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Barney S. Heath
Director

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Lara Kritzer
Community Preservation Program Manager
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RE: West Newton Armory Affordable Housing Development

Dear Community Preservation Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to present this funding proposal for environmental costs necessary for the City's acquisition of the West Newton Armory for redevelopment into 100% affordable housing. On February 1, 2021, the City Council voted to recommend that the Mayor purchase the Armory from the Commonwealth for \$1 for affordable housing. This vote was the culmination of a fourteen month process that involved the creation of a Joint Advisory Planning Group and involvement of an affordable housing consultant. At the conclusion of 2020, the JAPG and housing consultant both released separate reports and determined that affordable housing at the Armory was not only the City's best use of the property, but also feasible.

In order to acquire the property from the Commonwealth, the City must conduct a Phase II environmental assessment, a environmental noise assessment, and execute a Memorandum of Agreement with the Massachusetts Historical Commission. While a portion of these costs are being funded with remaining grant funds awarded to the City from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, the Planning Department is requesting that the Community Preservation Committee fund the balance. This would fund the cost of the Phase II assessment, which is an important step in the acquisition process.

The Planning Department will continue to work closely with the City's housing consultant to ensure that these steps are completed in a satisfactory and timely manner. I look forward to presenting the proposal to the Committee at its March 11, 2021 meeting. Please feel free to contact me in the meantime if you have any questions or would like any further information.

Sincerely,

Barney Heath

Barney Heath, Director
Planning and Development Department