, causeway and ramp. Until recent subdivision construction, the land had been undisturbed for about a century. Based on preliminary surveys in 1990 and 1991, the Massachusetts Historical Commission has determined that the Abbott site could contribute information meaningful to local, state and national history. The site has the potential to contribute significant information on "... vernacular buildings, historical land use, and the socio-economic interaction of rural farms with village, regional and international markets."

The site is listed in the State Register of Historic Places, and a Preservation Restriction has been placed on the site. However, little more can be done while it remains in private ownership split between 3 owners. If the Town is able to purchase the site, it can preserve the site appropriately and possibly have an archaeological investigation conducted. The costs for acquisition have not been determined.

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## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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### **Affordable Housing Resources**

At present, 4.5% of Bedford's housing units are classified as affordable "subsidized housing" by the state's Department of Housing and Community Development (for the purposes of Chapter 40B). These 210 affordable units are located as follows:

- Ashby Place, 80 affordable apartments reserved for seniors and handicapped
- Bedford Meadows, 10 affordable homeownership homes out of 40
- Bedford Village, a 96-unit apartment complex with a mix of affordable and market units
- Elm Street, 12 affordable rental units in duplexes
- Old Billerica Road, 4 rental units of special needs housing
- Railroad Avenue, 8 rental units of special needs housing

### **Affordable Housing Goals**

Goal 1: Meet local housing needs along the full range of incomes, while promoting diversity and the stability of individuals and families living in Bedford.

Bedford residents have long indicated their support for diversity in economic status, age, religion,

race and ethnicity. The preservation and production of affordable housing is a proven method for promoting diversity, allowing individuals and families with more limited means to afford to live in town. The town will utilize Community Preservation funds to create new environments that offer current and future residents a wide range of housing options including mixed-use housing, senior residential developments, supportive housing alternatives, live-work spaces, and artist workspaces.

Goal 2: Ensure that new affordable housing is harmonious with the existing community.

Developments will incorporate a number of characteristics designed to maintain a low to medium density with locations scattered throughout the town while conserving the natural landscape.

Goal 3: Surpass the 10% State standard for affordable housing.

In order to ensure that future affordable housing development is consistent with the needs and character of the town, Bedford must meet and exceed the state's 10% affordable housing standard. Until that milestone is achieved, the town will be considered deficient in this area.

Goal 4: Leverage other public and private resources to the greatest extent possible.

Bedford does not receive federal or state funding for affordable housing on an entitlement basis. The Bedford Housing Partnership will be creative in leveraging public and private resources to make affordable housing development possible. Creativity will be demonstrated by combining Community Preservation funds with the various private, state, and federal resources that are available on a non-entitlement "competitive" basis. This will include Federal Home Loan Bank funds, State HOME, Housing Stabilization, and Housing Innovations funds, and Federal Low Income Housing Tax credits.

### **Affordable Housing Needs**

Many affordable housing developments have been proposed in the past few years. If all of these developments were approved and built (omitting the troubled Princeton Properties development), we would add 264 units of affordable housing, bringing our total to 474, just over 10% of the total number of units in town. Reaching this level will help Bedford achieve a proper balance of affordable and market rate housing and regain control of development by eliminating the threat of hostile comprehensive permits.

The good news is that, other than the Avalon Bay development, the 264 units on the drawing board are fairly small developments, scattered throughout the town to avoid stressing one neighborhood too much. The bad news is that building affordable housing is never easy. With government budgets in a tight squeeze, it's even harder.

CPA funding is crucial to building these units. Some developments will be private and some will tap state or federal funding sources. But several are planned to use CPA funds. Without these funds, we will probably face several more large private developments like Avalon Bay. With these funds, we may be able to reach the 10% level within a few years by building smaller developments. Therefore, it's crucial that CPA funding remains available.

