

STATE OF NEW YORK

8649

IN SENATE

July 1, 2020

Introduced by Sen. SKOUFIS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules

AN ACT to amend the town law, in relation to authorizing the town of Chester, county of Orange to establish community preservation funds; to amend the tax law, in relation to authorizing the town of Chester to impose a real estate transfer tax with revenues therefrom to be deposited in said community preservation fund; and providing for the repeal of certain provisions upon expiration thereof

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The town law is amended by adding a new section 64-k to
2 read as follows:

3 § 64-k. Town of Chester preservation funds. 1. As used in this
4 section, the following words and terms shall have the following mean-
5 ings:

6 (a) "Town" means the town of Chester.

7 (b) "Community preservation" shall mean and include any of the
8 purposes outlined in subdivision five of this section.

9 (c) "Board" means the advisory board required pursuant to subdivision
10 six of this section.

11 (d) "Fund" means the community preservation fund created pursuant to
12 subdivision two of this section.

13 (e) "Tax" shall mean the real estate transfer tax imposed pursuant to
14 section fourteen hundred thirty-nine-bbb of the tax law or, if the
15 context clearly indicates, shall mean the real estate transfer tax
16 imposed pursuant to article thirty-one of the tax law.

17 2. The town board of the town of Chester is authorized to establish by
18 local law a community preservation fund pursuant to the provisions of
19 this section. Deposits into the fund may include revenues of the local
20 government from whatever source and shall include, at a minimum, all
21 revenues from a tax imposed upon the transfer of real property interests
22 in such town pursuant to article thirty-one-A-four of the tax law. The
23 fund shall also be authorized to accept gifts of any such interests in
24 land or of funds. Interest accrued by monies deposited into the fund

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 shall be credited to the fund. In no event shall monies deposited in the
2 fund be transferred to any other account. Nothing contained in this
3 section shall be construed to prevent the financing in whole or in part,
4 pursuant to the local finance law, of any acquisition authorized pursu-
5 ant to this section. Monies from the fund may be utilized to repay any
6 indebtedness or obligations incurred pursuant to the local finance law
7 consistent with effectuating the purposes of this section.

8 3. The purposes of the fund shall be exclusively: (a) to implement a
9 plan for the preservation of community character as required by this
10 section, (b) to acquire interests or rights in real property for the
11 preservation of community character within the town including villages
12 therein in accordance with such plan and in cooperation with willing
13 sellers, (c) to establish a bank pursuant to a transfer of development
14 rights program consistent with section two hundred sixty-one-a of this
15 chapter, and (d) to provide a management and stewardship program for
16 such interests and rights consistent with subdivision ten of this
17 section and in accordance with such plan designed to preserve community
18 character. Not more than ten percent of the fund shall be utilized for
19 the management and stewardship program.

20 4. If the implementation of the community preservation project plan,
21 adopted by the town board, as provided in subdivision seven of this
22 section, has been completed, and funds are no longer needed for the
23 purposes outlined in this subdivision, then any remaining monies in the
24 fund shall be applied to reduce any bonded indebtedness or obligations
25 incurred to effectuate the purposes of this section.

26 5. Preservation of community character shall involve one or more of
27 the following:

- 28 (a) preservation of open space;
- 29 (b) establishment of parks, nature preserves, or recreation areas;
- 30 (c) preservation of land which is predominantly viable agricultural
31 land, as defined in subdivision seven of section three hundred one of
32 the agriculture and markets law, or unique and irreplaceable agricul-
33 tural land, as defined in subdivision six of section three hundred one
34 of the agriculture and markets law;
- 35 (d) preservation of lands of exceptional scenic value;
- 36 (e) preservation of freshwater marshes or other wetlands;
- 37 (f) preservation of aquifer recharge areas;
- 38 (g) preservation of undeveloped beach-lands or shoreline;
- 39 (h) establishment of wildlife refuges for the purpose of maintaining
40 native animal species diversity, including the protection of habitat
41 essential to the recovery of rare, threatened or endangered species;
- 42 (i) preservation of unique or threatened ecological areas;
- 43 (j) preservation of rivers and river areas in a natural, free-flowing
44 condition;
- 45 (k) preservation of forested land;
- 46 (l) preservation of public access to lands for public use including
47 stream rights and waterways;
- 48 (m) preservation of historic places and properties listed on the New
49 York state register of historic places and/or protected under a municip-
50 al historic preservation ordinance or law; and
- 51 (n) undertaking any of the purposes of this subdivision in furtherance
52 of the establishment of a greenbelt.

