

Application to the
Dennis Community Preservation Committee

By the
Planning Department

May 5, 2017

Contact Information:

Daniel J. Fortier, Town Planner

Susan B. Witte, housing coordinator

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Synopsis

Project Title.	Housing Coordinator Funding Year Two (2)
Organization Name.	Town of Dennis, Planning Department
Amount Requested from CPA funds.	\$23,600.00
Purpose.	Funding year two (2) of Affordable Housing Coordinator position
Project site location.	Dennis Town Hall
Applicant Information	Dennis Planning Department Daniel J. Fortier, Town Planner and Susan B. Witte, affordable housing coordinator

Applicant Information

Project Title	Housing Coordinator Funding Year Two (2)
Primary & secondary contact	Daniel J. Fortier, Town Planner Susan B. Witte, housing coordinator Dennis Town Hall, 685 Route 134, South Dennis, MA. 02660 508-760-6122 dfortier@town.dennis.ma.us switte@town.dennis.ma.us
Primary & secondary contact to receive funds	MaryAnne Gibbs, Town of Dennis Accounting 508-760-6152 mgibbs@town.dennis.ma.us

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

The Town of Dennis, through the Planning Department, is seeking a continuation of annual funding for the existing 19-hours per week position of Affordable Housing Coordinator. The Coordinator was hired at the end of May in 2016 with CPC grant funding. The Coordinator works under the direct supervision of the Town Planner and together with the Dennis Planning Board, Planning Department and Municipal Affordable Housing Trust to promote the creation of affordable housing both by the town and private entities; and monitors existing affordable housing that has been approved by the Dennis Planning Department. The Coordinator initiated collaboration with The Community Development staff in the Town of Yarmouth and together created a D-Y Ready Renter list acceptable to the DHCD. The D-Y Ready Renter list is a key ingredient to match available affordable rental units with income eligible households for inclusion on the SHI list.

To re-cap the 2015 application, The Affordable Housing Coordinator carries forward affordable housing initiatives that arose during the Dennis Affordable Housing Forum and the 2017 Housing Needs Assessment, which is incorporated in the 2017 Housing Production Plan, received Planning Board endorsement in April, and is on the Board of Selectman's agenda for approval next month. The coordinator's efforts will include working with private land owners on potential affordable housing projects; working with approved affordable housing projects on compliance issues; moving housing projects forward on sites the Town has foreclosed on; working with the tax collector on tax lien properties that provide affordable housing opportunities; identifying sites with opportunities for town acquisition; bringing the management of Ready Renter list "in house"; and processing and contacting all property owners with affordable housing permits to monitor tenant selection processes.

The position:

- Positively affects the creation of affordable housing by both private and public entities.
- Provides a mechanism for protecting the existing affordable housing stock.
- Provides a liaison between affordable rental owners and income eligible tenants.
- Provides a point of contact between the Dennis Municipal Affordable Housing Trust and other town boards and state agencies.

SELECTION CRITERIA

GENERAL CRITERIA

Projects will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. How the project meets the goals of the Community Preservation Act.

The project meets the goals of the Community Preservation Act by providing a central point of contact for affordable housing in Dennis. The position promotes creation of

affordable housing on private and town owned property; assists in acquiring land for housing creation; coordinates private creation of affordable housing and helps match eligible tenants with available affordable housing.

2. How the project specifically benefits the Town of Dennis and its residents.

There are many opportunities to create affordable housing in Dennis. Staffing is often the biggest obstacle. By maintaining this position, Dennis will be better prepared to move a number of housing projects forward that are currently in conceptual stages. As over 40% of Dennis residents are income eligible for affordable housing and the town is well below the state 10% affordable housing target, there is tremendous need for the services this position offers.

3. Compatibility with the Dennis Local Comprehensive Plan, Dennis Open Space and Recreation Plan, Dennis Affordable Housing Action Plan, and any other planning documents.

