

Assessing the Information and Training Needs, Organizational Structure, Levels of Administrative Support, and Decision-making Approaches of Conservation Commissions, Planning Boards, and Zoning Boards of Appeal in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Final Technical Report

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I. Introduction.

Massachusetts is a state with a strong "home rule" tradition grounded in local government. As a result, local communities exercise considerable influence over environmental issues and natural-resource management. Natural-resource and environmental sustainability is closely linked to land-use decisions made on a daily basis by a variety of municipal officials that include selectmen, town managers and mayors, and members of health boards, planning boards, conservation commissions, and zoning boards of appeal. Local boards and commissions, in particular, are vested with statutory authority over development, zoning, wetlands and water protection, wildlife (e.g., decisions regarding beaver management), solid waste and sewage disposal, and open space. As a result, local boards are often primary stewards of the environment. However, these volunteer boards frequently struggle with increasing levels of issue complexity, responsibility, liability, time demands, and public mistrust, often without adequate financial resources, training, or technical support. Burnout, high rates of turnover, and a general lack of training often undermine the effective functioning of these boards.

Board members need training to enhance their capacity to make good decisions. For this reason, board members need access to expertise, information, and training that go beyond simply the scientific and technical aspects of their decisions. They also need training related to such things as legal processes and appeal procedures, conducting public involvement and open meetings, and ethical issues. With more comprehensive and in-depth training across a variety of topics and issues, municipal boards will be better equipped to make decisions that conform with laws and regulations, and that, to the extent possible, are technically correct, socially acceptable, and politically feasible.

The Citizen Planners Training Collaborative (CPTC) is a cooperative effort led by UMass Extension to coordinate and standardize information and training for members of planning boards and zoning boards of appeal. The Massachusetts Association of Conservation

Commissions (MACC) is a private, non-profit organization serving the needs of conservation commissioners in Massachusetts. UMass Extension has been an active partner with MACC in the development and implementation of educational materials and training programs for conservation commissioners. The CPTC and MACC each offer their constituencies a core curriculum of training programs leading to certificates for those who complete all units.

Existing training programs for board members currently only reach approximately 25-35 percent of the total membership of these boards in Massachusetts. These programs rely heavily on in-person delivery of training units and do not allow board members timely access to specific information that would assist them in making sound judgments in the variety of land-use decisions they are charged with making in the course of carrying out their responsibilities. The organizations that run these training programs struggle to expand them to reach a larger proportion of their target audiences and address a wider range of topics, while at the same time maintaining reliable funding support.

UMass Extension, in cooperation with CPTC and MACC, would like to develop a comprehensive, technology-based Land-use Education Program for local planning boards, zoning boards of appeal, and conservation commissions. The educational content encompasses the knowledge that each board is required to master by law. The delivery methods encompass a strategic mix of educational technologies (web sites, on-line courses, interactive DVDs) and traditional delivery methods (printed material and face-to-face training). It is our belief that such an approach will: a) make the material more engaging, b) take advantage of technology to communicate some concepts more effectively, c) address the diverse learning styles of target audiences, d) reach a greater proportion of target audiences, e) expand the number of topics or content areas addressed, and f) provide a cost-effective and long-term approach for meeting the information and training needs of municipal officials.

To improve the level of environmental and land-use decision making at the local level, information is needed regarding the structure and decision-making approaches of local boards,

the level of financial and technical support they receive, the extent of the training that their members have received, the perceived information needs of local board members, and their preferred information-delivery formats and technologies for obtaining information. UMass Extension developed and implemented a social survey in collaboration with its partners, MACC and CPTC, and with Dr. Robert M. Muth (Department of Natural Resources Conservation, University of Massachusetts Amherst), and Dr. Rodney R. Zwick (Department of Resource Recreation Management, Lyndon State College, Lyndonville, VT), who served as principal investigators of the study. Together, they collaborated to design and conduct a questionnaire survey to gather information on the following issues from a random sample of members of conservation commissions, planning boards, and zoning boards of appeal in Massachusetts:

- Extent of their participation in current CPTC and MACC core training programs and their perceived effectiveness of these programs.
- Target-audience needs for expertise, information, and training programs; their preferred methods for accessing information and training; their willingness to participate in educational programs and training sessions; and their capacity to utilize both technology-based and place-based (e.g. in-person workshops) delivery methods.
- Perceptions of board structure, levels of administrative support, dynamics, and decision-making processes, including decision-making models (e.g. powerful single chair versus balanced participation; degree of political interference in decision making); turnover rates; characteristics of board members that serve extended terms or dominate decision making; understanding of legal processes and standards for decision making; and access to technical information or expertise, including applied research.

- Demographic background and participation patterns of board members, including the amount of time they devote to board activities, and the extent to which they are involved with more than one local board.

II. Methods.

A. Questionnaire Development and Design.

To guide in the design of the questionnaire and the administration of the survey, an ad hoc Steering Committee, composed of current and former UMass Extension personnel and the principal investigators, was formed. At initial meetings of the Steering Committee, members provided guidance on the general focus of the information to be collected through the questionnaire. Three versions of the questionnaire were developed--one for conservation commissioners, one for planning board members, and one for members of zoning boards of appeal. After technical review and revision of the questionnaires, final drafts of each questionnaire were developed. The three different versions of the questionnaire contained essentially the same modules; however, each version was slightly modified for relevance to each target group of respondents. The questionnaire contained modules on the following subject areas:

1. The respondents' experiences serving on their commission/board, including length of service, knowledge levels of members, amount of access to specialized expertise for conducting business, and level of support that commissions/boards receive for carrying out their responsibilities.

2. Perceptions of the respondents concerning the process by which their commissions/boards deliberate and make decisions, including the extent to which they have experienced political interference in reviewing projects or making decisions.

3. Respondents' assessments of training needs and the types of technical resources that might be useful in assisting them carry out commission/board responsibilities, including their level of past participation in information-sharing and training venues (e.g., professional conferences, workshops, training sessions, etc.); their levels of interest in receiving information or training on specific subjects; and their preferences for the structure, format, and timing of potential future workshops.

4. Demographic background information on respondents.

5. Finally, on a blank page in the survey, respondents were invited to provide any comments regarding their commission/board participation.

B. Selecting the Sample and Administering the Survey.

1. Selecting the sample. Of the 351 towns and municipalities in Massachusetts, 111 were randomly selected to include in the survey. The result was a sample comprised of a diverse array of communities, large and small, coastal and inland, rural and urban, within the Commonwealth. Within each of the 111 towns or municipalities included in the sample, three members of each conservation commission, planning board, and zoning board were randomly selected to receive a questionnaire. For most communities, each commission/board was comprised of three or more members; however, a few communities either had one or more vacancies on one or more of their commissions/boards (resulting in less than three members per board), or, on rare occasions, did not have commissions/boards with three permanent members. In those cases where a selected commission/board did not have three members at the time of the survey, a questionnaire was sent to everyone who was serving at the time, whether one member or two.

a. Conservation commissioners. MACC maintains a membership list of conservation commissioners in Massachusetts. The names of conservation commissioners were identified, either from the mailing list or from town websites, or through telephone calls to town clerks. The names of three conservation commissioners were randomly drawn from the overall list of conservation commissioners for each study community. For purposes of this project, MACC then provided their home or work mailing addresses. A total of 332 questionnaires was sent to conservation commission members.

b. Planning and zoning board members. For members of town planning boards and zoning boards, no such centralized membership list existed. Planning and zoning board members were identified either through town websites or telephone calls to town clerks, and

three names were randomly selected for each board in each town. However, privacy concerns precluded town officials from giving out personal mailing addresses for members of planning and zoning boards. As a result, the questionnaire for each randomly selected member of the planning boards and zoning boards in the study was sealed in a separate stamped envelope with the individual board member's name on it. All the envelopes for planning and zoning board members of a particular town were then bundled together and placed in a larger mailing envelope addressed to the town clerk or other administrative official for each town. Each large envelope contained a cover letter to the town clerk or administrator explaining the research project and indicating that a questionnaire was included in each of the enclosed individual envelopes. The cover letter also requested that each envelope containing a questionnaire be addressed by the town clerk to the individual whose name was written on the envelope and mailed. In all, 331 questionnaires were mailed to planning board members and 322 questionnaires were sent to members of zoning boards of appeal.

2. Administering the survey. Administration of the questionnaire took place over three mailing waves. Each questionnaire had a different I.D. number on it that corresponded to each individual respondent. When a respondent filled out a questionnaire and mailed it back, it was logged in and the respondent's name was removed from the mailing list to avoid sending him or her future mailings. Multiple mailings were sent out to increase the response rate. On June 19, 2008, the first mailing was sent out to each member of the sample. It contained a questionnaire, a cover letter explaining the objectives of the survey, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope for returning the questionnaire. On July 2 and 25, respectively, second and third mailing waves were sent out to those who had not yet responded, and they also included a questionnaire, cover letter, and a stamped, self-addressed reply envelope.

