



CITY OF PITTSFIELD

APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ELIGIBILITY

Date: November 1, 2020

Project Title: Preserving Endangered Historic Properties

Name of Applicant: John Dickson

Name of Organization: Pittsfield Historical Commission

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CPA Category (circle all that apply):

Open Space

Historic Preservation

Recreation

Community Housing

CPA Funding Requested: \$ 5,000 **Total Project Cost:** \$ 5,000

Project Description: Please provide a brief project description below. Include a brief description of how your project accomplishes the goals of the CPA and include an estimated budget. Please include supporting materials as necessary.

Create and file with the Massachusetts Historical Commission building inventory forms for buildings identified in the Endangered Historic Properties Casebook. This would be a first step in acting on recommendations to preserve important buildings in the city at risk of falling into irreversible disrepair.

In 2016, the Pittsfield Historical Commission received a planning grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission to create an Endangered Historic Properties Casebook. The purpose was to identify and showcase historic buildings that were in danger of falling into disrepair. The initial, preliminary research on the property was a first step to encourage developers and/or community groups to consider projects to preserve the buildings.

One of the main activities of the historical commission is to review demolition permits on historical properties. What we have learned is that by the time the demolition request arrives at the commission, the building was often in such disrepair that demolition was the only option, regardless of its historical significance for city or neighborhood. Identifying properties that might land on our meeting agendas in advance could help save them from certain demolition.

The Endangered Properties Casebook was completed and made public only in 2019. The outside consultant who prepared the casebook identified 23 properties in the city and prepared short four-page descriptions of each building with a series of recommendations that the city and the historical

commission could undertake to start the work on preservation.

For 17 of the properties, the first step recommended involved preparing an inventory form for the state historical commission. These forms are essential documents in describing historic properties that might be eligible for nomination to the National Historic Registry. Once a building is accepted for nomination, it would be eligible for historic tax credits that would aid potential developers as they put together their financial packages in deciding whether to take on preservation work.

Last year, the Community Preservation Committee approved half of our requested funding so that the work could begin. This year, the Commission is requesting \$5,000 to complete the inventory forms for the remaining properties on the endangered list and support the preservation of these historic properties.

Where appropriate, signature of property owner (or City representative if City-owned) and/or chief executive officer of organization:

NOTE: This application enables the CPC to review the request to ensure eligibility and offer guidance. If eligible, an Application for Funding must be completed.