

November 2016

Boston Approved the CPA: What's Next?

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City Council must establish the Community Preservation Committee

The voters of Boston overwhelmingly approved Question 5 on November 8th to adopt the Community Preservation Act by a 74% to 26% margin starting in fiscal 2018. The ball is now in the City Council's court since it is responsible for creating the ordinance that establishes the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to administer the program. The ordinance would establish the CPC's composition, length of member terms, the method of selecting its members, and outline the responsibilities of the CPC.

Once the ordinance is approved by the City Council, it is sent to the Mayor for his approval. The Mayor can approve, reject or suggest amendments to the proposed ordinance. While the City Council can override the Mayor's actions since the ordinance just creates the governance structure and is not a money item, the creation of this ordinance is a matter that should be established collaboratively with the Mayor and City Council.

Community Preservation Committee

The CPC must consist of at least five members. By statute, five designated entities must each select one board member to serve on the CPC. Those entities are:

- Conservation Commission
- Planning Board (BPDA)
- Historical Commission (Landmarks Commission)
- Housing Authority
- Board of Park Commissioners

The Mayor appoints all or a majority of the board members of these public entities.

At-Large Positions

Up to four additional "at-large" positions can be added to the CPC. One or more organizations can be named to designate a member to the CPC. An individual with a particular background pertinent to the CPA could be designated. The additional members can benefit the CPC by providing broad experience in any of the three core CPA areas or additional expertise in related disciplines.

Other City CPCs

The organizational structures of the CPCs in the 23 cities in Massachusetts that adopted the CPA before November 8th generally consist of nine members, but the process for selecting the four "at-large" positions and length of terms differ. For example, in Newton, the Mayor selects four citizens with expertise in the CPA areas. In some cities such as Fall River and Peabody, the Mayor selects two members and the City Council selects two members. Most members are appointed to three-year staggered terms. In some cities members are not eligible to serve for more than two consecutive full terms.

Councilors Michael Flaherty and Andrea Campbell submitted an early draft ordinance to the City Council which has been assigned to the Government Operations Committee. A public hearing will be scheduled.