C. Response Rate.

In most mail surveys, a certain percentage of questionnaires is returned by the U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable (the addressee is deceased, has moved, his or her address is

incorrect, etc.). Together, these are referred to as “non-deliverables.” For this study, there were 14 non-deliverables, which, when removed from the database, reduced the total effective sample from 985 to 971. A total of 580 usable questionnaires was returned, which, when divided by the 971 in the effective sample, yielded a response rate of 59.7 percent. Figure 1 provides information on the response rates for each of the three commission/boards.

Figure 1. Original sample, non-deliverables, effective sample, number of questionnaires returned, and response rate for conservation commissions, planning boards, and zoning boards of appeal.

Members of:	Original Sample	Non-Deliverables	Effective Sample	Questionnaires Returned	Response Rate
Conservation Commissions	332	5	327	204	62.4%
Planning Boards	331	5	326	185	56.7%
Zoning Boards of Appeal	322	4	318	191	60.0%
Overall Sample	985	14	971	580	59.7%

D. Data Entry and Analysis. As questionnaires were received back from respondents, data-entry personnel at Lyndon State College coded the responses on the questionnaires and entered the data into a software program, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), for analysis. Numerical codes were entered where appropriate, but responses to several open-ended questions that required the respondent to write in a response were typed in verbatim. After the completion of data checking, clean-up, and debugging, computer analysis was conducted to generate the means and frequency distributions that are reported in the Results sections below.

III. Results.

The results of the survey are presented in the data tables below. They are presented in three sections, corresponding with the data from the conservation commissioners, planning board members, and members of the zoning boards of appeal, respectively. The title of each table represents the question as it was asked on the questionnaire. Columns titled “n” represent the number of respondents who chose that particular response option, while the percent column (%) represents the percentage that the “n” represents out of the total number of respondents who responded to that particular question. (Note: totals do not always add up to 100.0 due to rounding.)

Results
Section I

Survey Response Data Related to Conservation Commissioners

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 1. In considering all the time you've served on your town's Conservation Commission (excluding any breaks in service), what is the total amount of time you have been a full (voting) member?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
One year or less.....	8	4.0
More than 1 year but less than 3 years.....	31	15.5
Between 3 and 10 years	91	45.5
More than 10 years.....	70	35.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 2. Within the past year, how many hours per week, on average, would you say you've spent working on Commission business?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Two hours per week or less.....	62	31.6
More than 2 hours but less than 5 hours	93	47.4
Between 5 and 10 hours	35	17.9
More than 10 hours.....	6	3.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>196</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 3. At the present time, do you serve on any other town boards or commissions?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	72	36.4
No	126	63.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 4. What is the total number of seats on your town's Conservation Commission?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
2.....	1	0.5
3.....	2	1.0
4.....	4	2.0
5.....	51	25.8
6.....	3	1.5
7.....	132	66.7
8.....	2	1.0
9.....	2	1.0
10.....	1	0.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 5. Are there any unfilled seats on the Commission at the present time?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	70	35.2
No.....	129	64.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>199</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 5a. If Yes, how many regular seats are not filled?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	42	64.6
2.....	18	27.7
3.....	4	6.2
4.....	1	1.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 6. Has your Commission had difficulty recently finding people willing to serve on it as members?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	91	46.0
No.....	93	47.0
Not sure.....	14	7.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 7. Does your community have a municipal wetlands bylaw?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	127	64.5
No	65	33.0
Not sure	5	2.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>197</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 8. At the present time, does your Commission have a paid secretary or other paid clerical staff to provide the Commission with logistical support such as taking minutes of meetings, assisting with paperwork and/or organizing meetings?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	149	76.4
No	44	22.6
Not sure	2	1.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 8a. If Yes, how many hours a week would you say they work, on average?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than five hours per week	16	10.8
Between 5 and 10 hours per week	26	17.6
Between 10 and 20 hours per week	37	25.0
Between 20 and 40 hours per week	37	25.0
Full-time (40 hours per week, or more).....	32	21.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>148</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 9. At the present time, does your town have a paid conservation administrator or other paid professional staff position who assists your Commission on regulatory processes and provides technical support for decision-making?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	124	62.6
No	72	36.4
Not sure	2	1.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 9a. If Yes, how many hours a week would you say they work, on average?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than five hours per week	5	4.0
Between 5 and 10 hours per week	10	7.9
Between 10 and 20 hours per week	22	17.5
Between 20 and 40 hours per week	27	21.4
Full-time (40 hours per week, or more)	62	49.2
<i>Total</i>	126	100.0

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 10. To what extent does your Commission consult with the following people as sources of technical support or specialized expertise on proposed projects?

	Frequently consult		Occasionally consult		Rarely consult		Not applicable	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Conservation agent or administrator	127	66.5	13	6.8	4	2.1	47	24.6
Town or city engineer.....	21	10.8	66	34.0	43	22.2	64	33.0
Other municipal employees with specialized expertise.....	18	9.3	85	44.0	62	32.1	28	14.5
Outside technical consultants such as biologists, wetlands scientists, or engineers	46	23.5	89	45.4	58	29.6	3	1.5
Town counsel (attorney)	21	10.8	93	47.9	75	38.7	5	2.6

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 11. To the best of your knowledge, do any of your Commission members have training and/or experience that is relevant to the technical review (e.g. wetland delineation, stormwater design, erosion and sediment control, wildlife habitat evaluation, etc.) of projects before your Commission?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	158	80.2
No	29	14.7
Not sure	10	5.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>197</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 11a. If Yes, what is the number of members with relevant training and/or experience?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	31	20.0
2.....	49	31.6
3.....	41	26.5
4.....	19	12.2
5.....	8	5.2
6.....	3	1.9
7.....	4	2.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>155</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 12. Within the last two years, has your Commission used money in its own budget to hire outside consultants to assist with technical review of a project under the Wetlands Protection Act?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	84	42.4
No	100	50.5
Not sure	14	7.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 12a. If Yes, for approximately how many projects?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	26	37.1
2.....	26	37.1
3.....	9	12.9
4.....	4	5.7
5.....	3	4.3
6.....	1	1.4
8.....	1	1.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 13. Within the last two years, has your Commission hired an outside consultant at the applicant's expense to assist with technical review of a project under the Wetlands Protection Act?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	145	73.6
No.....	42	21.3
Not sure.....	10	5.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>197</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 13a. If Yes, for approximately how many projects?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	32	26.0
2.....	29	23.6
3.....	11	8.9
4.....	12	9.8
5.....	8	6.5
6.....	8	6.5
8.....	7	5.7
10.....	7	5.7
More than 10.....	9	7.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>123</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 14. Within the last two years, have members of your Commission consulted with outside technical experts to assist in making decisions under the Wetlands Protection Act?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	170	86.7
No	18	9.2
Not sure	8	4.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>196</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 14a. If Yes, please select all that apply?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection	156	76.5
Massachusetts Wildlife/Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP).....	94	46.1
Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.....	41	20.1
Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions	75	36.8
Other non-profit organizations	51	25.0
University of Massachusetts faculty or staff	5	2.5
Other college or university faculty or staff	5	2.5
Other State agencies	19	9.3
Federal agencies	28	13.7
Other	24	11.8

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 15. To assist with the administrative and technical review of projects under the Wetlands Protection Act, in your view, does your Commission need additional support in any of the following areas?

	Yes		No		Not applicable	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Administrative (clerical) support.....	69	36.7	113	60.1	6	3.2
Professional administrator with relevant expertise.....	48	25.5	129	68.6	11	5.9
Technical expertise within the Commission	85	45.7	96	51.6	5	2.7
Technical assistance from other departments in town government.....	73	40.1	102	56.0	7	3.8
Technical assistance from outside consultants.....	106	55.8	78	41.1	6	3.2

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 16. For conducting Commission business, does your town provide you with access to the following?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
An office	142	69.6
Telephone	126	61.8
Computer	115	56.4
High-speed internet connection (cable or DSL)	100	49.0
Black-and-white printer	107	52.5
Color printer	61	29.9
Digital (LCD) projector	16	7.8

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 17. Is your Commission involved in the following activities in your community?

	Yes		No		Don't know	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Open space planning	151	79.9	35	18.5	3	1.6
Land protection (via acquisition or conservation restriction)	148	79.1	37	19.8	2	1.1
Owns conservation land (responsible for municipal land).....	155	82.0	31	16.4	3	1.6
Holds conservation restrictions (CRs or APRs)	113	61.7	51	27.9	19	10.4
Monitors conservation restrictions	101	54.9	70	38.0	13	7.1
Land management (e.g. habitat management, trail maintenance)	99	53.8	78	42.4	7	3.8
Agricultural leases for municipal land	28	15.6	127	70.9	24	13.4
Community garden.....	28	15.5	144	79.6	9	5.0
Public education.....	83	45.6	91	50.0	8	4.4

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 18. How would you rate the collective knowledge and understanding of your Commission as a group in terms of the following legal requirements and processes?