Affordable housing has many definitions and addresses many different income levels. For now, our primary focus will be on the threshold set by the state's Chapter 40B guidelines, which consider a housing unit as affordable if it is subsidized by state or federal programs that support low- and moderate-income households, at no more than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). The following charts show what 80% AMI is and what the maximum purchase and rental prices are under the latest state guidelines for the Town of Bedford:

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MAXIMUM ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME AT 80% AMI  
 (UD 2001 GREATER BOSTON AREA)

# OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD	80% OF MEDIAN INCOME
1-4 PEOPLE	\$56,000

AFFORDABLE PRICES AT 80% AMI IN BEDFORD  
 (FOR A FAMILY OF 1-4 PEOPLE)

FOR SALE

1-2 BR CONDO	\$125,000
3 BR CONDO	\$130,500
3 BR SFR	TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH DHCD/STATE
4 BR SFR	TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH DHCD/STATE

RENTAL PER MONTH

1-2 BR	\$950
3 BR	\$1,000

Affordable Unit Production

The Bedford Housing Partnership has plans for a series of potential projects similar to those described below, all of which are consistent with the affordable housing goals outlined above. We will proceed with these projects one or two at a time so as to avoid overwhelming ourselves and our community with affordable housing developments.

For more information, please review the Comprehensive Affordable Housing Plan recently prepared by the Housing Partnership. This document includes a much more detailed analysis of the town's affordable housing needs and plans for meeting those needs.

**Current Proposals**

447 Concord Road

The Town-owned land at 447 Concord Road has been identified as one of the few parcels of Town-owned land suitable for affordable housing development. The 4.12 acre parcel is large enough to provide some economies of scale (10 units) without excess density. Using Town owned land will reduce the subsidy required by eliminating acquisition costs.

DEVELOPMENT PROFORMA

Uses		Sources	
Acquisition Costs	\$1,350,000	Town Land	\$1,350,000
Hard Costs	\$1,346,400	Perm Loan	\$550,000
Soft Costs	\$728,600	CPA	\$275,000
		Subsidy	\$1,250,000
Total	\$3,425,000	Total	\$3,425,000

The development plan for this parcel takes full advantage of this previously underutilized town property. About 2/3 of the property will be devoted to open space, wetlands, walking trails, and other conservation

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uses. The remaining 1.2 acres will support 10 units of affordable family rental housing, addressing a critical need in Bedford. A variety of subsidy sources will be tapped, including Bedford CPA funds, HOME funds (through the Metro West Consortium), state HOME funds, MHP financing, and a special Pilot Program for Suburban Affordable Housing funded by the state.

In addition to the usual permitting and approval processes required for any development in town, separate approvals from the Selectmen and Town Meeting will be required since the land in question is owned by the Town.

Patriot Place

A private developer has proposed constructing a mixed income rental housing development at 18 Springs Road. This housing was proposed as a single building of 16 one bedroom units. In response to concerns about the scale of the project, the developer has proposed to reduce the number of units to 10 with half the units affordable. However, this reduction is contingent on the receipt of state and local subsidies to keep the project economically feasible. These subsidies would consist of \$120,000 in CPA funds and \$300,000 from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership's Perm Plus Program.

DEVELOPMENT PROFORMA

Uses		Sources	
Acquisition Costs	\$350,000	Land	\$250,000
Hard Costs	\$945,521	Debt	\$664,000
Soft Costs	\$226,797	CPA	\$120,000
		Perm Plus	\$300,000
		Owner's Additional Equity	\$150,000
		Gap	\$38,317
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,522,317</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,522,317</b>

The Community Preservation Committee has voted to recommend the appropriation of \$120,000 in FY 04 CPA revenues for use on this project.

Affordable Housing Consultant

Last year, an affordable housing consultant was hired to assist with writing grant applications, completing administrative duties associated with the HOME funding program, affordable housing development, and other initiatives. This consultant has quite effective in gaining access to funds and planning affordable housing development. The Community Preservation Committee recommends appropriation of \$25,000 to support this part-time position for another year.

**Possible Future Proposals**

Village at Springs Brook

The project involves a 1.2-acre site that currently includes a parking lot and fields. Of the ten rental units under consideration for the development, at least four would be financed as affordable. Financing for the project is expected to include Cambridge Savings Bank and Massachusetts Housing Partnership's "Single

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DEVELOPMENT PROFORMA

Uses		Sources	
Acquisition Costs	\$0	Perm Loan	\$300,000
Hard Costs (\$110)	\$1,100,000	MHP	\$800,000
Soft Costs	\$300,000	CP	\$300,000
Total	\$1,400,000	Total	\$1,400,000

Bedford Lot 2

A proposed LIHTC development including 20 units of “rental” housing with 100% affordability. The Bedford Housing Trust will solicit qualified developers to complete feasibility analysis, development proforma, and syndication. This development includes the transfer of Town owned land or like property to the Trust with lease back to eventual ownership entity.

