

## **What Kinds of Projects are Eligible for CPA Funding in Belchertown?**

State legislation requires that CPA funds be used for projects that are consistent with the Belchertown's planning documents regarding community preservation *and* fall under one or more of the following four categories: open space, historical resources, community housing, and recreation. After a careful study of the Town planning documents and the CPA legislation, the CPC has established

- a) **General Criteria for Project Eligibility, and**
- b) **Specific Criteria for each of the Four Categories.**

### **General Criteria for Project Eligibility**

The Belchertown CPC will evaluate project proposals according to the following general criteria, not listed in any order of priority. It is not necessary for a single project to meet all these criteria.

The project:

- Meets the goals of the CPA and specifically benefits the town of Belchertown and its residents;
- Is consistent with Belchertown's Community Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, or other planning documents that have received wide scrutiny and input from Town residents;
- Seeks to preserve resources that are or might be threatened;
- Seeks to preserve the essential character of the Town;
- Seeks to preserve or utilizes currently owned Town assets;
- Demonstrates feasibility, cost/benefit value, and the likelihood that it can be implemented expeditiously and within budget;
- Takes advantage of multiple funding sources and leverages additional public or private funds;
- Will serve an under-served population;
- Advances the goals of one or more of the specific categories;
- Is endorsed by other Town boards or departments.

### **Specific Criteria for each of the Four Categories.**

The Belchertown CPC will evaluate project proposals according to the following specific criteria. No single project must meet all the criteria within a category. Projects meeting a very significant need or addressing multiple categories are welcome.

#### **a. Acquisition, Creation, and Preservation of Open Space**

[Applicants in this category should consult with the Belchertown Conservation Commission before submitting an application to the CPC.]

**Open space** project proposals should address one or more of the following criteria:

- Protect important wildlife habitat, especially areas that offer significant biodiversity or whose viability is threatened;
- Contain a variety of habitats, with a diversity of geologic features and types of vegetation;
- Preserve Belchertown's rural character;
- Provide opportunities for environmental education;
- Protect or enhance wildlife corridors and promote the connectivity of habitat;
- Provide connections with existing or potential trails;
- Preserve or enhance a scenic view or scenic road;
- Protect drinking water quantity and quality;
- Provide flood control/storage;
- Preserve important surface water bodies, including wetlands, vernal pools or riparian zones;
- Preserve lands currently utilized for or having the identified potential for agricultural or forest production;
- Preserve lands that are located within the identified recharge areas of existing or potential public water supply wells;
- Preserve lands that are located within the watersheds of surface water drinking supply reservoirs;
- Preserve lands that enable Belchertown to connect to larger, regional systems of greenway corridors;
- Preserve prime farmland, unique farmland, or soils of statewide importance, as defined and identified by USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service;
- Benefit initiatives of the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, and/or other Town boards.

**b. Acquisition, Preservation, Rehabilitation, and Restoration of Historic Resources**

[Applicants in this category should consult with the Belchertown Historical Commission before submitting an application to the CPC.]

**Historic resources** proposals should address one or more of the following criteria:

- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate historic, cultural, architectural or archeological resources of significance especially those that are threatened;

- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate Town-owned properties, features or resources of historic significance;
- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate the historical function of a property or site;
- Project is within a Belchertown, State or National Historic Register, or eligible for placement on such registers;
- Project demonstrates permanent protection for the historic resource;
- Project optimizes the use and enjoyment of the Town's historic resources by residents and visitors and contributes to the Town's fiscal stability;
- Benefit initiatives of the Historical Commission, the Historic District By-law Commission, and/or other Town boards.

**c. Creation, Preservation, and Support of Community Housing**

[Applicants in this category should consult with the Housing Authority before submitting an application to the CPC]

**Community Housing** proposals should address one or more of the following criteria:

- Contribute to the goal of 10% affordable housing (MGL Chapter 40B);
- Promote an environment that encourages diversity;
- Promote housing that is harmonious in design and scale with the surrounding area and conserves the natural landscape;
- Intermingle affordable and market-rate housing;
- Ensure long-term affordability;
- Promote use of existing structures on previously developed or Town-owned sites;
- Convert market-rate to affordable units;
- Demonstrates that the project fulfills a community housing need;
- Give priority for occupancy to local residents and Town employees;
- Benefit initiatives of the Housing Authority and/or other Town boards.

**d. Acquisition, Creation and Preservation of Land for Recreational Use**

[Applicants in this category should consult with the Belchertown Housing Authority before submitting an application to the CPC. Additionally, applicants needs to understand the limitations on use of funds for recreation. Projects that seek funding for replacement, improvement and maintenance of existing facilities, for example, are not eligible for CPA funds.]

**Recreation** proposals should address one or more of the following criteria:

- Serve a significant number of residents;
- Serve multiple recreation uses;
- Expand the range of recreational opportunities for residents of all ages;

- Maximize the utility of land already owned by the Town;
- Benefit initiatives of the Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission and/or other Town Boards.