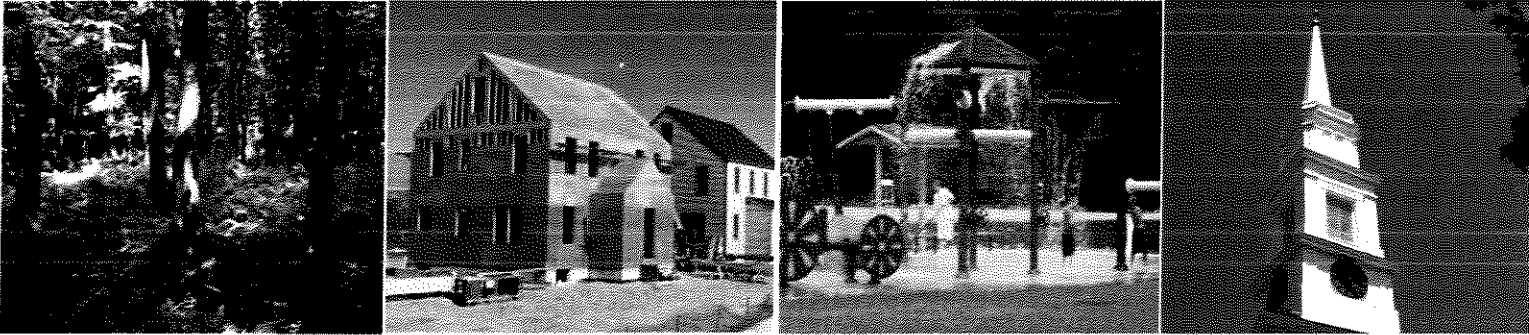# PRESERVING YOUR COMMUNITY WITH THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT

WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (CPA)? The CPA enables cities and towns in Massachusetts to create a local dedicated fund for open space, historic preservation, community housing, and outdoor recreation projects and to also receive funds from the state Community Preservation Trust Fund each year for these projects.

HOW IS CPA FUNDING GENERATED? CPA funds are generated through two sources: a surcharge of up to 3 percent on property tax bills and an annual disbursement of funds from the state Community Preservation Trust Fund, which distributes funds each October to communities that have adopted CPA. The state funds are generated through fees at the Registry of Deeds. If your community has not adopted CPA, you haven't been receiving these annual funds!

WHAT PROJECTS CAN CPA FUNDS SUPPORT?

Each fiscal year, CPA communities must spend, or set aside for future spending, the following share of its annual CPA revenues on three core areas:

- 10 percent for open space
- 10 percent for historic resources
- 10 percent for community housing

The remaining 70 percent of the revenues may be spent or reserved for future projects in any of these three areas, or for funding outdoor public recreation projects (i.e. ball fields, hiking or biking trails). CPA funds may never be directed to the general town fund; they may only be spent on the three CPA core areas and outdoor recreation.

CPA IN YOUR COMMUNITY COULD PROVIDE FUNDING TO:

- Restore and preserve historic town halls, documents, churches, cemeteries and other structures
- Create new ball fields, boat launches, and trails for walking and biking
- Preserve land to protect drinking water, local agriculture and wildlife habitat
- Develop a housing plan to determine the housing needs of local residents and then use CPA to address those needs (i.e., support housing for seniors; rehab old apartments to create condos to serve young families or small households)
- Leverage additional dollars from state, federal, and foundation grants

HOW MUCH WOULD CPA COST THE AVERAGE HOMEOWNER? *

Most towns adopting CPA in the past year have elected to include an exemption for the first $100,000 of taxable value of residential real estate. Listed at right are calculations for the approximate annual cost per homeowner if your community adopted CPA with this exemption.

TOWN	COST PER AVG. HOMEOWNER		
	1%	2%	3%
Athol	7	14	21
Erving	6	13	19
Gill	15	31	46
Greenfield	15	31	46
Orange *(2010 data)	9	18	27
Warwick	14	27	41

Several communities have adopted additional available exemptions, such as an exemption from the surcharge for low-income households and low– and moderate-income senior households.
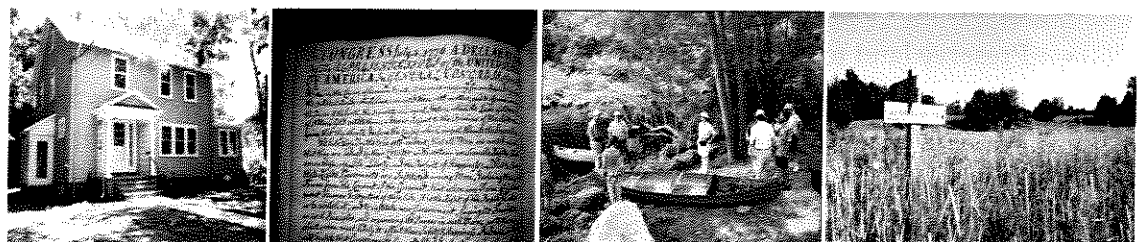
HOW MUCH WOULD CPA GENERATE FOR MY COMMUNITY? *

Listed below is the amount your community could generate locally with CPA (with the first $100,000 exemption). Note that this figure *does not* include revenue your community would receive annually from the State CPA Trust Fund.

TOWN	ANNUAL LOCAL CPA REVENUE		
	1%	2%	3%
Athol	40,542	81,084	$121,626
Erving	42,468	84,936	127,403
Gill	13,615	27,229	40,844
Greenfield	143,021	286,043	429,064
Orange *(2010 data)	37,208	74,415	111,623
Warwick	7,246	14,492	21,738

* *Both charts use FY11 data except where noted*

148 cities and towns have adopted CPA, including Northfield, Royalston, Templeton, Phillipston, and Hubbardston.

Pictures above show projects completed with CPA funding in municipalities across the state