DEVELOPMENT PROFORMA

Uses		Sources	
Acquisition Costs	\$0	Perm Loan	\$1,000,000
Hard Costs	\$2,000,000	LIHTC	\$1,875,000
Soft Costs	\$1,000,000	Subsidy/CP	\$125,000
Total	\$3,000,000	Total	\$3,000,000

Bedford Lot 3

A proposed homeownership development including 4 units of housing with 100% affordability. The Bedford Housing Trust will solicit qualified developers to complete feasibility analysis, development proforma, and development. This development includes the transfer of Town owned land or like property to the Trust with lease back to eventual ownership entity.

DEVELOPMENT PROFORMA

Uses		Sources	
Acquisition Costs	\$0	Unit Sales	\$418,000
Hard Costs	\$400,000	Subsidy	\$0
Soft Costs	\$200,000	CP	\$182,000
Total	\$600,000	Total	\$600,000

Bedford Lot 4

A proposed development including 15 rental units of housing with 25% affordability. The Bedford Housing Trust will solicit qualified developers to complete feasibility analysis, development proforma, soft money applications and development. This development includes the transfer of Town owned land or like property to the Trust with lease back to eventual ownership entity.

DEVELOPMENT PROFORMA

Uses		Sources	
Acquisition Costs	\$0	Perm Loan	\$750,000
Hard Costs	\$1,500,000	CP	\$750,000
Soft Costs	\$750,000	Subsidy	\$750,000
Total	\$2,250,000	Total	\$2,250,000

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Bedford Lot 5

A proposed development including 15 units of homeownership housing with 100% affordability. The Bedford Housing Trust will solicit qualified developers to complete feasibility analysis, development proforma, and development. This development includes the transfer of Town owned land or like property to the Trust with lease back to eventual ownership entity.

DEVELOPMENT PROFORMA

Uses		Sources	
Acquisition Costs	\$0	Unit Sales	\$1,567,500
Hard Costs	\$1,500,000	CP	\$182,500
Soft Costs	\$750,000	Subsidy/FHLB	\$500,000
Total	\$2,250,000	Total	\$2,250,000

Bedford Lot 6

A proposed development including 13 units of homeownership family housing with 100% affordability. The Bedford Housing Trust will solicit qualified developers to complete feasibility analysis, development proforma, and development. This development includes the leasing of a private parcel of land by the Trust with condominium ownership of the units.

DEVELOPMENT PROFORMA

Uses		Sources	
Acquisition Costs	\$500,000	Unit Sales	\$1,358,500
Hard Costs	\$1,950,000	CP	\$991,500
Soft Costs	\$650,000	Subsidy/FHLB	\$750,000
Total	\$3,100,000	Total	\$3,100,000

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**LAND FOR RECREATIONAL USE**

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Funding through the Community Preservation Act is limited to the “acquisition, preservation, and creation of land for recreational use.” Acquisition is defined as obtaining by gift, purchase, rental, lease, etc. Preservation is defined as protection from injury, harm, or destruction. In addition, the land cannot be used for “a stadium, gymnasium, or similar structure.” It can be used for “community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports” and use as a “park, playground, or athletic field.”

**Recreational Use Land Resources.** Bedford residents enjoy a variety of land resources that support recreational activities. Springs Brook Park provides swimming and other summer fun. Playing fields support organized sports such as soccer, baseball, and football. The Town Center houses many activities for seniors, youth, and children. Conservation land and bike trails around town provide opportunities for hiking, biking, walking, and many other activities. The Bedford schools put on shows and host other activities. Land owned by private owners or other governmental bodies provides other opportunities (such as fireworks at the VA hospital).

**Recreational Use Land Goals.** Most of the goals listed in the Open Space section above apply here, but will not be reproduced here to save space. In addition, the Bedford Recreation Commission has identified the following long-term goals, many of which pertain to this area:

- Goal 1: Provide for better, fuller recreational utilization of currently town-owned lands and facilities
- Goal 2: Improve recreational program offerings to traditionally under-served populations
- Goal 3: Further broaden the diversity of Recreation Department-administered programs to activities beyond traditional "sports and games"
- Goal 4: While maintaining town center as the focus of recreational activity, decentralize appropriate activities to neighborhood locations
- Goal 5: Coordinate new recreation program initiatives with the plans and activities of other town organizations that serve different, but complimentary, agendas (e.g., school physical education program, land conservation efforts, neighborhood association activities, etc.)
- Goal 6: Evaluate and improve as needed the safety standards attending all town recreational facilities and programs.

