

Town of Franklin



Photo: Courtesy of Franklin Police. Maple Hill Open Space.

Community Preservation Master Plan

April 5, 2022

1. Introduction & History of Community Preservation Act

History of the CPA

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a smart growth tool that was adopted into state law by Governor Paul Cellucci in 2000. It helps communities preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities for the community. CPA also helps strengthen the state and local economies by expanding housing opportunities and construction jobs for the Commonwealth's workforce, and by supporting the tourism industry through the preservation of the Commonwealth's historic and natural resources. For more information on the history of Community Preservation Act (CPA) statewide, please visit the Community Preservation Coalition's website at:

- <https://www.communitypreservation.org/about>
- <https://www.communitypreservation.org/history>

The Town of Franklin is a dues paying member of the Community Preservation Coalition:

- <https://www.communitypreservation.org/>

CPA Election

The Town of Franklin approved the Community Preservation Act at the ballot in November 2020. The results were as follows:

- 11,969 (58.2%) - Yes.
- 7,649 (37.2%) - No.
- 934 (4.5%) - Blank.
- **Total 20,552 ballots cast.**

Town Bylaw

The Town Bylaw was approved on December 16, 2020. The new Town Bylaw is as follows:

Chapter 16 Community Preservation Committee

- Section 16-1: Establishment and Authority
 - There is hereby established a Community Preservation Committee (hereinafter: "CPC") consisting of nine (9) appointed members, as provided in G.L. Chapter 44B, Section 5. The CPC shall have the legal authority and shall perform the duties and functions specified in G.L. Chapter 44B.

- Section 16-2: Composition
 - One member of Conservation Commission
 - One member of Historical Commission
 - One member of Planning Board
 - One member of Recreation Advisory Board
 - One member of the Housing Authority
 - Four (4) Citizens at Large
- Section 16-3: Appointment and Term
 - The representative members of the five Town bodies identified in Section 16-2 shall each be nominated by the respective Town body of which he/she is a member to the Town Administrator for the Town Administrator's appointment and Town Council's ratification for a one (1) year term; the four citizens at large shall each be appointed by the Town Administrator and ratified by the Town Council for a two (2) year term, provided that two shall initially be appointed for a two year term and two for a one year term, so that the citizen at large terms will be staggered. All terms shall commence on July 1 and terminate on June 30. Each representative member must remain a member of the respective Town body of which he/she is a member during his/her term as a CPC member.
- Section 16-4 CPC: Officers
 - The CPC shall have a Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk, to be voted by the CPC membership at its first meeting following annual appointments. The Chair shall preside at meetings and shall be responsible for calling all meetings and for timely preparation and posting of meeting agendas and otherwise complying with the notice requirements of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. Chapter 30A, Sections 18 through 25. The Vice Chair shall preside at meetings in the absence or recusal of the Chair. The Clerk shall be responsible for accurate and timely preparation of meeting minutes.

Public process for membership

The Community Preservation Committee has five members who are representatives of town boards and committees. These five seats are the minimum allowed under the law. Those members are from the Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, Housing Authority, Planning Board and Recreation Advisory Board. A member must be an active member of that respective committee and must seek appointment on an annual basis. For the inaugural committee, each committee gave the Town Administrator and Town Council the members of their selection.

The Community Preservation Committee also has four at-large resident placements. In order to solicit fair and equitable interest in becoming a member of the inaugural Community Preservation Committee, the Town put out a request for applications to all residents on our [Town Blog](#) (Town Website) and all relevant social media platforms, in conjunction with

mentioning that there were vacancies available on the board for public participation at Town Council meetings.

Once the application period closed, the Town Administrator and staff read through all of the applications, interviewed all candidates and brought four qualified candidates to the Town Council for final approval and appointment to the CPC.

- [Town Website Blog Post for CPC at-large Candidate Applications](#)
- [Online Application Form](#)

Community Preservation Committee begins

- [Community Preservation Committee Agendas](#)
- [Community Preservation Committee Minutes](#)

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) held its first meeting on March 2, 2021. The Committee's first business was to organize its leadership team and set a schedule of meetings for 2021.