The Dennis Comprehensive Plan directs the town to push forward in meeting the State's affordable housing target. The Dennis Affordable Housing Action Plan similarly directs the town towards an ambitious program to create affordable housing. One obstacle continues to be the availability of staffing to push ideas into projects and housing units. By continuing the funding for an Affordable Housing Coordinator, the Community Preservation Committee will help the town accomplish goals of these two town guiding documents.

4. Urgency acquisition, preservation, or rehabilitation of threatened resources. Saves resources where loss is imminent or threatened.

There are many opportunities to create affordable housing at our fingertips. The town, with the hiring last year of the housing coordinator, now has the resources and staffing to get the work done. Private projects now have a dedicated local contact to guide them through the development process. The Town has an individual who can initiate and guide town projects. The Town now has an individual charged with tracking all deed restricted units for local compliance.

In addition, there are many opportunities available in all our villages for creation of affordable housing, and we just need the ability to move on them. Historic Register eligible properties facing demolition by neglect provide opportunities to join historic preservation with affordable housing. Again, we need the man hours to put these projects together.

5. Preservation of the essential character of the town or of a neighborhood.

The town is its people, many of whom cannot afford the cost of housing. Creating safe affordable housing will create more opportunities for people who grow up in town to

continue to live in town. Making Dennis affordable for Dennis residents preserves the character and history of the town by providing opportunities for future generations.

6. Preservation and/or utilization of town owned assets.

The town controls a number of parcels that provide opportunities for affordable housing. The Bob Crowell Road DPW site, VIC Hall, and tax foreclosure properties all provide town controlled possibilities. Planning staff has identified housing scenarios for these sites. The Affordable Housing Coordinator has been charged with monitoring these and other projects for continued viability and, when appropriate, move these projects through the RFP and permitting process.

7. Produces an advantageous cost/benefit value.

Planning staff has identified the following potential projects for implementation over the next few years. The Affordable Housing Coordinator will be responsible for moving forward with these projects.

- VIC Hall Depot Street, Dennis Port - 18 - 24 one and two bedroom units
- Bob Crowell Road, South Dennis - 16 two and three bedroom units
- Historic Preservation Site, privately held West Dennis - Save historic building from demolition by neglect, up to 30 units
- Historic Preservation Site, privately held West Dennis - save potential historic site from demolition by neglect, up to 8 units
- Historic Preservation Site, privately held Dennis Port - save potential historic site from demolition by neglect, up to 30 units
- Brownfield Site, Dennis Port - up to 18 units
- Mixed use privately held in Dennis Northside - up to 28 units

8. Demonstrates practicability and feasibility within budget.

The Affordable Housing Coordinator position will continue to be a part time contracted position providing coordination of affordable housing programs and initiatives in Dennis. The project will require funding at \$23,600. This will provide staffing and expenses for year two of this position.

9. Utilizes multiple sources of funding, including public and/or private funds.

The proposal focuses primarily on public funding to coordinate town housing efforts. The position will support private investments in property to benefit the Dennis economy. In a meeting with the State Department of Development Services, for instance, the DDS Commissioner noted that caretaker positions, a growing part of the Cape economy, were difficult to fill due to the lack of affordable housing. The position, by supporting creation of this housing will provide for the areas aging population and aging in place opportunities.

10. Serves an under-served population.

Other than this part-time position there is no one else in Dennis providing this service.

11. Meets multiple needs and serves multiple populations.

Affordable housing serves a cross-section of the town's population. Young, old and middle-aged people all need affordable housing. The coordinator will work with public and private parties to increase the supply of affordable housing.

12. Serves more than one CPA purpose (especially in linking open space, recreation and community housing).

The Affordable Housing Coordinator will work on a variety of housing projects. Conceptually, the current F.O.R.W.A.R.D Hokum Rock Road project would include housing and protection of adjacent environmentally sensitive properties. The Bob Crowell Road concept plan connects housing to Johnny Kelley Park. The concept also includes relocating the Dennis Head Start program from Dennis Port to South Dennis. The VIC Hall project would include creation of a new playground on Mill Street which could serve this housing as well as housing recently created on Mill Street with CPC funds. Three projects involving privately-held sites include historic preservation possibilities; one of these includes a large tract of open space of conservation interest. The Planning Department has also been in discussions with the Dennis Conservation Trust on partnering with them on a few other joint acquisition opportunities.