	Little or no understanding		Moderate understanding		Substantial understanding	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Massachusetts Open Meeting Law as it applies to the operation of your Commission	6	3.2	67	35.3	117	61.6
Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act regulatory procedures and timelines	5	2.6	72	38.1	112	59.3
Concepts contained in the Wetlands Protection Act regulations	28	14.8	81	42.9	80	42.3
Terminology used in the Wetlands Protection Act regulations.....	4	2.1	51	26.7	136	71.2
Enforcement options available to your Commission for dealing with violations of the Wetlands Protection Act.....	21	11.0	80	41.9	90	47.1
Regulatory performance standards applicants must meet to receive project approval under the Wetlands Protection Act.....	18	9.6	72	38.3	98	52.1

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 19. To what extent does your Commission do the following when permitting activities under the Wetlands Protection Act?

	Rarely/never		Sometimes		Often		Always	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Require pre-construction meetings	32	16.9	45	23.8	43	22.8	69	36.5
Use a pre-construction checklist	61	32.8	37	19.9	47	25.3	41	22.0
Ensure that Orders of Conditions are recorded at the Registry of Deeds before a project begins	18	9.9	24	13.3	45	24.9	94	51.9
Monitor construction activity.....	8	4.2	49	25.8	79	41.6	54	28.4
Require use of “environmental monitors” to conduct regular inspections of project construction.....	55	29.4	68	36.4	41	21.9	23	12.3
Conduct compliance inspections after project completion	7	3.7	32	16.8	45	23.7	106	55.8
Ensure that Certificates of Compliance are requested and issued in a timely way	27	14.3	31	16.4	68	36.0	63	33.3

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 20. Please check the one statement that most accurately describes how your Commission makes decisions about projects it reviews under the Wetlands Protection Act.

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
The Commission has little or no access to staff, so the Commission members take primary responsibility for undertaking technical review and ensuring that proposed projects meet the regulatory requirements of the Wetlands Protection Act.....	50	26.5
Commission staff provides advice on the technical aspects of proposed projects and the Commission takes primary responsibility for ensuring that proposed projects meet the regulatory requirements	14	7.4
Commission staff provides advice on the regulatory requirements of proposed projects and the Commission takes primary responsibility for reviewing the technical aspects	15	7.9
The Commission relies on the advice of staff for both the technical aspects and the regulatory requirements of proposed projects	15	7.9
The Commission is most accurately characterized by a mix of the above decision-making approaches depending on the nature of the pending project and other circumstances	93	49.2
Other	2	1.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>189</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 21. Which of the following decision-making approaches most accurately describes your Commission at the present time?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
In most cases, the decisions of the Commission are strongly influenced by the opinions and recommendations of the Commission's staff and/or consultants working for the Commission	31	16.3
The opinions of one Commission member tend to be highly influential on decisions made by the Commission, based primarily on his or her technical expertise and/or knowledge of the regulations	19	10.0
The opinions of one Commission member tend to be highly influential on the decisions made by the Commission, but for reasons other than technical expertise or knowledge of the regulations	2	1.1
The opinions of two or three Commission members tend to be highly influential on the decisions made by the Commission, based primarily on their technical expertise and/or knowledge of the regulations	39	20.5
The opinions of two or three Commission members tend to be highly influential on the decisions made by the Commission, but for reasons other than technical expertise or knowledge of the regulations	5	2.6
It is the collective opinions of most or all Commission members that determine the decisions made by the Commission	94	49.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>190</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 22. In general, which of the following statements most accurately describes the way your Commission deliberates and makes decisions?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
It is often divided into factions that generally disagree about decisions	1	0.5
It generally reaches decisions through agreement or consensus..	193	9.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>194</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 23. In thinking about your participation on the Commission within the past two years (or less, if you haven't been a member for two years), has your Commission ever experienced any of the following?

	Yes		No		Don't know	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Engaged in a significant dispute with political leaders or other municipal boards or departments.....	57	28.2	143	70.8	2	1.0
Been subjected to what you consider unreasonable political interference from municipal leaders.....	36	17.7	162	79.8	5	2.5
Municipal leaders have sat in on one or more Commission meetings because of controversy over decisions made by the Commission	44	21.8	154	76.2	4	2.0
An agent or administrator for the Commission has been unjustifiably terminated because of controversy over decisions made by the Commission	3	1.5	194	97.0	3	1.5
A member of your Commission has been unjustifiably removed because of controversy over decisions made by the Commission.....	2	1.0	197	98.5	1	0.5
An agent or administrator for the Commission has been justifiably terminated for, in your view, legitimate reasons.....	6	3.0	190	95.5	3	1.5
A member of your Commission has been justifiably removed from the Commission "for just cause"	7	3.5	193	95.5	2	1.0
A member of your Commission has not been reappointed because of controversy over decisions made by the Commission.....	14	6.9	185	91.1	4	2.0
Your Commission has experienced actual budget cuts in retaliation for decisions made by the Commission.....	3	1.5	192	95.0	7	3.5
Municipal leaders have actually withheld Commission resources in retaliation for decisions made by the Commission.....	5	2.5	191	94.1	7	3.4

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 24. Below is a list of approaches for providing information to assist Conservation Commissions in decision making. Please tell us the extent to which you would prefer to receive educational material in the following formats.

	Strongly prefer		Moderately prefer		Do not prefer	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Obtain and view a video in DVD format	56	30.1	81	43.5	49	26.3
Obtain and view a multi-media, interactive DVD (combination of text, graphics, video, etc) searchable by topic	70	38.3	63	34.4	50	27.3
View text, images, and short audio/video clips on the web.....	41	22.8	85	47.2	54	30.0
Download audio or video podcasts	21	11.9	48	27.1	108	61.0
Obtain and view a hardcopy handbook, manual, or workbook	117	61.3	58	30.4	16	8.4
Attend an in-person workshop or short course	96	50.3	71	37.2	24	12.6
Participate in an interactive web-based workshop (“webinar”)	22	11.9	60	32.4	103	55.7
Access a “self-paced,” non-interactive web-based workshop.....	36	19.8	84	46.2	62	34.1
Attend a special workshop where a panel of experts would be available for an extended question-and-answer session	77	41.2	81	43.3	29	15.5
Access an online forum to seek information from Conservation Commissioners in other towns across the State.....	65	34.2	69	36.3	56	29.5
Complete an online university course for credit	31	16.8	56	30.4	97	52.7
Other	4	11.1	3	8.3	29	80.6

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 25. Please indicate whether you have ever attended one or more of the conferences, workshops, or training sessions listed below?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
The annual Environmental Conference sponsored by the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions in February/March	128	62.7
The annual fall conference sponsored by the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions	67	32.8
One or more units in the certificate training program, “Fundamentals for Conservation Commissioners” offered by the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions	113	55.4
One or more core days in the “Advanced Certificate Program” offered by the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions	36	17.6
Other classroom or field workshops offered by the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, not listed above.....	56	27.5
Workshops offered by the Massachusetts DEP.....	67	32.8
The annual Mass Land Conservation Conference.....	13	6.4
Workshops offered by the Massachusetts Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC).....	9	4.4
Other conferences or workshops related to serving on your Commission.....	61	29.9

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 26. If a particular workshop presents information that is of interest to you, how likely is it that you would participate in it if it were presented in the following formats?

	Extremely likely		Moderately likely		Somewhat likely		Not at all likely	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Interactive web-based one-hour workshop on a weekday.....	19	10.7	27	15.2	33	18.5	99	55.6
Interactive web-based one-hour workshop on a weeknight...	22	12.2	48	26.7	54	30.0	56	31.1
Interactive web-based one-hour workshop on a weekend.....	13	7.3	33	18.4	54	30.2	79	44.1
Interactive web-based two-hour workshop on a weekday	12	6.9	20	11.5	33	19.0	109	62.6
Interactive web-based two-hour workshop on a weeknight ...	11	6.3	42	24.1	52	29.9	69	39.7
Interactive web-based two-hour workshop on a weekend	9	5.2	26	15.0	44	25.4	94	54.3
Attend in-person two-hour workshop on a weekday	24	13.7	37	21.1	34	19.4	80	45.7
Attend in-person two-hour workshop on a weeknight	25	13.8	59	32.6	49	27.1	48	26.5
Attend in-person two-hour workshop on a weekend	28	15.3	46	25.1	47	25.7	62	33.9
Attend full-day workshop on a weekday	15	8.4	31	17.4	35	19.7	97	54.5
Attend full-day workshop on the weekend	34	18.2	48	25.7	51	27.3	54	28.9

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 27. To what extent do you rely on information from the following resources in assisting you to fulfill your responsibilities as a Conservation Commissioner?