On March 30, 2021 the CPC hosted a new member training program directed by Stuart Saginor, the executive director of the Community Preservation Coalition.

In following meetings in April and May of 2021, the CPC discussed the FY22 budget, open space, and Recreation presentations.

The Community Preservation Committee discussed and approved the purchase of a large parcel of Chapter 61A, open space, off of Maple Street at their June 17, 2021 meeting.

On September 21, 2021 the CPC discussed affordable housing, the housing production plan and the 2020 Town Master Plan. September 29th and October 1, 2021 the CPC hosted a tour of the Red Brick School House and the Franklin Historical Museum. About a dozen residents attended the tours of the two buildings.

On January 4th and January 18th of 2022 the CPC held public hearings to allow community members to present their ideas on how to use CPA funds in the CPA plan.

Maple Hill: An Open Space Success Story And The Power Of CPA

Fun fact: The Town of Franklin's purchase of the 70-acre Maple Hill open space property was the second fastest purchase of open space after a community passed CPA in the twenty year history

of the Community Preservation Act. Only the Town of Dunstable has an expenditure faster than Franklin's. This was feasible because of a critical CPA tool that was used. A provision in the Community Preservation Act allows communities to borrow against future spending on CPA. If this provision was not in the law, the Town may not have been able to purchase this property. See more details below.

Notable Meeting Dates: Purchase of Maple Hill

- June 09, 2021: [Town Council Meeting: Public Hearing Maple Hill](#)
- June 16, 2021: [Finance Committee Meeting: Unanimous support & move to CPC](#)
- June 17, 2021: [CPC Meeting: Unanimous support & Move to Town Council](#)
- July 21, 2021: [Town Council Meeting: Maple Hill Appropriation & Exercising Right of First Refusal](#)
- November 17, 2021: [Town Council Meeting: Unanimous vote to approve the purchase of Maple Hill land](#)



2. Fiscal 2022 Budget and Financial Summary

The Town passed an FY22 budget for Community Preservation despite being the first year of surcharge collections. This was done in the event any administrative expenses arose.

A breakdown of the FY22 approved CPA budget:

Administrative expenses reserve fund (5%)	\$66,470
Open Space reserve fund (10%)	\$132,940
Affordable Housing reserve fund (10%)	\$132,940
Historic Preservation reserve fund(10%)	\$132,940
Budgeted Trust Fund reserve (65%)	\$864,112
Total	\$1,329,402

Entering FY23, none of these reserves have been spent with the exception of charges made to the administrative account. The five expenditures from the Administrative account include:

1. \$4,350: Dues to the Community Preservation Coalition.
2. \$3,500: John Neas appraisal services; he provided an appraisal of the Schmidt's Farm property on Prospect Street.
3. \$2,312: Paid to United Consultants, INC to do wetland delineation and field survey location on two Town-owned parcels on Washington Street.

The purpose of these consultants was to investigate the potential for affordable housing on two sites (parcel ID 349-010-000-000 and parcel 349-009-000-000 on the town line on Washington Street) to investigate partnering with the Franklin Housing Authority or other affordable housing groups seeking land in Franklin. Unfortunately, the analysis confirmed it to have more wetlands and poor soils. The site will not be able to be used for housing. The Town is moving forward with a second analysis on a second site, which we believe has greater potential (parcel ID 349-010-000-000 off Washington Street).

4. \$2,500: Paid to Playground Inspections New England to cost out the design of the Nason Street Tot Lot redevelopment. An accurate quote will be provided at a later date through these funds. See below for FY23 recommendations.

In total, the Town will spend \$12,662 in FY22 through the date of this plan. Administrative expenses can still be used through June 30th. Excess will be automatically deposited into the Budgeted Trust Fund reserve.

It is anticipated the following will be in reserve accounts, respectively:

Administrative expenses reserve fund (5%)	\$0
Open Space reserve fund (10%)	\$132,940
Affordable Housing reserve fund (10%)	\$132,940
Historic Preservation reserve fund (10%)	\$132,940
Budgeted Trust Fund reserve (65%)	\$917,920

It is important to note that any unspent monies in the three required reserve accounts automatically stay in their reserve accounts and do NOT get deposited into the Budgeted Trust Fund Reserve. Unspent administration expenses or budgeted reserves all get saved into that Budgeted Trust Fund Reserve. If any donations are made by a private individual, they also would be deposited into the Budgeted Trust Fund Reserve.