### **Current Proposals**

#### 51 Loomis Street

A small house next to the Page field parking lot (at 51 Loom Street) is available for purchase. The house on this property is not suitable for municipal use (too expensive to bring it up to code), but parking at this location is very tight when the field is in use. Therefore, it is recommended that this house lot be purchased with \$230,000 in CPA funds and the property be converted into parking.

### **Possible Future Proposals**

#### Kid's Club Playground/ "Sprinkler" Park

Recreational improvements as part of the renovation and preservation of the Historic Town Center School take on several aspects. This proposal addresses two of them – the most fundamentally basic and the most creative. What they have in common is only their nearness to the Town Center building and the groups that occupy it. In addition to Tot Lot reconstruction (for which Recreation will seek funding elsewhere), the Kid's Club would benefit from playground facilities suitable for the older children that it serves.

As a separate part of the Tot Lot rebuilding, the Recreation Commission proposes the construction of a "sprinkler park" in which small children, their parents and grandparents could wade and cool off on hot summer days. The model the Recreation Commission has in mind is the Belmont park facility at the intersection of Trapelo Road and Waverly in Belmont. That facility provides the recreational activity described but also serves as well as something of a living sculpture augmenting the urban landscape in an intensively developed part of Belmont.

These two projects should, optimally, be incorporated into the plan for development or re-development of the Town Center. The estimated cost for these two playground projects will, then, be dependant in large part on where they are sited in relation to the other build-out aspects of the Town Center complex. It is the Recreation Commission's assumption, however, that the new Kid's Club playground can be placed at the Kid's Club west door exit area and the Sprinkler Park will replace the little used original (blue metal) tot lot playground equipment across from the library. (Between these two play facilities will be the refurbished, now a wooden structure, tot lot for which CPA funding is inappropriate). Given the work necessary for playground construction in these two sites, the estimated costs of an older kids' playground and a sprinkler park is \$200,000, divided \$120,000 and \$80,000 respectively.

### Benches On Paths

The town benefits from two well-paved paths for walking and biking, the Bedford- to-Cambridge Minuteman Bikeway and the Depot Park-Sweetwater-Fawn Lake path. While excellent paths and, perhaps, not too challenging to veteran bikers, novices might hope for a place to occasionally rest.

The Recreation Commission plan for enhancement of these two biking facilities is the installation of park benches every half-mile along both trails.

The cost for benches and installation is \$1,800 per bench. This proposal anticipates the deployment of six such benches on the town's two bikeways for a total cost of \$10,800.

### Wilson Mill Site (Recreation)

The Recreation Commission plan for utilization of the Wilson Mill Site, intended to be consistent with the primacy of its historic preservation significance, is of three dimensions: (1) the placement of site-consistent play structures for children at a safe and appropriate location within the Site, (2) the construction of ample walking trails throughout the Site and around the mill pond that allow access while maintaining the natural, open-space feel of the Site, and (3) the construction of some, if not all, of those trails in such a manner as to be accessible by disabled citizens.

The estimated cost for these recreational use improvements is approximately \$50,000.

### Fawn Lake (Recreation)

The Fawn Lake preservation project is of a magnitude that goes well beyond the narrower interests of the Recreation Commission. However, there are two small aspects of the overall undertaking that are recreational use-related and that can be completed prior to completion of the entire lake preservation efforts.

The Recreation Commission would like to contribute to the early-on enhancement of Fawn Lake in two respects: (1) the construction of a portable canoe launch ramp, and (2) the construction of disabled-accessible trails around the perimeter of the entire lake.

The estimated cost for these two improvements is \$100,000 with 90% of the cost anticipated for trail construction.

### Old Town Hall Performing Arts Facility

The ultimate use of the Old Town Hall building has not been settled. All agree, however, that the top floor hall holds the potential for public gatherings. Encouraging music training and performance has not been a traditional activity of the Bedford Recreation Department. Nor has it been for any other group outside of the schools. The Recreation Commission proposes to expand its programming to include the presentation of live music performances in the Old Town Hall.

