



Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

**Department of Planning and
Community Development**

Town Hall, 3rd Floor
333 Washington Street
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**Alison Steinfeld
Director**

To: Board of Selectmen
From: Kara Brewton, Economic Development Director
Date: December 11, 2013
Re: Coolidge Corner Theatre National Endowment for the Arts "Our Town"
Grant
cc: Mel Kleckner, Joslin Murphy, Alison Steinfeld

The Coolidge Corner Theatre Foundation (Theatre) is requesting the Town of Brookline be a partner on their "Our Town" grant application to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). If successful, this \$200,000 grant would allow the Theatre to move forward with initial design work for the proposed Coolidge Corner Theatre expansion. This grant is for projects that "contribute toward the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core. Our Town will invest in creative and innovative projects in which communities, together with their arts and design organizations and artists, seek to improve their quality of life; encourage greater creative activity; foster stronger community identity and a sense of place; and revitalize economic development." The intended outcome of this grant is to "strengthen communities through the arts." For more information, see <http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town>

All Our Town applications must include two primary partners: a nonprofit organization and a local government entity. One of the two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. Additionally, any local government is only permitted to partner on one "Our Town" grant application per year. The next grant cycle requires applications due to the NEA by January 13, 2014. Specifically, the Theatre is asking for the Board of Selectmen to submit the following documents (attached to this memo) as part of the Theatre's NEA grant application:

- 1) Letter of endorsement from the highest ranking official for the local government (one page limit). This letter should reflect the official's familiarity with and support for the project, and must designate your project as the only one being submitted for the local government.
- 2) Statements of commitment from partners (one page limit). Because the Theatre as lead applicant is a nonprofit tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization, they are required to include a statement from the relevant local government agency reflecting its support for and involvement in the project.
- 3) Our Town Partner Information Form, briefly describing the Town's involvement in planning and executing the project including any specific programming, management, finances, or other responsibilities for matching the NEA grant.

These three draft documents describe the May 2013 Town Meeting votes, anticipated future land lease over the Town parking lot, permitting process, and conceptual study of the Coolidge Corner parking lot renovation study currently underway. The documents do not make any commitments to future expenditures or approvals.

If successful, this grant would help one of Brookline's most important cultural anchors remain viable, enhance Coolidge Corner's vibrancy, and improve the quality of life for Brookline residents.

NEA Application
Our Town Partner Information
(For Our Town Applicants only)

Read the
instructions for
this form before
you start.

OMB No. 3135-0112
Expires 11/30/2016

To be completed only by the one primary partner and included in the application package.

Lead Applicant for Partnership

(official IRS name): Coolidge Corner Theatre Foundation

Primary Partner's IRS name: Town of Brookline

Popular name (if different):

Primary Partner's Mr. Ms. First: Betsy Last: DeWitt
Authorizing Official

Email

Address: betsy@betsydewitt.com

Address: 333 Washington Street, 6th Floor, Selectman's Office

City/State/Zip Code (9-digit number): 024456853

Primary Partner's

Taxpayer ID Number (9-digit number): 046 -- 001102

Web Address: [http:// www.brooklinema.gov](http://www.brooklinema.gov)

Contact: Mr. Ms. First: Melvin Last: Kleckner

Title: Town Administrator

E-mail: mkleckner@brooklinema.gov

Telephone: (617) 730-2210 ext. Fax: (617) 7302054

Organization's Total Operating Expenses for the most recently completed fiscal year (unaudited figures are acceptable): \$ 248,300,000

Mission/purpose of your organization:

The Town of Brookline is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Briefly describe your organization's involvement in planning and executing the project including programming, management, finances, and any responsibilities for matching the Arts Endowment's grant. Be specific; do not provide a general statement of support for the project. Use this space only.

The Town of Brookline voted in its May 2013 Town Meeting to permit the Coolidge Corner Theatre(CCT) to expand air rights over an adjacent Town-owned parking lot and to modify existing public walkway easements over Theatre property. As the Theatre design moves forward, the Town of Brookline Selectmen, Town Counsel and Planning Board will form a Project Review Team to work with the CCT as part of the design process of the expanded theatre, even prior to the official permitting process. Additionally, with the CCT expansion in mind, the Town of Brookline is currently working with a consultant towards two concept design options for the Town-owned parking lot adjacent to the CCT whose purpose is to provide usable open space for outdoor, public cultural activities adjacent to the Theatre and in the heart of Coolidge Corner. The study is being managed by the Economic Development Division of the Planning and Community Development Department, in partnership with the Director of Parks and Open Space and Director of Engineering. This initial \$5,000 design expenditure in conceptual planning is designed to dovetail with the Theatre expansion's design. Economic Development will seek additional Town funding for more detailed design work of this lot as the process moves forward. A \$205,000 capital expenditure for a rehabilitation of this lot is currently budgeted in the Town of Brookline's long-term FY2014 to 2019 Capital Improvements Program.



