

TOWN OF SOUTHBOROUGH

APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDING

Please submit the following application for consideration at Annual Town Meeting in April 2021. Please email the chairman your application and submit **Four hard copies** of your full application should be sent to:

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
Southborough Town House
17 Common Street; Southborough, MA 01772**

southborocpc@gmail.com

A representative from the project will be required to present the project to the CPC during a scheduled meeting (a schedule will be forwarded to the applicant)

Download CPA Plan with guidelines at
www.southboroughcommunitypreservation.org

Name of applicant/contact person - St. Mark's Church/ Mark Weiler

Name of proposal - St. Mark's Church Bell Tower Restoration Project

CPA funding requested - \$300,000

Total cost of project - \$750,000

CPA category

 X

(Check ALL that apply)

Open space _____ Historic preservation

Recreation _____ Community housing

Sponsoring organization and/or affiliations - St. Mark's Congregation & Vestry. Southborough Historical Commission (**See December 2017 Minutes**)

Mailing address - 27 Main St. Southborough, MA 01772

Daytime phone number - 508-481-1917

Email address - office@stmarkssouthborough.org

PLEASE COMPLETE THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES AND INCLUDE WITH YOUR APPLICATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In describing the project, please include answers to the following questions. Applications may be returned as incomplete if all relevant requested information is not provided. Include supporting materials and exhibits as necessary.

1 GOALS: What are the goals of the proposed project? Who will benefit and why? How will success be measured?

The main goal is to preserve St. Mark's Bell Tower for many future generations of Southborough residents to enjoy. Built in 1891 on land donated by Joseph Burnett,

the tower has fallen into major disrepair over the years. In its current condition, the tower has a shelf life of approximately 3 years, before St. Mark's can accumulate funds to restore it, or demolish it altogether.

We firmly believe that this project benefits the entire community of Southborough due to its significance within downtown Southborough's historic district as well St. Mark's strong ties to the Burnett family.

2 ELIGIBILITY: Define how the project meets CPA requirements and fits the criteria as outlined in the Southborough CPA Plan located at www.southboroughcommunitypreservation.org

St. Mark's Church is directly called out in the Southborough's CPA plan as a historic landmark. Southborough's top Historic Preservation Goal is to preserve and maintain historic landmarks. St. Mark's Bell Tower has been a part of Southborough's downtown landscape since 1891. It's location within downtown and Gothic Revival design also contributes to Southborough's goal to maintain the feel of a small New England town.

St. Mark's Bell Tower Restoration Project also falls into multiple sections under the Specific Criteria for Historic Projects:

- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate historic, cultural, architectural, land or archaeological resources of significance, especially those that are threatened
- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate town-owned properties, features or resources of historical significance
- Project is within a State or National Historic Register, or eligible for placement on such registers, or on the Southborough Historic Properties Survey (Note: St. Mark's is currently a part of the Southborough's Historical Application for the downtown zone to be added to the State and National Register of Historic Places)

- Project demonstrates a public benefit; or Project demonstrates the ability to provide permanent protection for maintaining the historic resource

2 COMMUNITY NEED: Why is this project needed? Does it address needs identified in existing Town plans?

As stated in the response above, Southborough's top Historic Preservation goal is to preserve and maintain historic landmarks. Based on the outpouring of support to save the Burnett house we feel as though this directly ties into Joseph Burnett's legacy. Below are a couple quotes from Southborough's Town Meeting in 2016 from [Wicked Local Southborough](#) debating whether to save the Joseph Burnett House:

- Joe Hubley, chairman of the Historical Commission, called the home the 'icon of Southborough.' 'I don't want to see another historic building in this town torn down.'
- Hewitt Heiserman, of Central Street: "Sudbury has the Wayside Inn, Hopkinton has the start of the Boston Marathon and we have Joseph Burnett. He is our greatest native son and self-made man and I believe we need to preserve his legacy forever."
- <http://southborough.wickedlocal.com/news/20160411/southborough-town-meeting-saves-burnett-house>