The Town did not meet any of its required thresholds for FY22, thus those monies are being recommended to be expended for some of the projects outlined in the FY23 budget recommendations below to meet those requirements.

By statute, FY22 does not include a state match. Recent announcements of state matching funds are seen [here at the Department of Revenue](#). The Town will see a match in FY23 based on FY22 real estate collections. At the end of March or beginning of April 2022, the Town expects to get an estimate of what it will receive in November 2022 for state matching funds. These funds will be added to the projected budget totals in Section 4.

3. FY23 Proposed Budget & Project Recommendations

Every year, the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is required to prepare an annual CPA budget, which is voted on by the Community Preservation Committee who recommends a budget to the Town Council for authorization. For most communities, this happens in the spring along the same timetable as the general municipal budget process.

The first step in the process is to determine the total amount of CPA revenue the community can expect to receive during the next fiscal year. This total revenue figure should include an estimate of the CPA local surcharge revenue plus the estimated matching money to be received in November from the CPA Trust Fund. Once the total revenue has been determined, the annual budget breaks it down into the various CPA accounts.

CPA Account Breakdown

Category Reserve Accounts: Funds in a category reserve account are “restricted” funds, and they can only be used for that specific category. Once funds are transferred to a category reserve, they cannot be transferred out and spent for a different purpose. We are required to spend or reserve 10% of total revenue in each of the following categories: (1) Housing (2) Open Space (including Recreation) and (3) Historic Preservation.

Other Accounts:

- **CPC Administrative Account:** Each year the CPC has the option of requesting that the local legislative body (Town Council) appropriate up to 5% of annual CPA revenues for the CPC’s administrative needs during the fiscal year. However, unlike a reserve fund, this account is only available for one fiscal year, and will be closed out automatically at the end of the fiscal year. Unused funds from this account will be transferred to the CPA Fund Balance account.
- **Budgeted Reserve and/or CPA Project Appropriations for any Category:** After the CPC has determined the amount of revenue that will be used for projects, administrative expenses, and the 10% category reserves, there may be additional CPA revenue that you don't have an immediate need for. An optional "budgeted reserve" account can be included in the CPA budget to temporarily put this money in case you need it for additional projects that arise during the year. If you don't place this money in a budgeted reserve, you will temporarily lose access to the funds when the town sets its tax rate in the fall. Putting the unused money in a budgeted reserve allows the community to access the funds during the entire fiscal year for any CPA purpose. At the end of the fiscal year, the unused balance in the budgeted reserve will automatically be closed out and added to your CPA Fund Balance account.

The Town is proposing to have accounts set aside for both options as outlined below.

FY23 Revenue Projections (surcharge only, not state match)

Administrative expenses (up to 5%)	\$69,889
Open Space requirement (10%)	\$139,778
Affordable Housing requirement (10%)	\$139,778
Historic Preservation requirement (10%)	\$139,778
Budgeted Reserve (up to 65%)	\$908,556
TOTAL	\$1,397,778

Please note when the state gives us the matching amount, staff will update this budget document. We anticipate at the May and June 2022 meetings, the CPC will consider the full budget amount and will formally review the budget proposal.

FY23 CPA Reserves

In addition to the budgeted revenues above, the CPA will have approximately these revenues below in the reserve funds:

Administrative expenses reserve fund (5%)	0
Open Space reserve fund (10%)	\$132,940
Affordable Housing reserve fund (10%)	\$132,940
Historic Preservation reserve fund (10%)	\$132,940
Budgeted Trust Fund reserve (65%)	\$917,920

FY23 Total Budget available

This chart combines the anticipated revenues for FY23 from the tax levy and the reserves from FY22. Again, when the state match information comes through, we will update these figures.