13. Receives endorsement by other municipal boards and/or departments.

The creation of an Affordable Housing Coordinator position was presented at the Board of Selectmen's Housing Forum. The idea received broad support in each break out group.

PROJECT SPECIFIC CRITERIA

COMMUNITY HOUSING proposals, which address as many of the following criteria as possible, will receive preference:

1. Increases the number of units in the town's affordable housing inventory.

There are many opportunities to create affordable housing in Dennis. The Affordable Housing Coordinator will be charged with identifying opportunities throughout town. On Monday May 1, 2017 the Dennis Planning Board approved 16 rental units of housing, these units, as they come on line the Housing Coordinator will ensure that they follow requirements for tenant review and inclusion into the State Housing Inventory.

2. Promotes a socioeconomic environment that encourages a diversity of income, ethnicity, religion and age.

One task assigned to the potential Affordable Housing Coordinator will be to create a Ready Renter list matching income eligible people with rental properties. The Ready Renter program will be devised to ensure equal opportunity access to affordable rentals in Dennis.

3. Provides housing that is harmonious in design and scale with the neighborhood.

Housing to be created through this program will be designed harmoniously with the surrounding neighborhood.

4. Results in a higher percentage of affordable units than otherwise required.

The Coordinator will work on town initiated project which when created through this program will strive to be 100% affordable and will target primarily the creation of rental housing. In addition the Coordinator will work with private property owners on compliance with Dennis Affordable Housing By-law requirements which range from 25% to 50% affordable.

5. Ensures affordability in perpetuity.

All housing created under the auspices of the Affordable Housing Coordinator will be affordable in perpetuity.

6. Promotes the use of existing buildings or construction on previously developed or town owned sites.

The Affordable Housing Coordinator will focus on several initial projects on town controlled properties. The Coordinator will work with the Tax Collector to identify tax title properties that could benefit housing creation. There are several other sites that are not town-owned that create historic preservation and conservation opportunities for acquisition.

7. Converts market rate to affordable units.

Three potential acquisitions would include conversion of abandoned structures for affordable housing.

8. Ensures that new community housing is harmonious with the existing community and neighborhood and will incorporate similar characteristics designed to maintain architectural harmony, density consistency, and conserving the natural landscape.

All town projects will be designed harmoniously with their surroundings. For instance the Hokum Rock project would use historically appropriate designs as it is located within the Old King's Highway Historic District and the Veteran's Housing project has been approved by Old King's Highway.

9. Preference will be given to projects utilizing and rehabilitating existing housing stock and other existing structures over new construction.

Projects on the drawing board seek to repurpose town owned properties for housing as well as pursue strategic sites for new housing opportunities. Some of these locations may include structures that could be reused for affordable housing. The Coordinator is charged to work with the tax office to identify all opportunities to reuse sites and structures for affordable housing opportunities.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

CPA funds will be awarded only to projects that meet one or more of the following criteria:

The Affordable Housing Coordinator position will directly provide for creating and maintaining a “Ready Renter List” to match income eligible tenants with deed restricted affordable rental units; monitoring existing affordable housing for compliance with permits issued; and working to promote the creation of affordable housing both by private and public interests. The creation of affordable housing will directly involve repurposing and redeveloping town owned sites and working with private property owners on projects. The Bob Crowell Road site would redevelop the former DPW site for 16 units of affordable housing. The VIC Hall project would redevelop the site in Dennis Port for up to 24 units of housing and a playground.

