

October 31, 2007

Dear Gloucester Member:



At the City Elections on November 6, Gloucester residents will have an opportunity to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA). The CPA would create a dedicated fund for the acquisition of open space, historic preservation, the creation of affordable housing, and for recreational purposes. The fund would be created through the collection of a 1% surcharge on real estate tax bills, subject to exemptions for low-income residents and low and moderate income seniors, and for the first \$100,000 of assessed value. If adopted in Gloucester, the CPA would yield approximately \$400,000 in the first year, which would be matched with state funding.

The CPA is critical to enabling Gloucester to protect important wildlife habitat and watershed land, and create new open space for parks and playgrounds in vacant and unused city lots. Important historic and recreation sites, such as City Hall, Newell Stadium, and the Thomas Sanders House at the Sawyer Free Library could be restored and preserved using CPA funds. The CPA funds can also be used to make needed capital improvements to Gloucester's many historic structures, including roof repairs, furnace replacements, and accessibility improvements. Finally, the community can use CPA funds to provide more affordable housing options for seniors, teachers, and young families wanting to remain in Gloucester, but who would be otherwise priced out of the housing market.

The Essex County Greenbelt Association supported the adoption of the CPA at the state level. Currently 127 communities statewide have adopted the CPA, including 15 in Essex County. In addition, the CPA created a source of matching state funds which are distributed to participating communities.

With the passage of the CPA by the legislature in the fall of 2000, each Massachusetts community was afforded the opportunity to adopt the CPA. Essex County Greenbelt hopes that you will go to your polling place on November 6 and vote to adopt the CPA for Gloucester.

Sincerely yours,

Protecting land and nature for you, our communities and the future

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