53 6. The town board which has established a community preservation fund
54 shall create an advisory board to review and make recommendations on
55 proposed acquisitions of interests in real property using monies from
56 the fund. Such board shall consist of five or seven legal residents of

1 the municipality who shall serve without compensation. No member of the
2 local legislative body shall serve on the board. A majority of the
3 members of the board shall have demonstrated experience with conserva-
4 tion or land preservation activities. The board shall act in an advisory
5 capacity to the town board. At least one member of the board shall be an
6 active farmer. Board members' terms shall be staggered.

7 7. The town board which has established a community preservation fund
8 shall, by local law, adopt a community preservation project plan. Such
9 plan shall list every project which the town plans to undertake pursuant
10 to the community preservation fund. Such plan shall provide for a
11 detailed evaluation of all available land use alternatives to protect
12 community character, including but not limited to: (a) fee simple acqui-
13 sition, (b) zoning regulations, including density reductions, cluster
14 development, and site plan and design requirements, (c) transfer of
15 development rights, (d) the purchase of development rights, and (e)
16 scenic and conservation easements. Said evaluation shall be as specific
17 as practicable as to each parcel selected for inclusion in such plan.
18 Such plan shall establish the priorities for preservation, and shall
19 include the preservation of farmland as its highest priority. Funds from
20 the community preservation fund may only be expended for projects which
21 have been included in such plan. Such plan shall be updated not less
22 than once every five years, but in no event until at least three years
23 after the adoption of the original plan. A copy of such plan shall be
24 filed with the town clerk, the commissioner of environmental conserva-
25 tion, the commissioner of agriculture and markets and the commissioner
26 of the office of parks, recreation and historic preservation. Such plan
27 shall be completed at least sixty days before the submission of the
28 mandatory referendum required by section fourteen hundred thirty-nine-
29 bbb of the tax law. If at the time of referendum, the town shall have in
30 place an adopted open space plan, such plan shall be deemed sufficient
31 to waive the preservation plan requirements of this subdivision. Any
32 monies expended from the community preservation plan shall, however be
33 consistent with the purposes outlined in subdivisions three and five of
34 this section and with the open space plan for a period not to exceed
35 twelve months.

36 8. The town board which has established a community preservation fund
37 pursuant to this section may study and consider establishing a transfer
38 of development rights program to protect community character as provided
39 for by section two hundred sixty-one-a of this chapter. All provisions
40 of such section two hundred sixty-one-a shall be complied with. If at
41 any time during the life of the community preservation fund a transfer
42 of development rights program is established, the town may utilize
43 monies from the community preservation fund in order to create and fund
44 a central bank of the transfer of development rights program. If at any
45 time during the life of the community preservation fund, a transfer of
46 development rights program is repealed by the town, all monies from the
47 central bank shall be returned to the community preservation fund.

48 9. No interests or rights in real property shall be acquired pursuant
49 to this section until a public hearing is held as required by section
50 two hundred forty-seven of the general municipal law; provided, however,
51 that nothing herein shall prevent the town board from entering into a
52 conditional purchase agreement before a public hearing is held. Any
53 resolution of the town board approving an acquisition of rights or
54 interest in real property pursuant to this section, shall find that
55 acquisition was the best alternative for the protection of community
56 character of all the reasonable alternatives available to the town.