TOWN of BROOKLINE

Massachusetts

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

BETSY DEWITT, Chairman
NANCY A. DALY
RICHARD W. BENKA
KENNETH M. GOLDSTEIN
NEIL A. WISHINSKY

MELVIN A. KLECKNER
Town Administrator

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www.BrooklineMA.gov

January 4, 2014

Our Town
National Endowment for the Arts
Washington D.C.

Dear Grant Review Committee,

This letter serves as the Town of Brookline's Statement of Commitment as a partner in the Coolidge Corner Theater's proposed expansion project.

To date the Town of Brookline has approved several critical Town Meeting votes regarding easements on Town land that will permit the physical expansion of the historic building. We have met with various community and merchant groups to assess sentiment and support for this project which has been overwhelmingly positive. As this proposed expansion supports all three of the Town of Brookline's goals for the 2102 5-Year Economic Development Plan (improving the functional and aesthetic qualities of the public space in commercial areas; aiding the growth of existing businesses; and enhancing the tax growth from surrounding commercial properties), we are delighted to be a partner on this project.

Moving forward, the Town of Brookline will continue the collaborative process of developing the design of the building and the surrounding public space with the Theatre. We have budgeted funding to explore design concept options for the Town-owned parking lot adjacent to the Coolidge Corner Theatre whose purpose is to provide usable open space for outdoor, public cultural activities adjacent to the Theatre and in the heart of Coolidge Corner. The study is being managed by the Economic Development Division of the Planning and Community Development Department, in partnership with the Director of Parks and Open Space and Director of Engineering. This initial \$5,000 design expenditure in conceptual planning is expected to be followed by further detailed studies that dovetail with the Theatre expansion's design phase. Economic Development will seek additional Town funding for more detailed design work of this lot as the process moves forward. A \$205,000 capital expenditure for a rehabilitation of this lot is currently budgeted in the Town of Brookline's long-term FY2014 to 2019 Capital Improvements Program.

We are looking forward to being partners in Coolidge Corner Theatre's expansion project and enjoying the community benefit of an expanded cultural institution that will enhance aesthetics of the public space, increase the economic and social vitality of the neighborhood, draw patrons not just from the Town of Brookline but also the greater Boston area to our unique Coolidge Corner neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Betsy DeWitt, Chairman
Board of Selectmen
Town of Brookline
617-730-2200
betsy@betsydewitt.com



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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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January 4, 2014

Our Town
National Endowment for the Arts
Washington D.C.

Dear Grant Review Committee,

As the highest-ranking official for the Town of Brookline, I am writing this letter to endorse the Coolidge Corner Theatre Foundation's proposed expansion of the historic Art Deco theatre. As a long standing and cherished cultural institution in the commercial district of our town, the Theatre differentiates Brookline from other communities and has been an economic engine for our town.

The proposed plan to expand the theatre will enhance the aesthetics and increase the vibrancy of the public space of the Coolidge Corner district and ensure long-term viability of the Coolidge Corner Theatre which will have a direct impact on the long term viability of our Coolidge Corner commercial neighborhood. Our own meetings with various neighborhood groups confirm that the theatre is an icon that many view as the most crucial driver of the vibrancy in our largest commercial district.

The Theatre expansion plan dovetails with all of Brookline's three goals for the 2012 5-Year Economic Development Plan: improving the functional and aesthetic qualities of the public space in commercial areas; aiding the growth of existing businesses; and enhancing the tax growth from surrounding commercial properties.

As the design phase of this project progresses we will be working closely with the Theatre and members of the community to support and ensure the success of this major community improvement. The Town of Brookline will also be contributing its own financial resources to this endeavor as we have budgeted funding to assist in the re-design and construction of the parking lot adjacent to the Theatre as an open space for public cultural activities.

The Coolidge Corner Theatre Foundation's expansion proposal is the only project being submitted by the Town of Brookline. In the Town of Brookline the Chair of the Board of Selectmen is the highest-ranking official.

We are enthusiastic about this proposed project and hope that the National Endowment for the Arts will support our community effort to expand the influence of this stellar cultural institution in the Town of Brookline and the greater Boston area.

Sincerely,

Betsy DeWitt, Chairman
Board of Selectmen
Town of Brookline