St. Mark's Church is a community gathering place, offering meeting and performance space on a regular basis for numerous local organizations including:

- Neighbors for Peace
- Southborough Community Dinners
- Boy Scouts: Local & Regional meetings
- Al-Anon
- Fay School Graduation
- Metrowest Chamber of Commerce
- Parking lots used for both Fay School & St. Mark's School events
- Kodaly Music Institute

- Southborough Gardner's Club
- Electrical Inspectors of Massachusetts: Yearly meeting

While these events aren't hosted in the Bell Tower, it's the tower that draws people to the property. When people think of St. Mark's Church one of the first things people think of is the tower. Type in St. Mark's Church Southborough into Google images, and a large majority of images focus on the tower.

3 COMMUNITY SUPPORT: What is the nature and level of support and/or opposition for this project?

When St. Mark's realized that the tower has a shelf life of approximately 3 years, the Vestry looked at 3 options: 1. Preserve the tower as it looks today to match the rest of the church; 2. Tear it down and build a new tower for a fraction of the price that won't match the rest of the church; 3. Tear down the tower altogether. The vestry voted unanimously to go with preservation. There were also no objections to restoration when the price tag was presented to the congregation at St. Mark's annual meeting in January 2018. St. Mark's then presented to the Southborough Historical Committee in December 2017 on the status of the tower and they voted unanimously to support the project. We also reached out to Southborough's State Representative, Carolyn Dykema and she also supported the restoration project. In the appendix you'll find both letters of recommendation.

The main topic of conversation over the last 12 months is the litigation between George Caplan vs. the town of Acton, MA debating the separation of church and state and whether public funding can be used to renovate churches.

The state Supreme Court ruled in favor of the town of Acton that the funds can be used on religious buildings and churches as part of historic preservations, but the funds cannot be used for directly religious items. Repairing walls and windows, for example, is permissible. But repairing a stained glassed window with some type of

religious depiction is not fundable. The St. Mark's Tower Restoration project falls under historic preservation and does not contain any religious depiction.

4 BUDGET: What is the total budget for the project and how will CPA funds be spent? All items of expenditure must be clearly identified and back-up documentation provided. Distinguish between hard and soft costs. (NOTE: CPA funds may NOT be used for maintenance.) Include a two to five-year budget, if appropriate.

5 FUNDING: What funding sources are available, committed or under consideration? Include commitment letters, in kind donations and volunteer hours, and describe any other attempts to secure funding for this project.

St. Mark's received \$50,000 from the Massachusetts Historical Commission during 2018's round of their annual Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund. In the appendix you will see the email we received from MHC committing the \$50,000. We also plan to apply for an additional \$50,000 in 2019.

Beginning in 2019, St. Mark's is also going to launch a Capital Campaign project to raise money from our own congregation. We have raised \$350,000 to date. Combining the \$50,000 from Mass Historical Commission, the \$350,000 from the capital campaign, and the requested \$300,000 from Southborough's CPC will get us to the total of \$700,000. The price tag for the overall project increased to \$750,000 as a result of additional deterioration uncovered during phase 1 work. We're continuing to work with the Mass. Historic Commission and continue to reach out to our congregation to get us to \$750,000 mark.

6 TIMELINE: What is the schedule for project implementation, including a timeline for all critical elements? This should include the timeline for expenditures, receipt of other funds and/or other revenues, if any.

The preservation architects have provided design development drawings and outline specifications up to this point. They indicate that once given authorization to proceed, the final bid documents and specifications can be produced in 6 weeks. Bidding will take approximately 4 weeks. Restoration repairs will take approximately 16 weeks, assuming the work proceeds during normal seasonal construction conditions for masonry work.

7 IMPLEMENTATION: Who will be responsible for implementing the project? Who will the project manager be? What relevant experience does the proposed project manager have? Who else will be involved in project implementation and what arrangements have been made with them?

Currently, preservation architects Spencer, Sullivan & Vogt (SS&V) are under contract with St.

