

Government 

Hamilton CPC: CPA funds sought for affordable housing units at Acord Food Pantry

Wed Apr 29, 2009, 02:44 PM EDT

Hamilton -

The Hamilton Community Preservation Committee submitted the following article to educate the community about the Community Preservation Act projects that will be proposed at the Annual Town Meeting on May 4. This is the final in a series of articles.

Harborlight Community Partners, a nonprofit based in Beverly with a mission of providing affordable housing, is coordinating an effort to create four affordable housing units at the site of the Acord Food Pantry on Willow Street. This is the very first time that CPA funds in Hamilton are being used to create affordable housing. Located within downtown, this small scale project will help Hamilton come a few steps closer to providing more, much needed, affordable housing. Currently, only 2.8 percent of Hamilton's housing stock meets the low-income definition of affordable housing, compared to the 10 percent that is required to avoid being subject to a 40B development. In addition to developing the four units, Harborlight, as property owner, will lease space to the Acord Food Pantry, a significant benefit of keeping the food pantry at its current downtown location. It also gives Hamilton an opportunity to work with a reputable and established local affordable housing developer with whom we hope to work on other affordable housing projects in Hamilton.

The funding for the project, including the purchase price of the property and the renovation of the building, is coming from several sources including private fundraising, Hamilton CPA funding, and local and state grants. The advantages of providing both added affordable housing options and keeping the food pantry in its current location cannot be overstated in these difficult economic times. Lastly, this project has the added reward of increased tax revenue for Hamilton. Although Harborlight is a non-profit agency, it chooses to make property tax payments to help support the communities where it has facilities.

This project will be presented to Town Meeting on May 4. For more information on these proposals, please contact cberry@hamiltonma.gov or refer to the CPC's web site at www.hamiltonma.gov.

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