1 10. Rights or interest in real property acquired pursuant to this
2 section shall be administered and managed in a manner which (a) allows
3 public use and enjoyment in a manner compatible with the natural,
4 scenic, historic and open space character of such lands; (b) preserves
5 the native biological diversity of such lands; (c) with regard to open
6 spaces, limits improvements to enhancing access for passive use of such
7 lands such as nature trails, boardwalks, bicycle paths, and peripheral
8 parking areas provided that such improvements do not degrade the ecolog-
9 ical value of the land or threaten essential wildlife habitat; and (d)
10 preserves cultural property consistent with accepted standards for
11 historic preservation. Notwithstanding any other provision of this
12 subdivision there shall be no right to public use and enjoyment of land
13 used in conjunction with a farm operation as defined by subdivision
14 eleven of section three hundred one of the agriculture and markets law.
15 In furthering the purposes of this section, the town may enter into
16 agreements with corporations organized under the not-for-profit corpo-
17 ration law and engage in land trust activities to manage lands including
18 less than fee interests acquired pursuant to the provisions of this
19 section, provided that any such agreement shall contain a provision that
20 such corporation shall keep the lands accessible to the public unless
21 such corporation shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the town that
22 public accessibility would be detrimental to the lands or any natural
23 resources associated therewith.

24 11. Rights or interests in real property acquired with monies from
25 such fund shall not be sold, leased, exchanged, donated, or otherwise
26 disposed of or used for other than the purposes permitted by this
27 section without the express authority of an act of the state legisla-
28 ture, which shall provide for the substitution of other lands of equal
29 environmental value and fair market value and reasonably equivalent
30 usefulness and location to those to be discontinued, sold or disposed
31 of, and such other requirements as shall be approved by the state legis-
32 lature. Any conservation easements, created under title three of article
33 forty-nine of the environmental conservation law, which are acquired
34 with monies from such fund may only be modified or extinguished as
35 provided in section 49-0307 of such law. Nothing in this section shall
36 preclude the town, by local law, from establishing additional
37 restrictions to the alienation of lands acquired pursuant to this
38 section. This subdivision shall not apply to the sale of development
39 rights by the town acquired pursuant to this section, where said sale is
40 made by a central bank created by the town, pursuant to a transfer of
41 development rights program established by the town pursuant to section
42 two hundred sixty-one-a of this chapter, provided, however that (a) the
43 lands from which said development rights were acquired shall remain
44 preserved in perpetuity by a permanent conservation easement or other
45 instrument that similarly preserves the community character referenced
46 in subdivision five of this section, and (b) the proceeds from such sale
47 shall be deposited in the community preservation fund.

48 § 2. The tax law is amended by adding a new article 31-A-4 to read as
49 follows:

50 ARTICLE 31-A-4

51 TAX ON REAL ESTATE TRANSFERS IN THE TOWN OF CHESTER

52 Section 1439-aaa. Definitions.

53 1439-bbb. Imposition of tax.

54 1439-ccc. Payment of tax.

55 1439-ddd. Liability for tax.

56 1439-eee. Exemptions.

1 1439-fff. Credit.

2 1439-ggg. Cooperative housing corporation transfers.

3 1439-hhh. Designation of agents.

4 1439-iii. Liability of recording officer.

5 1439-jjj. Refunds.

6 1439-kkk. Deposit and disposition of revenue.

7 1439-lll. Judicial review.

8 1439-mmm. Apportionment.

9 1439-nnn. Miscellaneous.

10 1439-ooo. Returns to be secret.

11 1439-ppp. Foreclosure proceedings.

12 § 1439-aaa. Definitions. When used in this article, unless otherwise
13 expressly stated, the following words and terms shall have the following
14 meanings:

15 1. "Person" means an individual, partnership, limited liability compa-
16 ny, society, association, joint stock company, corporation, estate,
17 receiver, trustee, assignee, referee or any other person acting in a
18 fiduciary or representative capacity, whether appointed by a court or
19 otherwise, any combination of individuals, and any other form of unin-
20 corporated enterprise owned or conducted by two or more persons.

