

BALLOT QUESTION

Shall the City of Cambridge accept sections 3 to 7, inclusive, of chapter 44B of the General Laws, as approved by the Cambridge City Council, a summary of which appears below?

QUESTION SUMMARY

Sections 3 to 7 of Chapter 44B of the General Laws of Massachusetts, also known as the Community Preservation Act (Act), establish a dedicated funding source to enable cities and towns to (1) acquire and preserve open space, which includes land for parks and recreational uses, the protection of public drinking water supplies, wetlands, farm land, forests, marshes, beaches, scenic areas, wildlife preserves and other conservation areas, (2) acquire, restore and preserve historic buildings and sites, and (3) help meet local families' affordable housing needs.

In the City of Cambridge, the funding source for these community preservation purposes will be a surcharge of 3% on the annual property tax assessed on real property and by matching funds distributed by the state from a trust fund created by the Act. If approved, the following will be exempt from the surcharge: (1) property owned and occupied as a domicile by any person who qualifies for low income housing or low or moderate income senior housing; (2) \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of residential real property. A taxpayer receiving a regular property tax abatement or exemption will also receive a pro rata reduction in this surcharge.

A Community Preservation Committee will be established by ordinance to study community preservation resources, possibilities and needs and to make annual recommendations to the City Council on spending the funds. At least 10% of the funds for each fiscal year will be spent or reserved for later spending on each of the Act's three community preservation purposes: (1) open space (excluding land for recreational use), (2) historic resources and (3) affordable housing.



City of Cambridge

O-24.

IN CITY COUNCIL

June 18, 2001

COUNCILLOR BRAUDE
COUNCILLOR BORN
COUNCILLOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DECKER
MAYOR GALLUCCIO
VICE MAYOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

WHEREAS: The General Court has enacted M.G.L. c. 44B, thereby authorizing cities and towns in the Commonwealth to create a special Community Preservation Fund by assessing a surcharge on annual real estate taxes and to appropriate monies in that fund for open space, historic resources and affordable housing; and

WHEREAS: Communities that accept the surcharge will receive matching funds from a new state trust fund; and

WHEREAS: It has long been the policy of the City Council to increase the availability of affordable housing options in the City, to increase the availability of open space in communities throughout the City, and to support the preservation of historical resources in the City; and

WHEREAS: The Community Preservation Fund presents an opportunity to obtain matching funds through the state trust fund to augment local tax dollar investments in these priority goals of the City; and

WHEREAS: The City Council has in the past made annual tax supported appropriations in the approximate amount of \$5,100,000 for the Affordable Housing Trust and the Open Space Acquisition Fund, and for historic preservation projects; and

WHEREAS: It is estimated that the surcharge will raise approximately \$5,100,000 if adopted with the proposed exemptions; and

WHEREAS: It is the City Council's intent to change the funding mechanism for affordable housing, open space and historic preservation projects from "annual appropriations" to the "surcharge" for the same amounts as allowed by the acceptance of the Community Preservation Fund, and therefore the acceptance of the Community Preservation Act by this City Council should not result in a property tax increase for the residential tax payers, merely a change in the funding process; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of M.G.L. c. 44B, §§3 through 7, inclusive, authorizing the creation of a Community Preservation Fund to be used for the purposes of (1) acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space, (2) acquisition and preservation of historic resources, and (3) acquisition, creation, and preservation of affordable housing; and be it further

ORDERED: That the amount of such surcharge on real property shall be set at three percent (3%) of the annual real estate tax levy against real property; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Council hereby accepts the following exemptions from said surcharge:

(1) for property owned and occupied as a domicile by a person who would qualify for low income housing or low or moderate income senior housing in the City;

(2) for \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of residential real property;

and be it further

ORDERED: That the attached Ballot Question and Question Summary shall be delivered to the Board of Election Commissioners by the City Clerk to be placed on the ballot at the next municipal election.

In City Council June 18, 2001.

Adopted as amended by a yea and nay vote:-

Yeas 8; Nays 0; Absent 1;

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Margaret Drury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

Order #24

2415

Accept M.G.L. c. 44B to create
special Community Preservation Fund.

Councillor Braude and entire membership

✓

In City Council June 18, 2001

to transfer
fund
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