Administrative expenses reserve fund (5%)	\$69,889
Open Space reserve fund (10%)	\$272,718
Affordable Housing reserve fund (10%)	\$272,718
Historic Preservation reserve fund (10%)	\$272,718
Budgeted Trust Fund reserve (65%)	\$1,826,476

Maple Hill Borrowing Schedule

For FY23 through FY43, the CPA Open Space requirement will be fulfilled due to the purchase of the Maple Hill open space property. This is smart policy as now the Budgeted Reserve Fund revenues have more flexibility in use.

The Town will be "temporarily borrowing" the \$3.5M this spring. This means that only the interest payments will be due in FY2023. When the Town does the permanent bond for this amount, it will be grouped in with a larger borrowing to save cost in issuance fees. The Town Finance Director and Treasurer-Collector work with a professional consultant on borrowing. The Town also is required to include special Bond Counsel as well.

After that, there will be a principal payment and interest payment reflected in the Debt service schedule below. The following model is at a 3.5% interest rate since the Town does not know the rate and we traditionally want to be conservative in our estimates.

Debt Service Schedule
Project: Maple Hill Land

Amount: 3,500,000.00
 # of Years: 20
 Interest Rate: 3.50%
 Date of Issue: 4/30/2022

Total Interest @ 3.50%: 1,286,250.00
 Total Debt Service: 4,786,250.00
 First Year Cost: 297,500.00
 Average Annual Cost: 236,250.00

	Principal	Interest	Total		Principal	Interest	Total
Nov-2022		61,250.00	61,250.00	Nov-2037		15,312.50	15,312.50
May-2023	175,000.00	61,250.00	236,250.00	May-2038	175,000.00	15,312.50	190,312.50
Nov-2023		58,187.50	58,187.50	Nov-2038		12,250.00	12,250.00
May-2024	175,000.00	58,187.50	233,187.50	May-2039	175,000.00	12,250.00	187,250.00
Nov-2024		55,125.00	55,125.00	Nov-2039		9,187.50	9,187.50
May-2025	175,000.00	55,125.00	230,125.00	May-2040	175,000.00	9,187.50	184,187.50
Nov-2025		52,062.50	52,062.50	Nov-2040		6,125.00	6,125.00
May-2026	175,000.00	52,062.50	227,062.50	May-2041	175,000.00	6,125.00	181,125.00
Nov-2026		49,000.00	49,000.00	Nov-2041		3,062.50	3,062.50
May-2027	175,000.00	49,000.00	224,000.00	May-2042	175,000.00	3,062.50	178,062.50
Nov-2027		45,937.50	45,937.50	Nov-2042		0.00	0.00
May-2028	175,000.00	45,937.50	220,937.50	May-2043			
Nov-2028		42,875.00	42,875.00	Nov-2043			
May-2029	175,000.00	42,875.00	217,875.00	May-2044			
Nov-2029		39,812.50	39,812.50	Nov-2044			
May-2030	175,000.00	39,812.50	214,812.50	May-2045			
Nov-2030		36,750.00	36,750.00	Nov-2045			
May-2031	175,000.00	36,750.00	211,750.00	May-2046			
Nov-2031		33,687.50	33,687.50	Nov-2046			
May-2032	175,000.00	33,687.50	208,687.50	May-2047			
Nov-2032		30,625.00	30,625.00	Nov-2047			
May-2033	175,000.00	30,625.00	205,625.00	May-2048			
Nov-2033		27,562.50	27,562.50	Nov-2048			
May-2034	175,000.00	27,562.50	202,562.50	May-2049			
Nov-2034		24,500.00	24,500.00	Nov-2049			
May-2035	175,000.00	24,500.00	199,500.00	May-2050			
Nov-2035		21,437.50	21,437.50	Nov-2050			
May-2036	175,000.00	21,437.50	196,437.50	May-2051			
Nov-2036		18,375.00	18,375.00	Nov-2051			
May-2037	175,000.00	18,375.00	193,375.00	May-2052			
				Total	3,500,000.00	1,286,250.00	4,786,250.00

Fiscal Year 2023 Project Recommendations

A. Open Space:

a. Maple Hill Open Space Purchase

Payment #1 (Interest only) for the Maple Hill open space borrowing: est. \$137,000

Location: 70 Acres of land off Maple Street

[Memo: Maple Hill ROFR](#)

[Presentation: Open Space](#)

[Franklin Open Space Plan](#)

The total cost of the land is \$4,590,000 and the land will be used as an open space recreation area for the community to enjoy. The Town is borrowing \$3 million, which will be borrowed against the CPA future revenues. The Town also committed \$1,559,900 from the 2017 sale of the Pond Street Sewer Beds towards the purchase of this land.

