

**SPRINGFIELD COMMUNITY PRESERVATION
FULL APPLICATION COVER SHEET**

I. PROJECT INFORMATION

CPA program area - check all that apply:

community housing historic preservation open space recreation

Project/Program Title: **City of Homes Living Museum and Related Restoration**

Brief Project/Program Summary:

Funds are requested to support actual costs of improvements to Welcome Center and Museum at the Kibbe House, Architectural Crafts Center at the Washburn House, and interpretive signage for self-guided tours of the McKnight National Register Historic District. In addition funds are requested to support restoration of threatened resources and specific common area improvements.

estimated start date: Nov. 1, 2021

estimated completion date: Sep. 30, 2022

II. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Type of Applicant - check one:

City of Springfield Non-Profit Organization For-Profit Business Individual

Name of Organization: **McKnight CDC and McKnight District Improvement Ass'n**

Name of Contact Person: **David P. Gaby AIHP**

Mailing Address: **1030 Worthington Street**

Mailing City/State/Zip: **Springfield, MA 01109**

Phone: **(413) 301-6308**

Fax: **(413) 259-0052**

Email: **mcknightcdc@gmail.com**

Website: **mcknighthistoric.org**

III. BUDGET SUMMARY

Estimated Project Budget: **\$3,850,000**

CPA Funding Request: **\$362,500**

Will you be seeking multi-year funding Yes No

CPA Request as Percentage of Total Project/Program Budget: **5%**


List Other Secured Funding Sources:

Cooperative Development Institute, Inc. for \$500,000, etc..

List Other Prospective Funding Sources:

Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Park Service, private foundations

Applicant Signature: _____


David P. Gaby
Coordinator

Date Submitted: _____

4/1/2021

City of Homes Living Museum and McKnight Restoration Project

OVERVIEW

Pioneer Architect and City Planner Daniel Burnham enjoined us to “Make no little plans”, and we feel that perhaps we have been guilty in the past of not listening to this important principle and as a result our overall intentions have remained unclear. Let us therefore be clear: It is our intention to plan and work for a McKnight District that is both restored to preserve its architectural integrity and renovated to perpetuate its useful life into the next century as well as the balance of this century. We feel proper use of Community Preservation funds should play a vital part in making this vision a reality.

Further, just as it is clear that resources are perennially limited, it is also clear that they therefore should be used wisely, and should typically be used to support increments of some larger plan or vision, such as the one we are sharing.

Therefore this year, as we submit our application for Community Preservation Funds, we would ask that you see this request, and perhaps related requests, as parts of a larger plan of which this is just a small part.

OUR CONCEPTION OF PRESERVATION OF THE McKNIGHT HISTORIC DISTRICT

In our view the McKnight District is a unique and collaborative creation of many people over many years, including the McKnight Brothers and their collaborators, but also including those who came before them to lay out the area and start the community earlier in the 19th Century, and those in the 20th Century who appreciated the residential community that had been created, and therefore worked to preserve and enhance it, sometimes despite the actions of outsiders.

We feel that this is notable for the more or less intentional development of a residential community created the model for the many subsequently-developed neighborhoods that made Springfield the City of Homes, and that it is also notable for the fact that McKnight was not only one of the physically best-preserved street car suburbs in the Nation when it was designated as historic in the 1970s, but also that it was one of the few communities in the Nation that was not subject to full “Racial resegregation” in the 1950s and 1960s. All of these accomplishments are worthy of note, and McKnight should be preserved for future generations to tell all these stories.

OUR CONCEPTION OF THE CITY OF HOMES LIVING MUSEUM

The purpose of the “City of Homes Living Museum” is to carry out the interpretive portion of that purpose, to collect and interpret the story of the development of McKnight and those of the other neighborhoods that grew up following the development of McKnight, and tell that story to people, both local people and visitors, so that they can appreciate what was accomplished and learn from those accomplishments.