	Regularly rely on it		Occasionally rely on it		Rarely rely on it		Never rely on it	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Website provided by DEP	37	20.6	65	36.1	46	25.6	32	17.8
Wetland Delineation Handbook (DEP)	60	32.1	65	34.8	39	20.9	23	12.3
Wildlife Habitat Guidance Document (DEP)	26	14.1	63	34.2	54	29.3	41	22.3
Storm Water Policy Handbook (DEP)	47	25.1	75	40.1	39	20.9	26	13.9
Inland Wetland Replication Guidelines (DEP)	26	14.1	58	31.5	61	33.2	39	21.2
Wetlands Protection Act Regulations (DEP)	138	73.0	46	24.3	4	2.1	1	0.5
Website provided by MACC	20	11.0	72	39.8	46	25.4	43	23.8
Handbook for Conservation Commissioners (MACC)	94	48.5	73	37.6	19	9.8	8	4.1
Massachusetts River and Stream Crossing Standards (River and Stream Continuity Partnership)	18	9.8	55	30.1	60	32.8	50	27.3
Website provided by the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP)	14	7.7	46	25.1	71	38.8	52	28.4

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 28. In deciding whether to take some form of web-based training or to attend an in-person training session, how important is it that you receive a certificate or “diploma” that documents your participation?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Extremely important	22	11.2
Moderately important	55	28.1
Not at all important.....	119	60.7
<i>Total</i>	196	100.0

Table 29. Do you presently receive the bi-monthly Newsletter published by the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	185	93.9
No	12	6.1
<i>Total</i>	197	100.0

Table 29a. If Yes, how useful is it to you?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Extremely useful	42	22.7
Moderately useful.....	136	73.5
Not at all useful	7	3.8
<i>Total</i>	185	100.0

Table 30. Do you have access to the internet to conduct business or obtain information relevant to your role as a Conservation Commissioner?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	181	91.9
No	16	8.1
<i>Total</i>	197	100.0

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 30a. If Yes, select up to two methods you most frequently use:

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Dial-up access from home	27	13.2
Dial-up access from town office	5	2.5
High-speed access from home	139	68.1
High-speed access from town office	21	10.3
High-speed access from library	6	2.9
High-speed access from work.....	78	38.2
Other	1	0.5

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 31. Please indicate your level of interest in receiving information or training in each of the following:

	High interest		Moderate interest		Low interest	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Regulatory terms, concepts and procedures	89	49.7	67	37.4	23	12.8
Riverfront regulations	84	46.4	82	45.3	15	8.3
Coastal regulations	39	22.4	19	10.9	116	66.7
Exemption, exceptions and limited projects	63	36.0	89	50.9	23	13.1
Wetlands enforcement	108	58.1	68	36.6	10	5.4
Wetlands delineation.....	102	54.5	68	36.4	17	9.1
Wildlife habitat evaluation and protection	94	51.6	72	39.6	16	8.8
Stormwater management.....	95	51.4	65	35.1	25	13.5
Wetlands replication.....	82	44.6	85	46.2	17	9.2
Rivers/streams (intermittent vs. perennial; bankfull)	96	52.5	66	36.1	21	11.5
Permitting road-stream crossings	63	35.0	82	45.6	35	19.4
Land acquisition and protection	73	39.7	87	47.3	24	13.0
Land/habitat management	76	41.8	80	44.0	26	14.3
Natural resource inventory.....	57	31.5	92	50.8	32	17.7

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 32. How many years have you lived in your present town?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Fewer than 10 years	40	20.6
10-19 years	49	25.3
20-29 years	38	19.6
30-39 years	31	16.0
40-49 years	12	6.2
50-59 years	12	6.2
60-69 years	3	1.5
70-79 years	9	4.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>194</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 33. What is your age?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than 30 years old.....	2	1.0
Between 30 and 39 years	13	6.8
Between 40 and 49 years	31	16.1
Between 50 and 59 years	73	38.0
Between 60 and 69 years	45	23.4
Between 70 and 79 years	26	13.6
Between 80 and 89 years	2	1.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>192</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 34. What is your gender?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Male	124	63.3
Female	72	36.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>196</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 35. What is your ethnic background?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
White.....	187	98.4
Hispanic	1	0.5
Black/African-American.....	0	0.0
Asian/Pacific Islander.....	1	0.5
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0.0
Native Hawaiian	0	0.0
Other	1	0.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>190</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 36. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Did not finish high school.....	1	0.5
High school graduate (including GED).....	13	6.7
Community college, vocational school degree, some college	16	8.3
College bachelor's degree	66	34.2
Graduate or professional degree	97	50.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>193</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 37. What is your current marital status?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Single	18	9.2
Married (or living with a "significant other")	162	83.1
Divorced or separated.....	9	4.6
Widowed	6	3.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 38. Do you have any children age 16 or younger living in your household?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	47	24.1
No	148	75.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 38a. If Yes, please indicate how many?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	15	31.9
2.....	24	51.1
3.....	6	12.8
4.....	2	4.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 39. Are you currently a student?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	9	4.6
No.....	185	95.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>194</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 39a. If Yes, indicate if you are attending:

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Full-time.....	3	33.3
Part-time.....	6	66.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 40. Are you currently self-employed?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	49	25.3
No.....	145	74.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>194</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Conservation Commission Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 41. What is your current employment status?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Employed full time.....	109	58.0
Employed part time.....	22	11.7
Unemployed.....	6	3.2
Retired.....	45	23.9
Disabled and unable to work.....	1	0.5
Other.....	5	2.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>188</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 43. Which category best describes your total household income for 2007?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than \$25,000.....	4	2.5
\$25,000 to \$49,999.....	20	12.3
\$50,000 to \$74,999.....	25	15.4
\$75,000 to \$99,999.....	31	19.1
\$100,000 or more.....	82	50.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>162</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Results
Section I

Survey Response Data Related to Planning Board Members

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 1. In considering all the time you've served on your town's Planning Board (excluding any breaks in service), what is the total amount of time you have been a full (voting) member?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
One year or less.....	11	5.9
More than 1 year and less than 3 years.....	27	14.6
Between 3 and 10 years	95	51.4
More than 10 years	51	27.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>185</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 2. Within the past two years, how many hours per week, on average, would you say you've spent working on your Board's business?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Two hours per week or less	44	23.9
More than 2 hours but less than 5 hours	91	49.5
Between 5 and 10 hours	40	21.7
More than 10 hours.....	9	4.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>184</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 3. At the present time, do you serve on any other town boards or commissions?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	88	48.4
No	94	51.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 4. Are your Planning Board members elected or appointed?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Elected	138	74.6
Appointed.....	47	25.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>185</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 5. What is the total number of seats on your town's Planning Board?

<i>Regular seats</i>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1	2	1.1
5	143	79.4
6	4	2.2
7	25	13.9
9	6	3.3
<i>Total</i>	180	100.0

<i>Alternate seats</i>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
0	30	30.9
1	51	52.6
2	10	10.3
3	1	1.0
4	2	2.1
5	3	3.1
<i>Total</i>	97	100.0

Not sure	4	2.2
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Table 6. Are there any regular seats that are unfilled at the present time?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	15	8.1
No	170	91.9
Not sure	0	0.0
<i>Total</i>	185	100.0

Table 6a. If Yes, how many regular seats are not filled?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1	10	58.8
2	7	41.2
<i>Total</i>	17	100.0

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 7. Has your Planning Board had difficulty recently finding people willing to serve on it as members?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	51	28.0
No	123	67.6
Not sure	8	4.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 8. Does your town have a master plan that is less than ten years old?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	103	56.9
No	68	37.6
Not sure	10	5.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 9. Has your town adopted the Community Preservation Act?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	86	47.3
No	71	39.0
Not sure	25	13.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 10. Does your town have a 40R (Smart Growth Zoning) Overlay District?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	34	18.7
No	127	69.8
Not sure	21	11.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 11. Is your town subject to Chapter 40B (Comprehensive Permit Law)?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	123	68.0
No	30	16.6
Not sure	28	15.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 12. At the present time, does your Board have a paid secretary or other paid clerical staff to provide the Board with logistical support such as taking minutes of meetings, assisting with paperwork and/or organizing meetings?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	155	85.2
No	27	14.8
Not sure	0	0.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 12a. If Yes, how many hours a week would you say they work, on average?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than five hours per week	21	14.3
Between 5 and 10 hours per week	31	21.1
Between 10 and 20 hours per week	19	12.9
Between 20 and 40 hours per week	32	21.8
Full-time (40 hours per week, or more).....	44	29.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 13. At the present time, does your town have a paid professional planning or community development staff person who advises your Board on legal and procedural requirements?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	113	62.4
No	62	34.3
Not sure	6	3.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 13a. If Yes, how many hours a week would you say they work, on average?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than five hours per week	6	5.5
Between 5 and 10 hours per week	7	6.4
Between 10 and 20 hours per week	9	8.2
Between 20 and 40 hours per week	12	10.9
Full-time (40 hours per week, or more).....	76	69.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 14. To what extent does your Board consult with the following people as a source of technical support or specialized expertise on proposed projects?