On June 17, 2021 the CPC voted unanimously to purchase the Maple Hill land and committed to using \$212,000 of CPA money every year for twenty years to pay off the purchase and interest costs associated with the purchase of this land. The Town Council unanimously voted on the Maple Hill appropriation and voted in a resolution to exercise its right of first refusal to purchase the Maple Hill land at their July 21, 2021 meeting. The last resolution to formalize the purchase of the Maple Hill land was on the November 17, 2021 Town Council meeting, it was passed unanimously.

The long term goal for the land is to provide paths and parking lots to the area.



B. Historic Preservation

a. Red Brick School House - Lead Paint Removal, Preservation and Paint

Location: 2 Lincoln Street, Franklin, MA

\$200,000 for the Ride Brick Schoolhouse Project

The Red Brick School house is a town owned building on the National Registry of Historic Places and has proven to be one of the most famous sites for the Town. This project would involve lead paint remediation on the interior and exterior of the building coupled with brick restoration and preservation, in addition to some structural and cosmetic improvements to the exterior of the building and its surrounding landscaping. Signage, landscaping and general improvements are also included. Staff expect additional requests in a second phase in future years.



C. Affordable Housing

a. Franklin Ridge Affordable Housing Project

Location: Panther Way

Estimated Cost: \$272,718, which would reflect the required 10% contribution the Town is required to spend for FY22 and FY23. These monies will assist inputting the sewer line and site work prepared. The state is looking for additional local money to be spent in order to offer stronger support for state funding. The project has a long way to go, but we are chipping away at it. Other recent appropriations available:

- \$280,000 in federal ARPA funding secured through legislators;
- \$200,000 Housing Choice grant for our Housing Choice state certification;
- \$500,000 from the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust still awaits formal disbursement;
- The staff have continued to work with federal and state officials on this project, as the costs of the project are likely to increase.

D. Budgeted Reserve:

The total recommendation from the budgeted reserve is \$385,000.

a. Town Clerk Vault Records Preservation \$15,000

For the preservation of town records in the Vault. King Information systems is an excellent company and expects future project proposals from other town records.

i. Attached are two letters

1. [Letter From Town Clerk: Vital Records Organization](#)
2. [Quote & Scope of Services: Vault Preservation](#)



Current Vault Pre-Organization



Organization After Improvements

b. Historical Museum Cupola

Location: 80 West Central Street

Estimated Cost: \$70,000 to restore the Historic Museum Cupola

Another project presented to the CPC was the restoration of the cupola that resides on the top of the Historical Museum. The cupola will be lifted off the building, restored, painted and reattached!



c. **Nason Street Tot Lot**

Location: 24 Nason Street, Franklin

Recreation - Nason Street Tot Lot - ADA accessible: \$300,000

The current playground, originally constructed in 2003, is antiquated and in need of modern day improvements. This playground will be designed and built using the best fit equipment to meet the social, cognitive, sensory, and physical needs of children ages 2-5 year old. This new and improved playground will include parallel play and custom play equipment to represent the Town of Franklin. The current pricing estimate for this project is \$300,000, this pricing includes all of the modifications needed to have the lot comply with all ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) regulations.



4. Five-Year Projection of Projects

Projected revenues from CPA

The Treasurer-Collector is currently working on some financial models of projected revenue for the next five years (similar to the Town's Capital Plan). It's best to wait for formal numbers from the state match. We hope to have this section filled in in May/June 2022.

Future projects FY23 and beyond

The following are a list of future projects based on known town priorities, as well as the recent public input. There is now order or priority and will continue to expand or be reduced based on other funding sources for grants.

