

An Untapped Funding Source for Colrain:

THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (CPA)

Who We Are:

The Colrain CPA Exploratory Committee is a volunteer group of Colrain residents who have come together because we believe that adopting CPA could have a very positive impact on our town.

The group consists of members of the Planning Board, Historical Society, Personnel Committee, and Library Board of Trustees. We've seen the impact that CPA adoption has had on our neighboring towns and we want that for our town!

What is CPA?

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) enables Massachusetts towns to create a fund for

- open space
- historic preservation
- community housing
- and outdoor recreation projects.

Towns that adopt the CPA receive a match from the Commonwealth's Community Preservation Trust Fund to help fund these projects.

Almost 200 communities in Massachusetts have adopted CPA, including our Franklin County neighbors: Conway, Deerfield, Greenfield, Northfield, Leverett, Shelburne, Shutesbury, Sunderland, and Whately. ***Because Colrain has not adopted CPA, we have not been receiving these annual CPA distributions from the Commonwealth!***

Where Do CPA Funds Come From?

CPA funds are generated through two sources: (1) a surcharge of up to 3 percent on our property tax bills, and (2) Community Preservation Trust Fund distributions from the state.

For small towns like Colrain that adopt CPA at the 3% surcharge level, these State Trust Fund distributions are frequently equal to the amount raised from the property tax surcharge; in other words, we double our money!.

How Much Could We Generate and What Would It Cost the Average Homeowner?

If we adopt the CPA surcharge at the 3% level (including the exemptions discussed below) we'd be able to raise roughly **\$63,000** in local revenue for our local projects. The average property owner would pay **\$68** dollars a year and we could expect a state match approaching 100%, **another \$63,000**, for a total in the well over-\$100,000 range; enough to effect real change.

(over)

Who Decides Which Projects We Fund?

We do! Town voters exercise local control over our CPA funds through a Community Preservation Committee (CPC) and our Town Meetings. The CPC's job is to solicit, review, and recommend projects to Town Meeting for approval. **All CPA projects must be approved by Town Meeting to receive CPA funds.**

How Can We Limit The Impact of The Added Tax on Residents?

We can exempt the first \$100,000 of residential/commercial property value from the surcharge and exempt low income residents and low and moderate income seniors (age 60 and over) from having to pay the surcharge at all.

What Can We Use Our CPA Funds For?

The CPA requires us to spend (or set aside for future spending) a minimum of 30% of our annual CPA revenues on three core areas:

- 10 percent for open space and outdoor recreation projects
- 10 percent for historic preservation projects
- 10 percent for community housing projects

We can save up for larger projects and, most importantly, **we can also leverage our money to obtain Commonwealth, federal, and other grants that require a match.**

What projects would you like to see Colrain able to fund?

- A swimming hole with parking?
- Improvements to the ballfield? A basketball court? A skating rink? A pickleball court?
- Renovate the Brick Meeting House as a community center?
- Affordable housing?

For more information on the CPA please visit: <https://www.communitypreservation.org>. This website has a wealth of information including a full listing of every project every town has done in the entire state since the CPA was first adopted in 2000.

Questions or comments? Please contact David Greenberg, david.greenberg3@gmail.com, 624-5557