	Frequently consult		Occasionally consult		Rarely consult		Not applicable	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Professional planning or community development staff.....	95	57.2	16	9.6	21	12.7	34	20.5
Town or city engineer.....	62	36.0	46	26.7	16	9.3	48	27.9
Town highway staff	40	23.3	75	43.6	48	27.9	9	5.2
Planning consultants from your regional planning agency.....	24	14.0	73	42.7	62	36.3	12	7.0
Town counsel (attorney)	54	30.0	90	50.0	35	19.4	1	0.6
Other municipal employees with specialized expertise.....	45	26.3	73	42.7	41	24.0	12	7.0
Outside private planning consultants	29	17.2	39	23.1	76	45.0	25	14.8

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 15. To the best of your knowledge, do any of your Board members have training and/or experience that is relevant to the review (e.g. traffic, storm water management, landscaping, architectural style, etc.) of projects before your Board?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	121	66.5
No	49	26.9
Not sure	12	6.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 15a. If Yes, what is the number of members with relevant training and/or experience?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
0.....	1	0.8
1.....	29	24.0
2.....	35	28.9
3.....	33	27.3
4.....	8	6.6
5.....	10	8.3
6.....	3	2.5
7.....	1	0.8
8.....	1	0.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 16. Within the last two years, has your Board used money in its own budget to hire outside consultants to provide legal, procedural or technical assistance in reviewing projects that come before your Board?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	62	34.4
No	101	56.1
Not sure	17	9.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 16a. If Yes, for approximately how many projects?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	19	38.8
2.....	11	22.4
3.....	6	12.2
4.....	2	4.1
5.....	5	10.2
6.....	4	8.2
More than 10.....	2	4.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 17. Within the last two years, has your Board hired an outside consultant at the applicant's expense to provide legal, procedural or technical assistance in reviewing projects that come before your Board?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	120	67.0
No.....	44	24.6
Not sure.....	15	8.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 17a. If Yes, for approximately how many projects?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1-2.....	33	42.3
3-4.....	7	8.9
5-9.....	18	23.1
10-20.....	14	17.9
More than 20.....	6	7.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 18. Within the last two years, have members of your Board utilized other outside sources of information or expertise to assist in making decisions?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	145	82.4
No	12	6.8
Not sure	19	10.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 18a. If Yes, please select all that apply?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection	60	32.4
Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.....	29	15.7
Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development.....	54	29.2
Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions	13	7.0
Massachusetts Municipal Association	18	9.7
Your Regional Planning Agency	102	55.1
Grant-funded Private Planning Consultants.....	26	14.1
Citizen Planner Training Collaborative materials or courses	53	28.6
Massachusetts Chapter of the American Planning Association.....	20	10.8
Town Counsel (attorney).....	134	72.4
Non-governmental organizations (such as Mass Audubon)	21	11.4
University of Massachusetts faculty or staff.....	14	7.6
Other college or university faculty or staff	6	3.2
Other State agencies	23	12.4
Federal agencies (such as the Environmental Protection Agency).....	20	10.8
Other	20	10.8

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 19. For conducting Board business, does your town provide you with access to the following?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
An office	104	56.2
Telephone	98	53.0
Computer	81	43.8
High-speed internet connection (cable or DSL)	72	38.9
Black-and-white printer	90	48.6
Color printer	48	25.9
Digital (LCD) projector	25	13.5

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 20. How would you rate your own individual understanding of the following legal requirements and processes, as they apply to the operation of your Board?

	Little or no understanding		Moderate understanding		Substantial understanding	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Massachusetts Open Meeting Law	5	2.7	63	34.4	115	62.8
Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) pertaining to planning	14	7.7	106	58.2	62	34.1
Massachusetts Public Records Law	41	22.5	95	52.2	46	25.3
Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law	18	9.9	91	50.0	73	40.1
Approval Not Required (ANR) review procedures	14	7.8	74	41.3	91	50.8
Zoning exemptions.....	27	15.1	93	52.0	59	33.0
How to amend zoning bylaws	20	11.1	56	31.1	104	57.8
Nonconforming issues	25	13.8	90	49.7	66	36.5

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 21. How would you rate the collective understanding of other Board members as a group in terms of the following legal requirements and processes?

	Little or no understanding		Moderate understanding		Substantial understanding	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Massachusetts Open Meeting Law	7	3.9	89	49.7	83	46.4
Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) pertaining to planning	21	12.0	99	56.6	55	31.4
Massachusetts Public Records Law	36	20.5	90	51.1	50	28.4
Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law	26	14.7	86	48.6	65	36.7
Approval Not Required (ANR) review procedures	17	9.7	87	49.7	71	40.6
Zoning exemptions.....	32	18.5	81	46.8	60	34.7
How to amend zoning bylaws	18	10.2	74	42.0	84	47.7
Nonconforming issues	30	17.1	82	46.9	63	36.0

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 22. Please check the one statement that most accurately describes how your Board makes decisions about projects it reviews.

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
In most cases, the decisions of the Board are strongly influenced by the opinions and recommendations of the Board's staff and/or consultants working for the Board	42	24.0
The opinions of one Board member tend to be highly influential on decisions made by the Board, based primarily on his or her technical expertise and/or knowledge of the regulations	5	2.9
The opinions of one Board member tend to be highly influential on the decisions made by the Board, but for reasons other than technical expertise or knowledge of the regulations	2	1.1
The opinions of two or three Board members tend to be highly influential on the decisions made by the Board, based primarily on their technical expertise and/or knowledge of the regulations	22	12.6
The opinions of two or three Board members tend to be highly influential on the decisions made by the Board, but for reasons other than technical expertise or knowledge of the regulations	3	1.7
It is the collective opinions of most or all Board members that determine the decisions made by the Board.....	101	57.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 23. In general, which of the following statements most accurately describes the way your Board deliberates and makes decisions?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
It is often divided into factions that generally disagree about decisions	9	5.0
It generally reaches decisions through agreement or consensus	172	95.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 24. In thinking about your participation on the Board within the past two years (or less, if you haven't been a member for two years), has your Board ever experienced any of the following?

	Yes		No		Don't know	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Engaged in significant dispute with political leaders or other municipal boards or departments.....	74	40.2	104	56.5	6	3.3
Been subjected to what you consider unreasonable political interference from municipal leaders.....	45	24.5	132	71.7	7	3.8
Municipal leaders have sat in on one or more Board meetings because of controversy over decisions made by the Board	66	36.1	112	61.2	5	2.7
A professional staff person for the Board has been unjustifiably terminated because of controversy over decisions made by the Board	4	2.2	173	95.1	5	2.7
A member of your Board has been unjustifiably removed because of controversy over decisions made by the Board	4	2.2	175	95.6	4	2.2
A professional staff person for the Board has been justifiably terminated for, in your view, legitimate reasons.....	8	4.4	170	92.9	5	2.7
A member of your Board has been justifiably removed from the Board "for just cause"	5	2.7	175	95.1	4	2.2
Your Board has experienced actual budget cuts in retaliation for decisions made by the Board.....	5	2.7	172	93.0	8	4.3
Municipal leaders have actually withheld Board resources in retaliation for decisions made by the Board.....	8	4.4	164	89.6	11	6.0
The threat of costly court procedures in appealing a decision has influenced your board's decision.....	42	23.3	129	71.7	9	5.0
A town Board or Commission has sued your Board over a decision	18	9.8	158	86.3	7	3.8

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 25. Below is a list of approaches for providing information to assist Planning Boards in decision making. Please tell us the extent to which you would prefer to receive educational material in the following formats.

	Strongly prefer		Moderately prefer		Do not prefer	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Obtain and view a video in DVD format	54	30.5	75	42.4	48	27.1
Obtain and view a multi-media, interactive DVD (combination of text, graphics, video, etc) searchable by topic	70	41.2	63	37.1	37	21.8
View text, images, and short audio/video clips on the web.....	44	25.7	78	45.6	49	28.7
Download audio or video podcasts	24	14.0	44	25.7	103	60.2
Obtain and view a hardcopy handbook, manual, or workbook	93	52.5	64	36.2	20	11.3
Attend an in-person workshop or short course	74	41.8	63	35.6	40	22.6
Participate in an interactive web-based workshop (“webinar”)	25	14.6	61	35.7	85	49.7
Access a “self-paced,” non-interactive web-based workshop.....	40	23.5	74	43.5	56	32.9
Attend a special workshop where a panel of experts would be available for an extended question-and-answer session	87	49.2	62	35.0	28	15.8
Access an online forum to seek information from Planning Board members in other towns across the State.....	64	36.4	76	43.2	36	20.5
Complete an online university course for credit	29	16.8	39	22.5	105	60.7
Other	8	16.7	4	8.3	36	75.0

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 26. Please indicate whether you have ever attended one or more of the conferences, workshops, or training sessions listed below?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
The annual conference of the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative	37	20.0
Regular regional fall workshops of the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative	39	21.1
Smart Growth and Sustainable Development conferences offered by the State.....	48	25.9
Workshops offered by your regional planning agency	67	36.2
Training session on the Conflict of Interest Law offered by the State.....	43	23.2
Training sessions on the Open Meeting Law offered by the State.....	38	20.5
Annual conference of the Massachusetts Federation of Planning and Appeals Boards.....	16	8.6
Other conferences or workshops related to serving on your Board	73	39.5

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 27. If a particular workshop presents information that is of interest to you, how likely is it that you would participate in it if it were presented in the following formats?

