

Billerica Historical Commission
Town Hall
365 Boston Road
Billerica, Massachusetts

To: CPC, Billerica

Re: MCA Application for CPA Funding

Date: June 25, 2018

The members of the Billerica Historical Commission endorse the Middlesex Canal Association's request for CPA funds to be used in conjunction with the organization's efforts to repurpose the former Talbot Mill warehouse located at 2 Old Elm Street in North Billerica. In viewing the building from the street, it is evident that little upkeep has been performed for many years.

Prompted by annual increases in the monthly rent at the present site of the organization's museum across the river at 71 Faulkner Street, the MCA, in 2012, accepted the gift of the warehouse from Pace Industries. The process of relocation has been fraught with difficulty, partially due to the age of the warehouse, but also to its geographical position in the flood plain. Recently the organization has met with success in obtaining approvals and plans soon to begin the process of restoring the building.

Once the roof has been replaced and the necessary brickwork is accomplished, the structure will be water tight. This will then allow the organization to focus on the many other aspects involved in rehabilitating an old building. The Commission was pleased to note that the MCA plans imply the inclusion of a local masonry firm to

perform the needed work.

In the year 2000 the MCA membership chose Billerica as the site of their museum, despite the fact they have six other communities from which to choose. The museum is faithfully open every weekend, except on holidays and is available by appointment on other days by request. Lectures of historical interest are held at the museum during the MCA's winter, spring and fall meetings. In conjunction with the Appalachian Mountain Club nature walks along extant sections of the canal are held semi-annually. The organization also supports local education. Both the Wilmington and the Billerica school systems have visited the museum in various capacities as have residents of local nursing homes and Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops.

Since 1983, the warehouse had been listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in the 75-acre Billerica Mills Historic District. By virtue of a 1990 Town Meeting vote the building is also part of a Local Historic District that was established nearly replicating the footprint of the NRD.

The location of the MCA museum is clearly a benefit to the Town and deserves consideration for community support through the receipt of CPA funding.

Sincerely,



Alec Ingraham, BHC Chair

Andy Bowen, Ann Stadtman, and Travis Brown