

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT FACT SHEET

Updated January 2015

- Stow was the **8th town to adopt the CPA** in May 2001. More than 150 communities are participating statewide.
- Stow's Community Preservation Committee has **9 members** that represent the following: Open Space Committee, Historic Commission, Housing Authority, Recreation Commission, Finance Committee, Planning Board, Board of Assessors, Council on Aging, and Conservation Commission.
- The **3% surcharge** on an average Stow house (of \$428k) is \$197 per year.
- There are **two exemptions to the surcharge**: 1) the first \$100k of a property's value 2) seniors with low income
- Town's that adopt a 3% surcharge are eligible for **multiple rounds of state matching funds**. Stow has received over **\$3.5 million in state matching funds to date**.
- CPA funds can be used to **leverage funds and grants**, such as State and Federal funds for open space and affordable housing.
- **Some recent Stow CPA projects**
 - Stow Community Park on Old Bolton Road
 - Removal of invasive vegetation at Lake Boon
 - Agricultural Preservation Restriction on 18.6 acres of land on Maple Street
 - Conservation Restrictions: Hale Woodlands and Corzine Property between Maple and Hudson Road.
 - Pilot Grove Phase 2 affordable housing project
 - Plantation Phase 2 senior housing project
 - Restoration of Historic Cemetery walls and Gravestones at three Town cemeteries
 - Recreational trail easement along Track Road between White Pond and Sudbury Road.
 - Historic Property Inventory
 - Acquisition of Minister's Pond along Great Road
 - Design funds for a recreational project at Pine Bluffs and restoration of the Randall Library
 - West School parking access and Old Blacksmith Shop repairs
- To date **Town Meeting has appropriated** \$2.3 million to Open Space and Recreation projects, \$2.4 million to Affordable Housing projects and \$350,000 to Historic Preservation projects.

For **more information** please visit the CPC pages at www.stow-ma.gov or contact our administrative assistant, Krista Bracci at communitypreservation@stow-ma.gov or 978-212-5333.

Community Preservation Act Background Information

I. General Overview

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) was passed in 1983 and allows participating cities and towns to adopt a real estate tax surcharge up to 3% in order to fund three key community needs: open space and recreation, historic preservation and affordable housing.

II. Expenditure Conditions

The CPA requires that communities spend, or set aside for future spending, a minimum of 10% of each year's CPA receipts on: open space, historic preservation, and affordable housing. The remaining 70% of funds may be allocated to any one or a combination of the three main uses recommended by the Stow Community Preservation Committee and subject to the approval of Town Meeting.

- **Administrative Costs.** Up to 5% of the annual CPA funds may be spent on the operation and administration costs of the Community Preservation Committee. This includes administrative staff, supplies and consulting costs. In addition, the Committee may use its allowance for legal fees, or technical reviews for its decision-making purposes. Any unspent funds are returned at the end of the budget year.
- **Incidental Project Costs.** CPA funds may be used for site surveys, environmental assessments, historic or housing consultants, architectural and engineering fees, permit processing fees, construction consultants, financing consultants, legal and accounting fees, and similar costs associated with and incidental to the development of a CPA project.
- **Multiple Purpose Projects.** Stow Community Preservation Committee encourages the creative combination of allowable uses in their expenditure of CPA funds. For example, a large tract of land can be acquired for open space protection while reserving part of the parcel for the development of community housing. Another example is adaptive re-use of an historic structure to convert a building to a residential or non-residential CPA related use.

No Maintenance. CPA funds cannot be used for routine maintenance of existing facilities. For example, communities cannot use CPA funds to maintain a municipal park (such as mowing the lawn, emptying trash barrels or dumpsters, etc.) or to maintain a historic town hall (cleaning the common areas or paying for utilities, etc).

More information can be found at the Community Preservation Coalition website:

www.communitypreservation.org