	Extremely likely		Moderately likely		Somewhat likely		Not at all likely	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Interactive web-based one-hour workshop on a weekday.....	24	14.5	31	18.8	36	21.8	74	44.8
Interactive web-based one-hour workshop on a weeknight...	22	13.3	49	29.5	45	27.1	50	30.1
Interactive web-based one-hour workshop on a weekend.....	13	8.1	25	15.6	39	24.4	83	51.9
Interactive web-based two-hour workshop on a weekday	16	9.8	26	16.0	34	20.9	87	53.4
Interactive web-based two-hour workshop on a weeknight ...	12	7.4	32	19.8	49	30.2	69	42.6
Interactive web-based two-hour workshop on a weekend	8	5.0	21	13.2	36	22.6	94	59.1
Attend in-person two-hour workshop on a weekday	21	13.1	34	21.3	39	24.4	66	41.3
Attend in-person two-hour workshop on a weeknight	27	16.2	57	34.1	47	28.1	36	21.6
Attend in-person two-hour workshop on a weekend.....	19	11.9	33	20.6	42	26.3	66	41.3
Attend full-day workshop on a weekday	21	12.5	33	19.6	23	13.7	91	54.2
Attend full-day workshop on the weekend	22	13.1	30	17.9	42	25.0	74	44.0

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 28. Do you have access to the internet to conduct business or obtain information relevant to your role as a Planning Board member?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	163	90.1
No	18	9.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 28a. If Yes, select up to two methods you most frequently use:

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Dial-up access from home	17	9.2
Dial-up access from town office	1	0.5
High-speed access from home	138	74.6
High-speed access from town office	21	11.4
High-speed access from library	13	7.0
High-speed access from work.....	68	36.8
Other	5	2.7

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 29. To what extent do you rely on information from the following resources in assisting you to fulfill your responsibilities as a Planning Board member?

	Regularly rely on it		Occasionally rely on it		Rarely rely on it		Never rely on it	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Citizen Planner Training Collaborative website	7	4.3	32	19.8	38	23.5	85	52.5
Your regional planning agency staff.....	37	21.9	55	32.5	41	24.3	36	21.3
Your regional planning agency website	12	7.4	33	20.4	42	25.9	75	46.3
Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development community assistance hotline.....	6	3.8	8	5.1	37	23.4	107	67.7
Information from the Massachusetts Federation of Planning and Appeals Boards.....	12	7.5	18	11.3	43	27.0	86	54.1
The Smart Growth Toolkit	10	6.3	42	26.6	35	22.2	71	44.9
Information from the Community Preservation Act Coalition .	11	6.9	28	17.6	37	23.3	83	52.2
State grant programs	8	5.0	32	20.1	33	20.8	86	54.1
Your town counsel (attorney)	50	28.9	88	50.9	27	15.6	8	4.6
State agency websites	12	7.6	52	32.9	41	25.9	53	33.5
Other town or municipal websites	24	15.2	39	24.7	39	24.7	56	35.4
Other	22	31.4	7	10.0	6	8.6	35	50.0

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 30. In deciding whether to take some form of web-based training or to attend an in-person training session, how important is it that you receive a certificate or “diploma” that documents your participation?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Extremely important	19	10.6
Moderately important	39	21.8
Not at all important.....	121	67.6
<i>Total</i>	179	100.0

Table 31. Do you hold a certificate for completing the core curriculum offered by the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	10	5.6
No	169	94.4
<i>Total</i>	179	100.0

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 32. Please indicate your level of interest in receiving information or training in each of the following:

	High interest		Moderate interest		Low interest	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Basic core courses (roles and responsibilities, etc.)	51	30.0	72	42.4	47	27.6
Sustainable development/Commonwealth Capital Program.....	46	27.7	67	40.4	53	31.9
Stormwater issues	35	20.6	83	48.8	52	30.6
New planning technology, GIS.....	60	35.1	68	39.8	43	25.1
Procedural issues (open meeting, conflict of interest, etc.)	42	24.3	75	43.4	56	32.4
Energy policy planning (includes cell towers, windmills, etc.).....	77	44.0	72	41.1	26	14.9
Transportation/traffic/pedestrian safety.....	66	38.4	61	35.5	45	26.2
Land protection and conservation	81	45.5	79	44.4	18	10.1
Planning with community support	81	46.0	74	42.0	21	11.9
Design standards and design review	75	43.1	73	42.0	26	14.9
Special permits and variances	63	36.2	90	51.7	21	12.1
Chapter 40B (Comprehensive Permit Law)	52	29.7	87	49.7	36	20.6
Site plan review.....	86	49.4	71	40.8	17	9.8
Subdivision control law/"Approval Not Required" procedures.....	67	38.5	76	43.7	31	17.8

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 33. How many years have you lived in your present town?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Fewer than 10 years	25	13.9
10-19 years	47	26.1
20-29 years	37	20.6
30-39 year	34	18.9
40-49 years	13	7.2
50-59 years	16	8.9
60-69 years	7	3.9
70-79 years	1	0.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 34. What is your age?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than 30 years old.....	1	0.6
Between 30 and 39 years	9	5.1
Between 40 and 49 years	42	23.6
Between 50 and 59 years	67	37.6
Between 60 and 69 years	40	22.5
Between 70 and 79 years	15	8.4
Between 80 and 89 years	4	2.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>178</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 35. What is your gender?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Male	130	72.6
Female	49	27.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 36. What is your ethnic background?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
White.....	168	96.6
Hispanic.....	0	0.0
Black/African-American.....	1	0.6
Asian/Pacific Islander.....	1	0.6
American Indian/Alaska Native.....	1	0.6
Native Hawaiian.....	0	0.0
Other.....	3	1.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>174</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 37. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Did not finish high school.....	2	1.1
High school graduate (including GED).....	8	4.6
Community college, vocational school degree, some college.....	31	17.7
College bachelor's degree.....	66	37.7
Graduate or professional degree.....	68	38.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 38. What is your current marital status?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Single.....	10	5.6
Married (or living with a "significant other").....	153	86.0
Divorced or separated.....	12	6.7
Widowed.....	3	1.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>178</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 39. Do you have any children age 16 or younger living in your household?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	64	35.8
No.....	115	64.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 39a. If Yes, please indicate how many?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	22	34.9
2.....	30	47.6
3.....	11	17.5
<i>Total</i>	63	100.0

Table 40. Are you currently a student?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	4	2.3
No.....	173	97.7
<i>Total</i>	177	100.0

Table 40a. If Yes, indicate if you are attending:

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Full-time.....	3	42.9
Part-time.....	4	57.1
<i>Total</i>	7	100.0

Table 41. Are you currently self-employed?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	53	30.1
No.....	123	69.9
<i>Total</i>	176	100.0

Planning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 42. What is your current employment status?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Employed full time.....	114	66.3
Employed part time.....	15	8.7
Unemployed.....	6	3.5
Retired.....	32	18.6
Disabled and unable to work.....	0	0.0
Other.....	5	2.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>172</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 44. Which category best describes your total household income for 2007?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than \$25,000.....	5	3.1
\$25,000 to \$49,999.....	20	12.5
\$50,000 to \$74,999.....	32	20.0
\$75,000 to \$99,999.....	31	19.4
\$100,000 or more.....	72	45.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Results
Section III

Survey Response Data Related to Members of
Zoning Boards of Appeal

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 1. In considering all the time you've served on your town's Zoning Board (excluding any breaks in service), what is the total amount of time you have been a full (voting) member?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
One year or less.....	14	7.7
More than 1 year and less than 3 years.....	23	12.6
Between 3 and 10 years	79	43.2
More than 10 years	67	36.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>183</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 2. Within the past two years, how many hours per week, on average, would you say you've spent working on your Board's business?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Two hours per week or less	100	55.2
More than 2 hours but less than 5 hours	60	33.1
Between 5 and 10 hours	16	8.8
More than 10 hours.....	5	2.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 3. At the present time, do you serve on any other town boards or commissions?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	61	33.5
No	121	66.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 4. Are your Zoning Board members elected or appointed?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Elected	11	6.0
Appointed.....	172	94.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>183</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 5. What is the total number of seats on your town's Zoning Board?