1. Open Space projects:

- a. Elm Street open space for a parcel of land adjacent to the Town owned forest on the banks of the Charles River.
- b. Maple Hill Master Plan Consultant. The authorization would be to hire a consultant through the engineering department to master plan the parcel with the adjacent landowners for a trail network in partnership with Metacomet Land Trust.
- c. The Franklin Greenway connectivity project planning and implementation. Think the Boston Freedom Trail meets the Emerald Necklace. Staff have been evaluating a larger master plan of bike lanes, trails, open spaces, sidewalks and other pedestrian friendly areas to downtown and other recreation sites in town.
- d. SNETT Trail extension from Grove Street to Union Street. This will be a low priority for now because our legislative delegation received a legislative appropriation for \$700,000 toward these projects.
- e. Fund the Town Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2023.
- f. Other open space land purchases as they become available.

2. Affordable housing projects

- a. Washington Street site analysis to determine if a site is available for potential affordable housing partnerships. See section 2 above of current expenditures.
- b. Franklin Ridge senior housing project.

3. Recreation

- a. Fletcher Field playground replacement is a big priority, but the staff have also requested a legislative appropriation in the FY23 state budget. So this will likely not be needed, which means...
- b. Design and Redevelop King Street Memorial Park and Pickleball Court expansion. The full scope of this project still needs to be discussed and I am hoping over the rest of this year, the staff can develop a game plan and take steps forward.

4. Historic Preservation

- a. Old South Church. The Town has issued an expression of interest proposal that is due on April 29th. If we receive any proposals, the Town Council ECD will evaluate the ideas on the table and make a recommendation.
- b. Historic District Signage. Franklin has two Nationally Registered historic districts on the federal register, Dean Junior College Historic District and the Franklin Town Common Historic District. Working with our library staff, a presentation will be made later this year and will lead to some recommendations to enhance the historic presence of those districts.
- c. Red Brick Schoolhouse Phase II. Possible restoration of the inside and/or structure.

5. Public Hearing #1, January 4, 2022

The following is a list of the comments made during the first required public hearing of the Community Preservation program in Franklin:

- A. Michael Rein offered his support for additional pickleball courts in Franklin, specifically at King Street Memorial Park if possible. Additionally, he suggested adding courts and times to be under the lights to accommodate demand. Mr. Rein provided eloquent testimony about the growth of the sport.
- B. Bill Kelso offered his support to Mr. Rein's comments.
- C. Alan Earls offered his support to consider funding portions of the work required to construct access points to the Charles River Meadowlands, citing a report completed several years ago on the feasibility of the project.
- D. Roberta Trahan offered her suggestion to invest in the SNETT trail. She commented the Franklin side is not well maintained and she usually walks on the Bellingham side due to the large tracts of mud, puddles and less than ideal grading of the surface.

6. Public Hearing #2, January 18, 2022

The following is a list of the comments made during the first required public hearing of the Community Preservation program in Franklin:

- A. Amanda Groh attended with several other friends to show support for additional Pickleball Courts. She and her friends echoed Mr. Rein's comments and had incredible pickleball T-shirts!
- B. Shannon Nisbett, Franklin Veteran's Officer, offered support for Veterans Memorial restoration and included a flier to the committee on the memorials in town. [The Town has appropriated funds for the doughboy from a separate funding source. DPW has installed a line item in their budget for annual maintenance.]
- C. Rose Determan offered her feedback as a Master's Degree student at Boston University. She emailed the members a copy of her capstone as part of her program on the metrics associated with protecting open space for different purposes, such as water, forest, habitat.

- D. Peter Ballantine offered feedback with another friend against the Charles River Meadowlands project as proposed by Mr. Earls at the previous meeting. He and his friend live on Pond Street and would be affected by residents' trails behind his house. He felt most folks on his stretch of Pond Street are opposed to any project behind their homes.
- E. Max Moringello offered his feedback to support affordable housing and believes that the Town should subsidize affordable housing projects.
- F. Susan Speers wished the Committee good luck. She encouraged the committee to spread the money across the four main uses the best they could.

Online Application

[CPA Online ViewPoint Application](#)

The public was alerted that an online application was posted and that any citizen could use the form to offer suggestions and comments. The form was opened two months to get initial feedback for the Plan. The portal closed for this initial round on February 28, 2022. After the initial plan is adopted, the form will remain open permanently in the future. There were no comments offered through the online application.

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