21 2. "Controlling interest" means (a) in the case of a corporation,
22 either fifty percent or more of the total combined voting power of all
23 classes of stock of such corporation, or fifty percent or more of the
24 capital, profits or beneficial interest in such voting stock of such
25 corporation, and (b) in the case of a partnership, association, trust or
26 other entity, fifty percent or more of the capital, profits or benefi-
27 cial interest in such partnership, association, trust or other entity.

28 3. "Real property" means every estate or right, legal or equitable,
29 present or future, vested or contingent, in lands, tenements or heredi-
30 taments, including buildings, structures and other improvements thereon,
31 which are located in whole or in part within the town of Chester. It
32 shall not include rights to sepulture.

33 4. "Consideration" means the price actually paid or required to be
34 paid for the real property or interest therein, including payment for an
35 option or contract to purchase real property, whether or not expressed
36 in the deed and whether paid or required to be paid by money, property,
37 or any other thing of value. It shall include the cancellation or
38 discharge of an indebtedness or obligation. It shall also include the
39 amount of any mortgage, purchase money mortgage, lien or other encum-
40 brance, whether or not the underlying indebtedness is assumed or taken
41 subject to.

42 (a) In the case of a creation of a leasehold interest or the granting
43 of an option with use and occupancy of real property, consideration
44 shall include, but not be limited to, the value of the rental and other
45 payments attributable to the use and occupancy of the real property or
46 interest therein, the value of any amount paid for an option to purchase
47 or renew and the value of rental or other payments attributable to the
48 exercise of any option to renew.

49 (b) In the case of a creation of a subleasehold interest, consider-
50 ation shall include, but not be limited to, the value of the sublease
51 rental payments attributable to the use and occupancy of the real prop-
52 erty, the value of any amount paid for an option to renew and the value
53 of rental or other payments attributable to the exercise of any option
54 to renew less the value of the remaining prime lease rental payments
55 required to be made.

1 (c) In the case of a controlling interest in any entity that owns real
2 property, consideration shall mean the fair market value of the real
3 property or interest therein, apportioned based on the percentage of the
4 ownership interest transferred or acquired in the entity.

5 (d) In the case of an assignment or surrender of a leasehold interest
6 or the assignment or surrender of an option or contract to purchase real
7 property, consideration shall not include the value of the remaining
8 rental payments required to be made pursuant to the terms of such lease
9 or the amount to be paid for the real property pursuant to the terms of
10 the option or contract being assigned or surrendered.

11 (e) In the case of (1) the original conveyance of shares of stock in a
12 cooperative housing corporation in connection with the grant or transfer
13 of a proprietary leasehold by the cooperative corporation or cooperative
14 plan sponsor, and (2) the subsequent conveyance by the owner thereof of
15 such stock in a cooperative housing corporation in connection with the
16 grant or transfer of a proprietary leasehold for a cooperative unit
17 other than an individual residential unit, consideration shall include a
18 proportionate share of the unpaid principal of any mortgage on the real
19 property of the cooperative housing corporation comprising the cooper-
20 ative dwelling or dwellings. Such share shall be determined by multi-
21 plying the total unpaid principal of the mortgage by a fraction, the
22 numerator of which shall be the number of shares of stock being conveyed
23 in the cooperative housing corporation in connection with the grant or
24 transfer of a proprietary leasehold and the denominator of which shall
25 be the total number of shares of stock in the cooperative housing corpo-
26 ration.