<i>Regular seats</i>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
3.....	55	31.4
4.....	1	0.6
5.....	110	62.9
6.....	2	1.1
7.....	5	2.9
8.....	1	0.6
12.....	1	0.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>175</i>	<i>100.0</i>

<i>Alternate seats</i>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
0.....	1	0.6
1.....	16	10.2
2.....	77	49.0
3.....	42	26.8
4.....	7	4.5
5.....	8	5.1
6.....	4	2.5
7.....	2	1.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>157</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Not sure	2	1.1
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Table 6. Are there any regular seats that are unfilled at the present time?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	25	13.7
No	153	83.6
Not sure	5	2.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>183</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 6a. If Yes, how many regular seats are not filled?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	13	72.2
2.....	5	27.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 7. Has your Zoning Board had difficulty recently finding people willing to serve on it as members?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	62	33.9
No	104	56.8
Not sure	17	9.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>183</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 8. Does your town have a master plan that is less than ten years old?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	82	46.3
No	56	31.6
Not sure	39	22.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>177</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 9. Has your town adopted the Community Preservation Act?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	69	37.9
No	49	26.9
Not sure	64	35.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 10. Does your town have a 40R (Smart Growth Zoning) Overlay District?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	36	20.1
No	97	54.2
Not sure	46	25.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 11. Is your town subject to Chapter 40B (Comprehensive Permit Law)?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	129	71.3
No	17	9.4
Not sure	35	19.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 12. At the present time, does your Board have a paid secretary or other paid clerical staff to provide the Board with logistical support such as taking minutes of meetings, assisting with paperwork and/or organizing meetings?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	146	79.3
No	37	20.1
Not sure	1	0.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>184</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 12a. If Yes, how many hours a week would you say they work, on average?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than five hours per week	30	21.3
Between 5 and 10 hours per week	31	22.0
Between 10 and 20 hours per week	25	17.7
Between 20 and 40 hours per week	28	19.9
Full-time (40 hours per week, or more).....	27	19.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>141</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 13. At the present time, does your town have a paid professional planning or community development staff person who advises your Board on legal and procedural requirements?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	79	43.4
No	94	51.6
Not sure	9	4.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 13a. If Yes, how many hours a week would you say they work, on average?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than five hours per week	14	21.2
Between 5 and 10 hours per week	6	9.1
Between 10 and 20 hours per week	4	6.1
Between 20 and 40 hours per week	8	12.1
Full-time (40 hours per week, or more).....	34	51.5
<i>Total</i>	66	100.0

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 14. To what extent does your Board consult with the following people as a source of technical support or specialized expertise on proposed projects?

	Frequently consult		Occasionally consult		Rarely consult		Not applicable	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Professional planning or community development staff.....	28	16.8	43	25.7	45	26.9	51	30.5
Town or city engineer.....	21	12.7	49	29.7	45	27.3	50	30.3
Town highway staff	22	13.0	41	24.3	83	49.1	23	13.6
Planning consultants from your regional planning agency.....	8	4.9	30	18.5	80	49.4	44	27.2
Town counsel (attorney)	49	27.7	93	52.5	34	19.2	1	0.6
Other municipal employees with specialized expertise.....	31	18.5	73	43.5	50	29.8	14	8.3
Outside private planning consultants	12	7.2	31	18.7	80	48.2	43	25.9

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 15. To the best of your knowledge, do any of your Board members have training and/or experience that is relevant to the review (e.g. traffic, storm water management, landscaping, architectural style, etc.) of projects before your Board?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	110	60.4
No	57	31.3
Not sure	15	8.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 15a. If Yes, what is the number of members with relevant training and/or experience?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
0.....	1	0.9
1.....	22	20.0
2.....	48	43.6
3.....	22	20.0
4.....	8	7.3
5.....	6	5.5
6.....	1	0.9
7.....	1	0.9
11.....	1	0.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 16. Within the last two years, has your Board used money in its own budget to hire outside consultants to provide legal, procedural or technical assistance in reviewing projects that come before your Board?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	31	17.2
No	137	76.1
Not sure	12	6.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 16a. If Yes, for approximately how many projects?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	11	40.7
2.....	7	25.9
3.....	4	14.8
4.....	2	7.4
5.....	2	7.4
10.....	1	3.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 17. Within the last two years, has your Board hired an outside consultant at the applicant's expense to provide legal, procedural or technical assistance in reviewing projects that come before your Board?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	104	57.1
No.....	65	35.7
Not sure.....	13	7.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 17a. If Yes, for approximately how many projects?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	32	37.6
2.....	27	31.8
3.....	5	5.9
4.....	9	10.6
5.....	2	2.4
6.....	2	2.4
7.....	2	2.4
8.....	1	1.2
10.....	4	4.7
15.....	1	1.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 18. Within the last two years, have members of your Board utilized other outside sources of information or expertise to assist in making decisions?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	120	67.8
No	41	23.2
Not sure	16	9.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>177</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 18a. If Yes, please select all that apply?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection	31	16.7
Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.....	10	5.4
Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development.....	41	22.0
Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions	12	6.5
Massachusetts Municipal Association	6	3.2
Your Regional Planning Agency	33	17.7
Grant-funded Private Planning Consultants.....	8	4.3
Citizen Planner Training Collaborative materials or courses	21	11.3
Massachusetts Chapter of the American Planning Association.....	3	1.6
Town Counsel (attorney).....	117	62.9
Non-governmental organizations (such as Mass Audubon)	6	3.2
University of Massachusetts faculty or staff.....	6	3.2
Other college or university faculty or staff	2	1.1
Other State agencies	8	4.3
Federal agencies (such as the Environmental Protection Agency).....	11	5.9
Other	24	12.9

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 19. For conducting Board business, does your town provide you with access to the following?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
An office	74	39.8
Telephone	69	37.1
Computer	50	26.9
High-speed internet connection (cable or DSL)	36	19.4
Black-and-white printer	57	30.6
Color printer	23	12.4
Digital (LCD) projector	10	5.4

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 20. How would you rate your own individual understanding of the following legal requirements and processes, as they apply to the operation of your Board?

	Little or no understanding		Moderate understanding		Substantial understanding	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Massachusetts Open Meeting Law	10	5.6	68	38.0	101	56.4
Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) pertaining to zoning	10	5.6	84	46.9	85	47.5
Massachusetts Public Records Law	58	33.1	74	42.3	43	24.6
Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law	26	14.7	61	34.5	90	50.8
Approval Not Required (ANR) review procedures	67	38.7	71	41.0	35	20.2
Zoning exemptions.....	22	12.6	76	43.4	77	44.0
How to amend zoning bylaws	22	12.4	70	39.5	85	48.0
Nonconforming issues	15	8.5	67	37.9	95	53.7

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 21. How would you rate the collective understanding of other Board members as a group in terms of the following legal requirements and processes, as they apply to the operation of your Board?

	Little or no understanding		Moderate understanding		Substantial understanding	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Massachusetts Open Meeting Law	11	6.4	69	39.9	93	53.8
Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) pertaining to zoning	9	5.2	80	46.5	83	48.3
Massachusetts Public Records Law	36	20.9	89	51.7	47	27.3
Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law	19	11.1	77	45.0	75	43.9
Approval Not Required (ANR) review procedures	43	26.1	85	51.5	37	22.4
Zoning exemptions.....	25	14.7	74	43.5	71	41.8
How to amend zoning bylaws	26	15.2	72	42.1	73	42.7
Nonconforming issues	17	9.9	64	37.4	90	52.6

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 22. Please check the one statement that most accurately describes how your Board makes decisions about projects it reviews.

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
In most cases, the decisions of the Board are strongly influenced by the opinions and recommendations of the Board's staff and/or consultants working for the board.....	3	1.7
The opinions of one Board member tend to be highly influential on decisions made by the Board, based primarily on his or her technical expertise and/or knowledge of the regulations	3	1.7
The opinions of one Board member tend to be highly influential on the decisions made by the Board, but for reasons other than technical expertise or knowledge of the regulations	1	0.6
The opinions of two or three Board members tend to be highly influential on the decisions made by the Board, based primarily on their technical expertise and/or knowledge of the regulations	21	11.7
The opinions of two or three Board members tend to be highly influential on the decisions made by the Board, but for reasons other than technical expertise or knowledge of the regulations	7	3.9
It is the collective opinions of most or all Board members that determine the decisions made by the Board.....	144	80.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 23. In general, which of the following statements most accurately describes the way your Board deliberates and makes decisions?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
It is often divided into factions that generally disagree about decisions	9	5.0
It generally reaches decisions through agreement or consensus..	171	95.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 24. In thinking about your participation on the Board within the past two years (or less, if you haven't been a member for two years), has your Board ever experienced any of the following?

	Yes		No		Don't know	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Engaged in significant dispute with political leaders or other municipal boards or departments.....	51	28.3	125	69.4	4	2.2
Been subjected to what you consider unreasonable political interference from municipal leaders.....	30	16.8	143	79.9	6	3.4
Municipal leaders have sat in on one or more Board meetings because of controversy over decisions made by the Board	59	33.0	116	64.8	4	2.2
A professional staff person for the Board has been unjustifiably terminated because of controversy over decisions made by the Board	1	0.6	170	95.5	7	3.9
A member of your Board has been unjustifiably removed because of controversy over decisions made by the Board	9	5.1	162	91.0	7	3.9
A professional staff person for the Board has been justifiably terminated for, in your view, legitimate reasons.....	6	3.4	168	94.4	4	2.2
A member of your Board has been justifiably removed from the Board "for just cause"	6	3.4	169	94.4	4	2.2
Your Board has experienced actual budget cuts in retaliation for decisions made by the Board.....	2	1.1	174	97.2	3	1.7
Municipal leaders have actually withheld Board resources in retaliation for decisions made by the Board.....	2	1.1	172	96.1	5	2.8
The threat of costly court procedures in appealing a decision has influenced your board's decision	29	16.2	142	79.3	8	4.5
A town Board or Commission has sued your Board over a decision	26	14.4	146	81.1	8	4.4

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 25. Below is a list of approaches for providing information to assist Zoning Boards in decision-making. Please tell us the extent to which you would prefer to receive educational material in the following formats.