Indirectly, there are opportunities for historic and open space preservation. The Planning Department has identified at least three sites with potentially historic properties that may be available for acquisition. One site contains a large tract of open space that would be preserved along with the preservation of an old sea captain’s house on the property, which would be converted to housing. Each of these sites provide the opportunity to reuse existing structures for more than one housing unit and to complement these historic structures with additional housing through new construction on the sites. Each of these locations also work as infill opportunities. One project, the VIC Hall project, also involves the creation of a new playground. The Affordable Housing Coordinator will be responsible for pursuing all of these projects.

REVIEW CRITERIA

Relevant experience of the Applicant and Applicant’s staff and others involved in the Project

The Dennis Town Planner has managed many grants over the past 30 years from small transportation grants (a user-side taxi subsidy program in Exeter NH in 1985) to Transportation Department budgets for the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. The Town Planner has also managed a US Department of Energy Clean Cities Program grant

while studying the viability of providing electric vehicle and other alternative fuel refueling sites in Metro-Boston.

Applicability to goals and objectives of the CPA

The project is designed to provide a key contact person in the Town of Dennis responsible for the promotion, creation and tracking of affordable housing in Dennis. Through program monitoring, the Coordinator is charged with ensuring approved affordable housing is meeting their permitted responsibilities. Through the Ready Renter list, the Coordinator will match income eligible tenants with affordable housing. Finally, the Coordinator will be charged with pursuing projects for construction on town-owned sites and possibly coordinating acquisition of sites for future housing initiatives. All of these actions promote the long term sustainability of affordable housing in Dennis.

Suitability as it relates to the current and future needs of the Town of Dennis

Over 40% of Dennis residents earn below 80% of the region's median income. Many current homeowners pay well over 30% of their monthly incomes on housing. By promoting the creation of affordable housing opportunities, tracking affordable housing compliance and matching income eligible tenants to rental units, the Affordable Housing Coordinator will be serving the very real needs of Dennis resident's ability to live affordably in town.

- Quality of applicant response
- Diversity of programs/services offered

The Affordable Housing Coordinator is charged, as described in this application, with numerous and varied tasks from the creation of housing, to aiding income eligible people in finding housing, to monitoring compliance with affordable housing permits. The role of the Coordinator will meet the diverse needs of Dennis residents to find affordable housing.

Implementation plan

The Housing Coordinator has been on staff for one year. This funding will allow the continuation of the position which serves residents and property owners in the creation of affordable housing in Dennis.

Availability of leveraged funds

The project does not rely upon leveraged funds directly. However, the project would expect that the Ready Renter program would involve fees associated with the rental listings being placed in the registry. In addition, the monitoring aspect of Special Permits generally involves monitoring agreements with associated fees for monitoring

compliance. Beyond this, any project that would move forward under the auspices of the Affordable Housing Coordinator would involve the "Request for Proposals" process and the ability of non-profit entities to bring additional housing funds to the table for construction.

Affordable Housing Coordinator

Position Purpose:

The position provides professional, technical, and administrative services for housing-related programs, projects and activities; all other related work as required. The Affordable Housing Coordinator is responsible for housing related services assigned through the Town Planner for the Town of Dennis Affordable Housing Trust, the Council on Aging and other boards and committees with affordable housing initiatives.

Supervision:

Supervision Scope: Performs varied and responsible duties requiring the exercise of considerable judgment and initiative in coordinating operations, formulating decisions.

Supervision Received: Work is performed under the administrative direction of the Town Planner and in accordance with state and local laws and regulations. In coordination with the Town Planner the employee generally establishes own work plan and completes work in accordance with established departmental policies and standards. This position is subject to review and evaluation according to the town's personnel plan.

Supervision Given: Supervises the work of various technical contractors.

Job Environment:

Administrative work is performed under typical office conditions. The noise level is moderate at times. Employee is required to attend evening meetings.

Operates an automobile, computer, printers, facsimile machine, copier, calculator, and other standard office equipment.

Makes frequent contact with other municipal employees, state, federal, and regional agencies, board/commission members, attorneys, engineers and applicants; makes regular contacts with the general public. Contacts are in writing, in person and by telephone and involve an information exchange dialogue. Contacts may also require the Housing Coordinator to provide advice and direction.