Mark's Church for the project, and they will provide construction administration services for

current work that has been funded through the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

They

are deeply experienced preservation architects who have delivered many projects that have

been funded through the Community Preservation Act, and by the Massachusetts Historical

Commission. SS&V will assist St. Mark's in the bidding process and will review qualifications

of bidders, making final recommendations for contract award. Through their construction

administration services, they will make weekly site visits to review and record work in progress. They will review and certify monthly applications for payment from the contractor,

they will provide final inspections, approve final payment and submit a completion report.

The architects will report to the Building Committee from St. Mark's.

8 MAINTENANCE: If ongoing maintenance is required, who will be responsible and how will it be funded? Please include a detailed five-year budget.

This restoration project will preserve the tower for generations to come, and annual maintenance will be minimal moving forward.

Ongoing maintenance on the St. Mark's Bell Tower will be needed and will rest solely on the shoulders of St. Mark's congregation. St. Mark's fell into this dire situation due to the generations of neglect and improper maintenance of the tower. Moving forward, our Buildings & Grounds team will be following the instructions laid out by specifically by the 3rd party architecture firm that specializes in historic preservation of buildings and towers. It will be funded within our annual buildings and grounds budget.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: please provide the following additional information if applicable

9 FURTHER DOCUMENTATION: documentation that you have control over the site, such as a Purchase and Sale Agreement, option or deed. (Letters of support from relevant town entities)

In the Appendix you will find a photocopy of the deed to St. Mark's Church

(Still waiting on letter of recommendation from Southborough Historical Commission)
In the appendix you will also find a letter of recommendation from Southborough's State Representative Carolyn Dykema to the Massachusetts Historical Commission in favor of the project.

10 FEASIBILITY REPORTS: any feasibility reports, renderings or other relevant studies and material.

In the appendix you'll be able to read and review the entire report completed by the Spencer Vogt group on the status of St. Mark's Bell Tower. It includes costs, shelf life of the tower in its current state, supporting photos, and details on what needs to be renovated.

11 ZONING COMPLIANCE: evidence that the project does not violate any zoning by-laws or any other laws or regulations, including environmental, and/or plans to obtain necessary approvals.

St. Mark's is only looking to renovate/ refurbish the current structure. There will be no changes to the size of the structure. Therefore, St. Mark's will only need a building permit. Zoning by-laws are not applicable.

12 OTHER INFORMATION: any additional information that might benefit the CPC in consideration of this project.

When we reached out to the Spencer & Vogt Group for a full analysis of the tower, we knew significant issues would arise, and repairs would be needed. The report confirmed these fears. Various generations of repair efforts unfortunately have compromised its structural integrity. As you'll read in the Tower Evaluation report in the Appendix the combination of the age of the tower, and the substandard repairs over time, we're looking at a project cost north of \$500,000. Major issues include water penetration, unevenly faced stones, cracked mortar joints, and stone slippage.

These also need to be addressed within the next 3 years to ensure structural integrity. St. Mark's Vestry looked at 3 options: 1. Preserve the tower as it looks today to match the rest of the church; 2. Tear it down and build a new tower for a fraction of the price that won't match the rest of the church; 3. Tear down the tower altogether. The vestry voted unanimously to go with preservation.

In the Appendix you will find the 3rd party report commissioned by St. Mark's to give us a comprehensive view of the current state of the structure.

Also included is report that the Massachusetts Historical Commission has on St. Mark's that states the church is eligible to be added to the Massachusetts and National Registry for Historic Places. The town of Southborough is applying for the entire downtown area that includes St. Mark's Church to be added to both registries.

Applicant requirements after CPC recommends project for Town meeting:

- A representative of the project will be required to be present when all CPC recommendations are reviewed at a Board of Selectman and an Advisory Committee meetings (to assist with fielding any additional questions concerning the project)
- All Town Meeting approved projects must submit a project schedule and proposed payment timeline
- All Town Meeting approved projects are required to present progress reports at 6 month intervals along with a written progress report to the CPC.
- All projects approved at Town Meeting are required to include appropriate permanent signage and publicity indicating funding was provided by Southborough CPA. (wording should be reviewed with the CPC prior to completion of the project)