In our view the museum will have four components, a Welcome Center, which we have started construction of in the George Kibbe Mansion, an Architectural Crafts Center, which we project will be housed in the ample Carriage house of the Washburn House on Westminster Street, connected by a series of interpreted “living exhibits”, mostly houses, around the neighborhood, and supported by an online historical database accessible to both physical and virtual visitors.

We see this as starting modestly and then growing in the coming years to become an integral part of the tourist and student field trip maps of the area, comparable to Sturbridge Village but oriented to McKnight primary periods of significance in the later 19th and 20th Centuries. In fact as time goes by we see incorporating elements of streetcar and automotive history into the total ‘Living museum’ experience. In support of this concept we have attached a list of sites that might be highlighted, as well as a rendering of a possible interpretive sign.

We would note that we are working with other funding sources to support this effort, but we would like to see some support from the Community Preservation Committee, as this will help to leverage other support.

GENERAL CONCEPTION OF APPROPRIATE RESTORATION PROGRAMS FOR BOTH BUILDINGS AND COMMON AREAS

At the same time we are developing the “Museum” we are also interested in preserving and restoring the physical resource which is the neighborhood’s entire architectural heritage, not just the houses but also the carriage houses, schools, streets, and street furniture, as well as the park spaces. All of these were part of the original development and all should be preserved as much as possible in the context of changing times.

Therefore we see the preservation as a mission to preserve the architecture of the whole district, rather than any sort of ‘Welfare program’ for ‘Eligible families’. We like to see people ‘Have skin in the game’ but we also feel that preservation of close to 1,000 Victorian houses is a long-term task that resources should be advanced, where possible, on a loan basis so that they can be recovered over time for future use. In addition we are especially unhappy with the message that people seem to be getting that properties that are “Only” on the National Register are “Not historic” and that they can and should carry out whatever inappropriate work they might wish to.

Even the church that received a CPA grant last year seems to have gotten this message somewhere and stripped the Cedar shingles off their National Register-designated meeting house and covered it with vinyl siding. Other unfortunate work has been carried out with City approval on houses heavily subsidized by the City through the auction program. These kinds of things are very visible and provide the message that this is the sort of work that is appropriate. That idea needs to be counteracted.

We therefore identified in our selection of houses for the revolving fund program a balance of properties inside and outside the "Local district", but that program has not yet moved forward.

In our plan for future activities we would project that the entire district MUST be included, and that visible restoration of buildings previously "Renovated" inappropriately should be a primary target, especially in those in prominent locations on arterial streets.

Beyond houses we feel that this must include the parks and open spaces that were designed into the district. By this we mean the "Dingle", Dartmouth Terrace, the four triangles, and Magazine Playground. Tapley Playground was lost to development, but can be considered to have been replaced by the playground at Johnson School, and Lafayette and Dorchester Rests are not really focal areas, and suggest that support for projects that are potentially damaging to the livability of nearby houses should be avoided.

For the Dingle we endorse the restoration of the "Sledding hill" that was proposed two years ago, as well as improvement of the drainage and walks, and for Magazine Park we are co-sponsoring with Chess Angels an application for re-creation of the structure for the park superintendent's office and lavatories that was demolished some years ago, along a memorial to Gen Knox and Gen Washington's location of the National Arsenal there, with chess tables and easels for local artists, and artistic embellishment of the back boards by local artists.

Finally, although we tend to talk about preserving historic buildings, all these buildings were built in a context, and that context needs to be maintained and sometime restored to be supportive of preservation of the historic buildings.

The need for this is especially acute in McKnight on Bay Street, St James Avenue, and Worthington Street, where increasingly out-of-control traffic damages the historic structures, damages the health of residents, and threatens resident's lives and limbs. Restoration of these streets to a level of activity more consistent with that when the community was developed would go a long way to encouraging people to continue to live on these streets, which are integral to the total the neighborhood.

This is why we are proposing development of a "Traffic Dampening Plan" as part of the overall restoration plan. We feel that this should potentially include the kinds of street architecture alterations that have been made in other City neighbor-hoods and in other cities. We also feel that there should be a program of preservation and restoration relative

to the 'Street furniture' used in the neighborhood, including the street signs, lamp standards, traffic signals, and so forth. We realize that there are modern standards, but would suggest that application of these standards in an historic district is to be avoided.