Has access to department-related confidential information requiring the application of appropriate judgment, discretion and professional protocols.

Errors in administration and judgment could result in reduced levels of service, cause confusion and delay, adverse public relations, and have legal repercussions.

Essential Functions:

Provides housing related support services for the Affordable Housing Trust and the Council on Aging, as appropriate.

Administers housing assistance programs such as the Ready Renter List, Rental Security Deposit/First/Last Month Rent Program and other town supported housing assistance projects.

Assists in the development, approval and implementation of the Affordable Housing Production plan.

Identifies affordable housing opportunities such as maintaining a list of town-owned vacant parcels; identifying possible public private partnerships for housing; and seeking available housing grant opportunities.

With respect to affordable housing projects, assists Planning Department and Affordable Housing Trust, in developing scope and terms of requests for proposals (RFPs) and other project documents, coordinates review by other town boards and departments, and public comment. Forwards plans for technical review to consulting engineers. Develops the scope of review including establishing time constraints. Refers all plans to required departments for review. Performs coordination of work with other town departments.

Prepares support materials as needed. Attends meetings, prepares minutes if needed.

Assists in preparing and/or reviewing proposed bylaw amendments and amendments to specific Board's rules and regulations.

Assists in development and execution of housing-related public educational programs/events.

Responds to questions and requests for information from the public and other town departments. Provides guidance and technical assistance as necessary.

Attends regional and professional development meetings as necessary.

Regular attendance and punctuality at the workplace is required.

Performs similar or related work as required, directed or as situation dictates.

Project Budget

Contractor Costs	\$21,100
Town of Dennis Overhead	\$1,000
Supplies, travel, training, membership dues	\$1,500
Total Grant Request	\$ 23,600

Supporting Documents

Certificate of Non-Collusion	attached
Letters of support	attached
References	not applicable
Other relevant material	not applicable
Copy of most recent US Income tax Form 990	not applicable

May 4, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a letter of very high commendation for Ms. Susan Witte, the current Housing Specialist at the Dennis Town Hall.

I have been a member of the Dennis Municipal Affordable Housing Trust (DMAHT) for the past several years and can compare where our committee was before Susan was hired and what we have accomplished since.

Susan possesses that special talent for bringing people of different backgrounds together to create solutions for the common good. She has an extreme passion for housing and brings her extensive Realtor experience along with her extreme organizational skills to our DMAHT Committee.

I feel that the DMAHT and the Town of Dennis residents are greatly enhanced by the employment of Susan Witte and her huge contribution to our mission and should be re-funded to continue with the great work that she has accomplished thus far.

Please feel free to contact me at 508-737-9399 if you have any questions that I might answer.

Most sincerely,



PJ Rainwater

21 A Anns Path

South Dennis, MA 02660

**Dennis Municipal Affordable Housing Trust
Town of Dennis,
685 Route 134
South Dennis, MA 02660**

4 May 2017

Dr. Dorria DiManno Co-Chair
Dr. Frank Dahlstrom Co-Chair
Town of Dennis Board Community Preservation Committee
685 Route 134
South Dennis, MA 02660

Dear Chairpersons DiManno and Dahlstrom:

The Municipal Affordable Housing Trust supports the reappointment of Susan Bennett Witte as the Town Planning Department's Housing Coordinator. With her expertise in affordable housing, Ms. Witte has proven to be an invaluable asset to our mission by adding an important component to the Trust's repertoire of skills. We additionally benefit from Ms. Witte's skills as a liaison with the local real estate community, where her established credibility and expertise in the market have proven to be vital. With that expertise, we have identified several candidate sites for our Rental Expansion Program, a process that might otherwise have not occurred in the present competitive market climate.

As such, the Trust fully endorses Ms. Witte's reappointment.

Sincerely,

James Kyrimes

James Kyrimes
Chair
Dennis Municipal Affordable Housing Trust