



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE



JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

To: Ald. Ben Ewan-Campen, Housing and Community Development Committee Chair;
Members of the Board of Aldermen
From: Kristen Stelljes, CPA Manager
Re: Public access agreements for CPA funded sites
Date: August 13, 2018

On July 12, 2018, Alderman Hirsch and Alderman Clingan requested information regarding how public access agreements are arranged with CPA fund recipients (order 206304). We appreciate this inquiry and opportunity to share our practices around ensuring public benefit from CPA funded projects.

The Community Preservation Committee takes very seriously the need for CPA funded projects to provide public benefit. One of the ways it ensures public benefit from projects is to require public access. This is typically required of projects that are primarily locked. To date, the projects that have public access requirements are:

- Milk Row Cemetery
- Prospect Hill Tower
- Somerville Museum
- Mystic Water Works
- Temple B'nai Brith
- South Street Farm
- Community Growing Center

The Community Preservation Committee and I work with the organizations that manage the sites that have public access requirements to determine what type of access would be most appropriate for the location and its use. For example, the public access agreement for Mystic Water Works requires the building participate in historic tours but does not require regular access to the interior of the building because there is no common meeting space available and it is home to vulnerable populations. Milk Row Cemetery and Prospect Hill Tower are now offering docent tours twice a month during warm weather as a result of the CPA requirement.

The terms of the public access is documented in the legal agreements the City has with the property owner. In the case of historic buildings, these terms are included in the perpetual historic preservation restrictions that are placed on the deed of the property. In the case of the two open space sites, the conditions will be added to the licenses governing use of the property.

We appreciate the Board of Aldermen's unwavering support for the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in Somerville. Your commitment to this program and the projects it supports is a key part of what has made CPA so successful in Somerville.