

CITY OF PEABODY
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
CITY HALL, 24 LOWELL STREET, PEABODY, MA 01960

THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT

Summary

The Community Preservation Act (CPA), approved as a ballot question on the November 6, 2001 Election, provides a mechanism to fund the creation and preservation of affordable housing, open space and historic resources.

The Act provides the authority for Peabody to establish a local Community Preservation Fund (CPF) that derives its revenues primarily from a surcharge on the property tax. The ballot question approved by the City provided for a one percent (1%) surcharge of the taxes assessed annually on real property. It also provided an exemption for the first \$100,000 of the assessed value of Class I, residential parcels. There are additional exemptions for residential properties. They are (1) for property owned and occupied as a domicile by a person who would qualify for low income housing and (2) for property owned and occupied as a domicile by a person who would qualify for low or moderate income senior housing.

Total Funding

The local surcharge for the Community Preservation Fund is yielded **\$375,679.77** during Fiscal Year 2002 (FY02) for the three project types:

- A. **Open Space & Recreation**
- B. **Historic Preservation**
- C. **Community Housing**

Together with an estimated one hundred percent (100%) state matching fund, Peabody should have approximately **\$751,359.54** to support projects during Fiscal Year 2003 (FY03). Community Preservation Funds (CPF) are available for use upon State Certification in September 2002.

The Community Preservation Committee

The Council has established the required Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to oversee use of Community Preservation Funds. The Committee is composed of the following nine members:

- One member of the Conservation Commission
 - One member of the Historical Commission
 - One member of the Planning Board
 - One member of the Park Commission
 - One member of the Housing Authority
 - Two members of the City Council
 - Two members of the General Public
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The Project and Funding Approval Process

Anyone may submit an application to request project funding, provided the project meets the requirements of the CPA and guidelines established by the Community Preservation Committee. A standard project proposal form is available at the City Clerks office, the Department of Community Development and Planning, and on the City Website.

Approval of funding requires a recommendation by the Community Preservation Committee and appropriation by the City Council. Each year, upon recommendation of the Committee, the City Council must spend, or set aside and designate for future spending, 10% of annual Community Preservation Fund revenues, for each of the three project categories. The Committee determines additional guidelines, priorities, and the breakdown of the remaining 70% of funds into the three categories.

Project Categories

Community Preservation Fund monies may be spent to undertake the following Community Preservation purposes:

- A. The acquisition, creation and preservation of open space;
- B. The acquisition and preservation of historic resources;
- C. The acquisition, creation and preservation of land for recreational use;
- D. The creation, preservation and support of community housing;
- E. The rehabilitation and restoration of open space, historic resources, land for recreational use; and
- F. Community housing that is acquired or created using monies from the fund.

Examples of Community Preservation Projects

- Open space acquisition
- Purchase and renovation of historic structures and sites
- Acquisition and creation of new parks
- Provision for new affordable housing

The Citizens Vote In 2001

Statewide, of the 69 Communities that held ballot votes on the CPA, 37 passed it. This is a 54% success rate. Fifty-two percent (52%) of Peabody voters who answered the CPA question on the November 6th, 2001 ballot supported the Community Preservation Act. This is surprising given that very little public education was provided on the Act prior to the election. Even with this slim margin, in tough economic times, we believe that the majority vote to approve the Community Preservation Act is a sign that the residents of Peabody support our efforts on these types of projects. In a broader sense, the passage of the CPA can be seen as support for a higher “quality of life” and the common good.

More information regarding the Community Preservation Act and Community Preservation Committee is available at City Hall and on the City Website:

www.ci.peabody.ma.us
