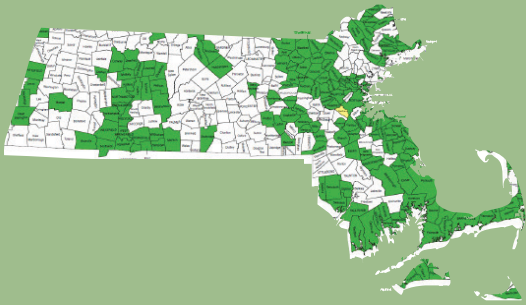


THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COALITION 2017 YEAR IN REVIEW



CPA ADVOCACY: MORE REVENUE FOR A STRONG CPA TRUST FUND

The Coalition established momentum in its legislative advocacy work in 2017. While the full legislature has yet to pass a permanent reinforcement to the CPA Trust Fund, for the first time ever, the State Senate did vote to increase the deeds recording fees, aiming for a higher CPA Trust Fund distribution. In addition, our CPA Trust Fund bill, H.3662, was recommended out of the Joint Committee on Revenue in May with 121 co-sponsors, setting the groundwork for our continued efforts in 2018.

Unfortunately, due to broad cuts to the state budget in 2017, there was no additional support for the CPA Trust Fund. We began the year hopeful when the legislature once again approved of a transfer of \$10 million from the state budget surplus to the Community Preservation Trust Fund. In the end, however, the lack of a budget surplus meant that the CPA Trust Fund did not receive the transfer of funds that was included in the state budget.

Without this infusion from the state budget surplus funds, the Trust Fund revenue came solely from deeds fee collections at the state's registries of deeds. The CPA Trust Fund distributed over \$24 million dollars to 162 eligible CPA communities, with a first round base match of 17.2% for all communities. Because of the downward trend in the CPA Trust Fund, as well as the inclusion of 10 new communities for the November 2018 distribution, the Coalition will be working diligently to convince the legislature that a permanent fix for the Trust Fund is imperative, and that time is running out.

CPA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

Sustained support and technical assistance to CPCs statewide, both new and old

The Coalition responded to thousands of technical assistance emails and phone inquiries from member communities across the state. Our staff continued to offer support across a range of CPA concerns, including project eligibility questions, legislative clarification, budgeting issues, and warrant article development and review. Over the course of the year, the Coalition also traveled to many of the new cities and towns that adopted CPA in November of 2016. These communities worked closely with the Coalition to draft the bylaws and ordinances regarding their local Community Preservation Committees, which was then followed by training sessions for both the committee members and municipal staff. Lastly, the Coalition began planning the return of our statewide CPA conference, which is planned for the fall of 2018. Watch for a "save the date" email from the Coalition soon.

Email Newsletters, Website, and Social Media Outreach

The Coalition's CPA Update email newsletter continued to provide valuable information for CPA communities throughout 2017, including Special Bulletin emails focused on updating local CPCs on especially important or time-sensitive CPA news, such as information on the new project reporting guidelines that went into effect this year. In the spring, the Coalition debuted its social media presence, using Facebook and Twitter to highlight projects across the state and providing different CPA factoids on a weekly basis. Our staff continued to refine and update the Coalition website (www.communitypreservation.org) with new material and technical assistance articles over the course of the year. We also began work on a massive design update for the website anticipated to launch in the first half of 2018.

CPA ADOPTION: A QUIET YEAR

After 2016's landmark year for CPA adoption, 2017 saw an expected drop in adoption interest. Despite an enthusiastic advocacy campaign, Dedham voters ultimately decided against adopting CPA during an April election. Moving into 2018, the only community with CPA adoption on the ballot is the town of Northbridge, which will vote on CPA at their spring election in May.

CPA PROJECTS: AN INCREDIBLE YEAR!

While 2017 was a slow year for new communities adopting CPA, it was encouraging to see the continued enthusiasm across the commonwealth in the cities and towns already implementing the program. Over 9,900 CPA projects have now been approved by local legislatures, meaning that an incredible 10,000th project landmark is going to be approved any day now. Among these projects, 27,190 acres of open space have been preserved, more than 13,000 affordable housing units have been created or supported, over 4,750 historic preservation projects have been approved, and over 1,950 outdoor recreation projects have been initiated. The work that the current CPA communities are doing continues to demonstrate the value of the Community Preservation Act.

CPA LAWSUIT REGARDING HISTORIC RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

In 2016, the town of Acton was sued by local taxpayers backed by Americans United for Separation of Church and State in an attempt to stop the town from using their Community Preservation Act funds on projects for local historic religious buildings. Later that year, during a preliminary injunction hearing, a court decision was issued in favor of the town. However, the plaintiffs then appealed the decision, moving the case forward into 2017.

In February, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) agreed to hear the lawsuit, and the hearing date was scheduled for September. Because this case has the potential to impact all CPA projects across the Commonwealth, the Coalition worked with the Massachusetts Municipal Lawyers Association and signed on to an amicus brief sent to the SJC, detailing support for the use of CPA funds for historic preservation projects. The SJC heard oral arguments from both sides regarding the legality of using CPA funds for an active house of worship, even when those funds are used exclusively for historic preservation purposes. The court's final ruling is expected in January 2018.

COALITION OPERATIONS

In January, Alison Leary joined the team as the new Associate Director, focusing on advocacy work at the State House and working with local communities on CPA. Then, in March, the Coalition welcomed Kaitlin Butler as our 2017-2018 Kuehn Fellow. Kaitlin worked to develop and launch a social media presence for the Coalition, as well as CPA research projects. Finally, in July, the Coalition moved into new office space, just around the corner from the State House on Beacon Street in downtown Boston.

The Coalition completed another year on firm financial footing (see our budget report at right). We are deeply grateful for the support of our member communities and thank them for their advocacy on behalf of CPA, as well as the hundreds of impressive housing, recreation, historic and open space projects that were completed during 2017.

FISCAL YEAR 2017: COALITION FINANCIAL REPORT

REVENUE

Foundation Grants	\$101,492
Community Members & Misc.	\$393,576
Total Revenue	\$495,068

EXPENSES

Personnel Costs	\$228,343
Benefits & Personnel Overhead	\$89,953
Advocacy Costs	\$52,500
Professional Services	\$3,944
Travel and Meeting Costs	\$5,017
Rent and Office Costs	\$34,545
Legal, Financial, Admin. & Misc.	\$80,766
Total Expenses	\$495,068



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