	Strongly prefer		Moderately prefer		Do not prefer	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Obtain and view a video in DVD format	50	31.6	60	38.0	48	30.4
Obtain and view a multi-media, interactive DVD (combination of text, graphics, video, etc) searchable by topic	60	37.5	56	35.0	44	27.5
View text, images, and short audio/video clips on the web.....	38	23.8	71	44.4	51	31.9
Download audio or video podcasts	17	11.1	33	21.6	103	67.3
Obtain and view a hardcopy handbook, manual, or workbook	100	59.5	45	26.8	23	13.7
Attend an in-person workshop or short course	58	34.9	66	39.8	42	25.3
Participate in an interactive web-based workshop (“webinar”)	14	8.8	50	31.3	96	60.0
Access a “self-paced,” non-interactive web-based workshop.....	26	16.5	52	32.9	80	50.6
Attend a special workshop where a panel of experts would be available for an extended question-and-answer session	69	41.1	51	30.4	48	28.6
Access an online forum to seek information from Zoning Board members in other towns across the State.....	52	31.0	65	38.7	51	30.4
Complete an online university course for credit	25	15.2	37	22.4	103	62.4
Other	4	7.8	4	7.8	43	84.3

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 26. Please indicate whether you have ever attended one or more of the conferences, workshops, or training sessions listed below?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
The annual conference of the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative	14	7.5
Regular regional fall workshops of the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative	28	15.1
Smart Growth and Sustainable Development conferences offered by the State.....	12	6.5
Workshops offered by your regional planning agency	41	22.0
Training session on the Conflict of Interest Law offered by the State.....	41	22.0
Training sessions on the Open Meeting Law offered by the State.....	40	21.5
Annual conference of the Massachusetts Federation of Planning and Appeals Boards.....	16	8.6
Other conferences or workshops related to serving on your Board	53	28.5

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 27. If a particular workshop presents information that is of interest to you, how likely is it that you would participate in it if it were presented in the following formats?

	Extremely likely		Moderately likely		Somewhat likely		Not at all likely	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Interactive web-based one-hour workshop on a weekday.....	8	5.1	32	20.4	33	21.0	84	53.5
Interactive web-based one-hour workshop on a weeknight...	26	16.0	39	23.9	35	21.5	63	38.7
Interactive web-based one-hour workshop on a weekend.....	12	7.6	24	15.3	31	19.7	90	57.3
Interactive web-based two-hour workshop on a weekday	4	2.5	23	14.6	32	20.4	98	62.4
Interactive web-based two-hour workshop on a weeknight ...	20	12.3	35	21.6	34	21.0	73	45.1
Interactive web-based two-hour workshop on a weekend	7	4.5	21	13.4	27	17.2	102	65.0
Attend in-person two-hour workshop on a weekday	19	11.9	29	18.1	37	23.1	75	46.9
Attend in-person two-hour workshop on a weeknight	29	17.7	44	26.8	41	25.0	50	30.5
Attend in-person two-hour workshop on a weekend.....	18	11.3	22	13.8	28	17.6	91	57.2
Attend full-day workshop on a weekday	15	9.2	26	16.0	30	18.4	92	56.4
Attend full-day workshop on the weekend	18	10.9	21	12.7	30	18.2	96	58.2

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 28. Do you have access to the internet to conduct business or obtain information relevant to your role as a Zoning Board member?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	161	89.9
No	18	10.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 28a. If Yes, select up to two methods you most frequently use:

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Dial-up access from home	14	7.5
Dial-up access from town office	7	3.8
High-speed access from home	139	74.7
High-speed access from town office	15	8.1
High-speed access from library	6	3.2
High-speed access from work.....	68	36.6
Other	3	1.6

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 29. To what extent do you rely on information from the following resources in assisting you to fulfill your responsibilities as a Zoning Board member?

	Regularly rely on it		Occasionally rely on it		Rarely rely on it		Never rely on it	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Citizen Planner Training Collaborative website	4	2.6	13	8.4	24	15.5	114	73.5
Your regional planning agency staff.....	9	5.5	31	19.0	39	23.9	84	51.5
Your regional planning agency website	2	1.3	14	8.9	33	20.9	109	69.0
Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development community assistance hotline.....	2	1.3	16	10.1	35	22.2	105	66.5
Information from the Massachusetts Federation of Planning and Appeals Boards.....	12	7.5	27	17.0	27	17.0	93	58.5
The Smart Growth Toolkit	3	1.9	8	5.2	23	14.9	120	77.9
Information from the Community Preservation Act Coalition ...	2	1.3	11	7.1	34	22.1	107	69.5
State grant programs	5	3.2	9	5.8	27	17.3	115	73.7
Your town counsel (attorney)	53	30.6	90	52.0	22	12.7	8	4.6
State agency websites	11	7.1	40	25.8	34	21.9	70	45.2
Other town or municipal websites	11	7.0	31	19.7	38	24.2	77	49.0
Other	15	21.4	8	11.4	5	7.7	42	60.0

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 30. In deciding whether to take some form of web-based training or to attend an in-person training session, how important is it that you receive a certificate or “diploma” that documents your participation?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Extremely important	13	7.3
Moderately important	44	24.9
Not at all important.....	120	67.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>177</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 31. Do you hold a certificate for completing the core curriculum offered by the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	6	3.4
No	170	96.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 32. Please indicate your level of interest in receiving information or training in each of the following:

	High interest		Moderate interest		Low interest	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Basic core courses (roles and responsibilities, etc.)	40	24.7	54	33.3	68	42.0
Sustainable development/Commonwealth Capital Program.....	19	12.1	58	36.9	80	51.0
Stormwater issues	29	18.1	54	33.8	77	48.1
New planning technology, GIS.....	25	15.6	68	42.5	67	41.9
Procedural issues (open meeting, conflict of interest, etc.)	51	31.7	61	37.9	49	30.4
Energy policy planning (includes cell towers, windmills, etc.).....	73	44.2	55	33.3	37	22.4
Transportation/traffic/pedestrian safety.....	43	26.4	76	46.6	44	27.0
Land protection and conservation	64	38.8	60	36.4	41	24.8
Planning with community support	43	26.4	74	45.4	46	28.2
Design standards and design review	36	22.6	66	41.5	57	35.8
Special permits and variances	106	63.1	34	20.2	28	16.7
Chapter 40B (Comprehensive Permit Law)	80	48.2	51	30.7	35	21.1
Site plan review.....	62	37.6	55	33.3	48	29.1
Subdivision control law/"Approval Not Required" procedures.....	47	28.3	68	41.0	51	30.7

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 33. How many years have you lived in your present town?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Fewer than 10 years	19	10.5
10-19 years	39	21.5
20-29 years	29	16.0
30-39 years	36	19.9
40-49 years	31	17.1
50-59 years	16	8.8
60-69 years	6	3.3
70-79 years	4	2.2
80-89 years	1	0.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 34. What is your age?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than 30 years old.....	1	0.6
Between 30 and 39 years	7	3.9
Between 40 and 49 years	37	20.8
Between 50 and 59 years	48	27.0
Between 60 and 69 years	47	26.4
Between 70 and 79 years	29	16.3
Between 80 and 89 years	9	5.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>178</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 35. What is your gender?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Male	134	74.9
Female	45	25.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 36. What is your ethnic background?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
White.....	166	96.0
Hispanic.....	0	0.0
Black/African-American.....	2	1.2
Asian/Pacific Islander.....	2	1.2
American Indian/Alaska Native.....	1	0.6
Native Hawaiian.....	0	0.0
Other.....	2	1.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 37. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Did not finish high school.....	1	0.6
High school graduate (including GED).....	31	17.3
Community college, vocational school degree, some college.....	32	17.9
College bachelor's degree.....	36	20.1
Graduate or professional degree.....	79	44.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 38. What is your current marital status?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Single.....	10	5.6
Married (or living with a "significant other").....	154	87.0
Divorced or separated.....	5	2.8
Widowed.....	8	4.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>177</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 39. Do you have any children age 16 or younger living in your household?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	60	33.0
No.....	122	67.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 39a. If Yes, please indicate how many?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
1.....	24	43.6
2.....	18	32.7
3.....	8	14.5
4.....	3	5.5
5.....	2	3.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 40. Are you currently a student?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	5	2.8
No.....	176	97.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 40a. If Yes, indicate if you are attending:

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Full-time.....	0	0.0
Part-time.....	2	100.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 41. Are you currently self-employed?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	66	37.1
No.....	112	62.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>178</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Zoning Board Members -- Technical Report Data Tables

Table 42. What is your current employment status?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Employed full time.....	96	54.2
Employed part time.....	24	13.6
Unemployed.....	2	1.1
Retired.....	49	27.7
Disabled and unable to work.....	2	1.1
Other.....	4	2.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>177</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 44. Which category best describes your total household income for 2007?

	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than \$25,000.....	6	3.8
\$25,000 to \$49,999.....	15	9.4
\$50,000 to \$74,999.....	32	20.0
\$75,000 to \$99,999.....	32	20.0
\$100,000 or more.....	75	46.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>100.0</i>