The Stage area in the hall room is too small to support community theatrical presentations or dance performances. But, with appropriate lighting and sound equipment, baffling and with appropriate seating, it should be optimal for concerts. The estimated cost to equip the hall room for this purpose is approximately \$9,000.

## IV

### SELECTION CRITERIA

The Community Preservation Committee requires that all proposed projects be eligible for CPA funding according to the requirements described in the CPA legislation.

Projects are then evaluated with consideration of the following criteria, although not all criteria will be appropriate for every project:

- Consistency with Bedford's Master Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, and other planning documents that have received wide scrutiny and input
- Feasibility
- Urgency
- Affordable cost
- Serving a currently under-served population
- Serving multiple needs and populations
- Consistency with recent town meeting actions
- Preservation of currently owned town assets
- Acquisition of threatened resources
- Multiple sources of funding

The Town Meeting has the ultimate say, as the law requires Town Meeting approval for all Community Preservation Committee funding recommendations.

## V

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Community Preservation Committee has approved the following recommendations:

- To recommend that the town appropriate \$250,000 from the FY 04 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for use on the 447 Concord Road development, subject to Town LIP and ZBA approval.
- To recommend that the town appropriate \$120,000 from FY 04 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for use on the Patriot Place development, subject to Town LIP and ZBA approval.
- To recommend that the town appropriate \$25,000 from FY 04 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for hiring a part-time Affordable Housing consultant.
- To recommend that the town appropriate \$70,750 from the Open Space Reserve and \$78,231 from FY 04 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for the Preservation of Fawn Lake.
- To recommend that the town reserve \$81,744 from FY 04 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for the Open Space Reserve fund.
- To recommend that the town appropriate \$8,000 from the Community Preservation Fund Balance for Job Lane House Preservation.
- To recommend that the town appropriate up to \$10,000 from FY 04 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for use on a Community-Wide Archaeological Reconnaissance Study, contingent on the receipt of up to \$15,000 from the Massachusetts Historical Commission.
- To recommend that the town reserve \$101,975 from FY 04 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for the Historic Preservation Reserve fund.
- To recommend that the town appropriate \$230,000 from FY 04 Community Preservation Fund Revenues for the creation of land for recreational purposes at 51 Loomis Street.

These recommendations will be included on the warrant for the Spring 2003 Annual Town Meeting.

## VI

### SOLICITATION OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

The Community Preservation Committee welcomes new project proposals that may contribute to community preservation in Bedford. Please submit such proposals to the Committee using the form and guidelines on the next two pages.

## Project Submission Sheet

### Community Preservation Committee

Submitter:	Submission Date
Submitter's address and phone number.	Purpose: (please select all that apply)
Town committee (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Open Space <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Preservation <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Description:

Fiscal Year	Total Cost	CPC Funds Requested	Other Funding Sources
2004			
2005			
2006			
2007			
2008			
Total			

How does this project help preserve Bedford's character?

For Community Preservation Committee Use	
Received on:	Associated Town Committee:
Reviewed on:	Determination:

## Guidelines for Submission

- 1) Each project request must be submitted on the Community Preservation Committee Project Submission Sheet (this form).
- 2) Requests should be within a 5 year period from FY 2004 to FY 2008
- 3) Requests must include the need for the item and be documented with appropriate support information.
- 4) Obtain quotes for project costs whenever possible. If not, cost estimates may be used provided the basis of the estimate is fully explained.
- 5) If request is part of a longer-term project, include the total project cost.
- 6) For Departments or Committees that have multiple project requests, prioritize projects.
- 7) Requests received by August 31, 2003 will be considered for recommendation at the Fall 2003 Annual Town Meeting.

Please keep in mind that there are legal limitations on what CPA funds can be used for. For example the funds cannot be used to build gymnasiums, stadiums, or any similar structure.

A Community Preservation Act - Question and Answers page can be found at:

<http://www.state.ma.us/envir/cpaqa.htm>

If you are in doubt about your project's eligibility, please submit it so we have the opportunity to review it.

Thank you for your input.

Community Preservation Committee  
Bedford, MA

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Please submit your form to:

Community Preservation Committee  
c/o Town Administrator's Office  
10 Mudge Way  
Bedford, MA 01730

## **VII**

### LOCATOR MAP

A locator map is included on the next page, highlighting sites of proposed projects.



## **VIII**

### **Financial Information**

