

The Herald News

City activist honored at Statehouse for CPA efforts in Fall River

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FALL RIVER — Al Lima, a community activist who successfully led the city to adopt the Community Preservation Act, has received the Kuehn Award.

The state's Community Preservation Coalition recently awarded 10 honorees with the Kuehn Award. Each was recognized at the Statehouse on Jan. 13 for their significant contributions to the success of the Community Preservation Act.

For decades, Lima has been a community activist involved in many projects, co-founding organizations such as S.A.V.E. (Saving Architectural Valuable Edifices), the original Preservation Society of Fall River and S.O.N.S (Save Our Neighborhoods). He has advocated for "The Responsible Siting of LNG," land conservation, responsible zoning, open space, park improvements and bike paths.

"It's quite an honor," Lima said.

He said the honor, however, belongs to the city of Fall River.

Lima's efforts to have the CPA adopted made Fall River the first Gateway City to do so.

Lima led the way as a spokesman, chief organizer, fundraiser and the middle-man between the city and the Community Preservation Coalition. Lima held fundraisers in his home, stood on street corners with signs, put up yard signs, handled mail-outs and organized phone banks.

Lima said he believed the CPA judges were impressed with the city's campaign to pass the CPA, which will leverage state and federal funding to improve parks, historical buildings and sites, and create decent housing.

The city has roughly \$1.5 million to begin CPA projects. Lima said a committee was recently formed to review projects.

"I see a lot of good things happening," Lima said.

The Community Preservation Coalition said Lima and the other recipients' dedication, enthusiasm, leadership and tireless commitment to community preservation in communities across the state has marked them as a true heroes of CPA, whose work best exemplifies the spirit of Robert H. Kuehn Jr.

The other award recipients are Howard Baker-Smith, Dartmouth; Merrill Bazy, Aquinnah; Paul Boudo, West Springfield; Colleen Brown, Swansea; Janet Chayes, Conway; Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone and Meridith Levy, Somerville; Edmund Hands and Avery Lee Williams, Easton; Philippe Jordi, Martha's Vineyard; and Cheri Vallone Rigby, Ashland.