

Warrant Article Questionnaire  
Non-Standard Town Agency Articles

**Section III – Questions with Response Boxes – To Be Completed By Petition Sponsor**

<b>Article # 21</b>	Date Form Completed: <b>3/10/22</b>
Article Title: <b>Adoption of Community Preservation Act</b>	
Sponsors	Emails
<b>Natick Affordable Housing Trust</b>	Ganesh Ramachandran< <a href="mailto:natickgram@gmail.com">natickgram@gmail.com</a> >
<b>Open Space Advisory Committee</b>	Martin Kessel< <a href="mailto:mkg49natick@comcast.net">mkg49natick@comcast.net</a> >
<b>Natick Historical Commission</b>	Nathaniel Shiedley< <a href="mailto:nat@sheidley.net">nat@sheidley.net</a> >

Question	Question
<b>1</b>	<b>Provide the article motion exactly as it will appear in the Finance Committee Recommendation Book and presented to Town Meeting for action.</b>
Response	<p><i>Move that the Town hereby accepts Sections 3 to 7, inclusive, of Chapter 44B of the General Laws, otherwise known as the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act, by approving a surcharge on real property for the purposes permitted by said Act, including the acquisition, creation and preservation of open space, the acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic resources, the acquisition, creation, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of land for recreational use, the acquisition, creation, preservation and support of community housing, and the rehabilitation and restoration of such open space and community housing that is acquired or created as provided under said Act; that the amount of such surcharge on real property shall be 1% of the annual real estate tax levy against real property commencing in fiscal year 2024; and that the Town hereby accepts the following exemptions from such surcharge permitted under Section 3(e) of said Act: \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of residential real property, and property owned and occupied as a domicile by any person who qualifies for low income housing or low or moderate income senior housing in the Town, as defined in Section 2 of said Act.</i></p> <p><i>and I so move</i></p>
<b>2</b>	<b>At a summary level and very clearly, what is the proposed purpose and objective of this Warrant Article and the accompanying Motion?</b>
Response	<p>The proposed motion would place a referendum question on the ballot for the Fall 2022 State Election, which asks the voters whether Natick should adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA), MGL Ch. 44B. The CPA can provide significant funding for open space preservation, outdoor recreation, historic preservation, and affordable housing projects in Natick. This is accomplished through a surtax on property tax and state matching funds. While state law allows various surtax rates and exemptions, we are proposing a</p>

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	surtax of 1 percent on property tax, with exemptions for the first \$100,000 in assessed value and exemptions for low-income homeowners.											
<b>3</b>	<b>Has this article or one of a very similar scope and substance been on a previous Warrant Article and what have been the actions taken by the Finance Committee, other Boards or Committees and Town Meeting?</b>											
Response	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">Warrant Period Ex: 2021 SATM</td> <td style="width: 25%;">Other Committees Ex: Planning Bd refer</td> <td style="width: 25%;">FinCom Action Ex: Referral</td> <td style="width: 25%;">Town Meeting Ex: Referral</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2005 FATM</td> <td>TM Study Cmte favorable 10-4-0</td> <td>Referral 9-5-0</td> <td>Passed</td> </tr> </table> <p>Referendum failed at 2006 Town Election</p>				Warrant Period Ex: 2021 SATM	Other Committees Ex: Planning Bd refer	FinCom Action Ex: Referral	Town Meeting Ex: Referral	2005 FATM	TM Study Cmte favorable 10-4-0	Referral 9-5-0	Passed
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<b>4</b>	<b>Why is it required for the Town of Natick and for the Town Agency sponsor(s)?</b>											
Response	<p>The CPA's goal is to address the difficulties that municipalities including Natick have finding money for projects that improve the quality-of-life, sustain our environmental resources, and address housing inequities. To date, 187 cities and towns have adopted CPA by local referendum. They have raised over \$2.65 billion for over 14,000 local community preservation projects, and received more than \$670 million in matching grants from the state. 65% of the state population live in a CPA community</p>											
<b>5</b>	<b>Does this article require funding, how much, from what source of funds and under whose authority will the appropriation be managed and spent?</b>											
Response	<p>The article does not require funding. The article allows for placing the CPA adoption question on the Fall 2022 General Elections ballot. The successful adoption of CPA will result in a 1% surcharge on property taxes.</p>											
<b>6</b>	<b>Does this article act in any way in concert with, in support of, or to extend any prior action of Natick Town Meeting, Massachusetts General Laws or CMR's or other such legislation or actions?</b>											
	<b>Does this article seek to amend, rescind or otherwise change any prior action of Natick Town Meeting?</b>											
Response												

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	The article will allow Natick to participate in the benefits offered by the state Community Preservation Act (MGL Ch. 44B). The article will not amend, rescind, or otherwise change any prior action of Natick Town Meeting.
<b>7</b>	<b>How does the proposed motion (and implementation) fit with the relevant Town Bylaws, financial and capital plan, comprehensive Master Plan, and community values as well as relevant state laws and regulations?</b>
Response	The Natick 2030+ Comprehensive Master Plan (2019), Housing Production Plan (2021), Open Space and Recreation Plan (2020 Update), Master Plan for Parks and Fields (2016) all recommended that Natick seriously consider adoption of the Community Preservation Act.
<b>8</b>	<b>Who are the critical participants in executing the effort envisioned by the article motion?</b>
Response	The registered voters of Natick will ultimately decide on the adoption of CPA. Once CPA is adopted, aCommunity Preservation Committee will be created to carry out the efforts envisioned by the article motion.  This article allows for the referendum question to be placed on the Town Ballot.
<b>9</b>	<b>What steps and communication has the sponsor attempted to assure that:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interested parties were notified in a timely way and had a chance to participate in the process</li> <li>● Appropriate Town Boards &amp; Committees were consulted</li> <li>● Required public hearings were held</li> </ul>
Response	The sponsors have <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Published an informational website <a href="http://www.CPAforNatick.org">www.CPAforNatick.org</a></li> <li>- Released a comprehensive study report outlining article goals, benefits and constraints, tax implications, and the CPA adoption process and timeline</li> </ul> <p>The sponsors have presented their proposal to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Natick Affordable Housing Trust (voted to sponsor and support)</li> <li>- Natick Historical Preservation Commission (voted to sponsor and support)</li> <li>- Open Space Advisory Committee (voted to sponsor and support)</li> <li>- Town Administration (provided feedback)</li> <li>- Select Board (provided feedback)</li> <li>- FinComm (provided feedback)</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conservation Commision (voted to support)</li> <li>- Trails &amp; Forest Stewardship Committee (voted to support)</li> <li>- Economic Development Committee (voted to support)</li> <li>- Friend of Natick Trails (endorsement)</li> <li>- Upper Charles Conservation Trust (endorsement)</li> </ul>
<b>10</b>	<b>Since submitting the article have you identified issues that weren't initially considered in the development of the proposal?</b>
Response	<p>No we have not identified additional issues since submitting the article</p> <p>Benefits and constraints of CPA adoption have been clearly articulated in our study report</p>
<b>11</b>	<b>If this Warrant Article is not approved by Town Meeting what are the consequences to the Town and to the sponsor(s)? Please be specific on both financial and other consequences?</b>
Response	<p>If the Warrant Article is not approved by Town Meeting, Natick citizens will not have an opportunity to weigh-in on the CPA adoption question during the Fall 2022 State Election. Natick will continue to miss out on the opportunity to receive state matching funds and to fund important projects in town.</p>