SPECIFIC PLANS FOR FY 2015 through 2022

CATEGORY	TOTAL PROJECTED	CPC Request for 2021	%
City of Homes Livings Museum*			
<u>Budget Items</u>			
Interpretive Signs	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	
Museum Space at Kibbe	\$ 25,000	\$ 12,500	
Stabilization of Washburn Space	\$ 100,000	\$ 50,000	
	\$ 850,000	\$ 62,500	7%
Historic Restoration Loans & Grants	\$1,025,000	\$125,000**	7%
Restoration of "Dummy light" at St James Ave & Dartmouth St (A diagram of a 1920's light is attached that is typical of the light that existed there, the lower portion of which still holds up the modern signal lights)		\$ 25,000	12%
Restoration of "Sledding Hill" at the Dingle (An estimate provided by a local landscape company is attached but the cost estimate is adjusted upwards to cover inflation and municipal bidding costs.		\$ 50,000	
Construction of a Permanent Building and other improvements, at Magazine Park, including easels, and backboards decorated by local artists		\$100,000	
Common Areas	\$2,000,000**	\$175,000	9%
Total Program	\$3,875,000	\$362,500	9%

* Amounts shown include restoration work amounts expended since 2015 at the Kibbe House and the Dodge-Howard House that was moved for preservation. All requests are for historic preservation. Housing is funded separately.

** The \$25,000 approved by the Committee for the revolving fund is included in this figure, while the \$200,000 provided to the Planning Dept. is not included, as it is as yet unclear to what degree these funds will address needed projects.

*** This includes funds being sought from other sources, including transportation allocations, and projected applications for "Place creation", energy system applications, etc. We note that we project further applications in the future, in various program areas, and we will be happy to share this information with the committee as it develops.

Canajoharie Historic District

U.S. National Register of Historic Places

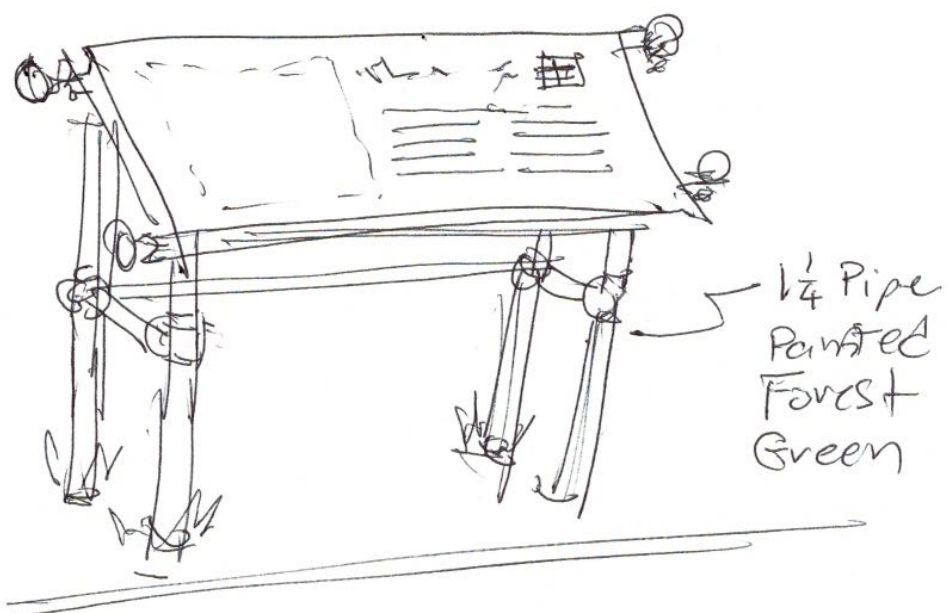
U.S. Historic district



Canajoharie Dummy Light, September 2008



TYPE TIA-44
Automatic Isolated Traffic Signal Complete
Automatic Timing Switch is Installed in Base Casting



1/4 Pipe
Painted
Forest
Green