27 5. "Conveyance" means the transfer or transfers of any interest in
28 real property by any method, including but not limited to, sale,
29 exchange, assignment, surrender, mortgage foreclosure, transfer in lieu
30 of foreclosure, option, trust indenture, taking by eminent domain,
31 conveyance upon liquidation or by a receiver, or transfer or acquisition
32 of a controlling interest in any entity with an interest in real proper-
33 ty. Transfer of an interest in real property shall include the creation
34 of a leasehold or sublease only where (a) the sum of the term of the
35 lease or sublease and any options for renewal exceeds forty-nine years,
36 (b) substantial capital improvements are or may be made by or for the
37 benefit of the lessee or sublessee, and (c) the lease or sublease is for
38 substantially all of the premises constituting the real property.
39 Notwithstanding the foregoing, conveyance of real property shall not
40 include a conveyance made pursuant to devise, bequest or inheritance;
41 the creation, modification, extension, spreading, severance, consol-
42 idation, assignment, transfer, release or satisfaction of a mortgage; a
43 mortgage subordination agreement, a mortgage severance agreement, an
44 instrument given to perfect or correct a recorded mortgage; or a release
45 of lien of tax pursuant to this chapter or the internal revenue code.

46 6. "Interest in the real property" includes title in fee, a leasehold
47 interest, a beneficial interest, an encumbrance, development rights, air
48 space and air rights, or any other interest with the right to use or
49 occupancy of real property or the right to receive rents, profits or
50 other income derived from real property. It shall also include an option
51 or contract to purchase real property. It shall not include a right of
52 first refusal to purchase real property.

53 7. "Grantor" means the person making the conveyance of real property
54 or interest therein. Where the conveyance consists of a transfer or an
55 acquisition of a controlling interest in an entity with an interest in
56 real property, "grantor" means the entity with an interest in real prop-

1 erty or a shareholder or partner transferring stock or partnership
2 interest, respectively.

3 8. "Grantee" means the person who obtains real property or interest
4 therein as a result of a conveyance.

5 9. "Fund" means a community preservation fund created pursuant to
6 section sixty-four-k of the town law.

7 10. "Recording officer" means the county clerk of the county of
8 Orange.

9 11. "Town" means the town of Chester, county of Orange.

10 12. "Treasurer" means the treasurer of the county of Orange.

11 13. "Town supervisor" means the town supervisor of the town of Ches-
12 ter.

13 14. "Tax" shall mean the real estate transfer tax imposed pursuant to
14 section fourteen hundred thirty-nine-bbb of this article or, if the
15 context clearly indicates, shall mean the real estate transfer tax
16 imposed pursuant to article thirty-one of this chapter.

17 15. "Residential real property" means property which satisfies at
18 least one of the following conditions:

19 (a) the property classification code assigned to the property on the
20 latest final assessment roll, as reported on the transfer report form,
21 indicates that the property is a one, two or three family home or a
22 rural residence; or

23 (b) the transfer report indicates that the property is a one, two or
24 three family residential property that has been newly constructed on
25 vacant land; or

26 (c) the transfer report form indicates that the property is a residen-
27 tial condominium.

28 § 1439-bbb. Imposition of tax. Notwithstanding any other provisions of
29 law to the contrary, the town of Chester, acting through its town board,
30 is hereby authorized and empowered to adopt a local law imposing in such
31 town a tax on each conveyance of real property or interest therein not
32 to exceed a maximum of three-quarters of one percent of the consider-
33 ation for such conveyance, subject to the exemptions set forth in
34 section fourteen hundred thirty-nine-eee of this article; any such local
35 law shall fix the rate of such tax. Provided, however, any such local
36 law imposing, repealing or reimposing such tax shall be subject to a
37 mandatory referendum pursuant to section twenty-three of the municipal
38 home rule law. Notwithstanding the foregoing, prior to adoption of such
39 local law, the town must establish a community preservation fund pursu-
40 ant to section sixty-four-k of the town law. Revenues from such tax
41 shall be deposited in such fund and may be used solely for the purposes
42 of such fund. Such local law shall apply to any conveyance occurring on
43 or after the first day of a month to be designated by such town board,
44 which is not less than sixty days after the enactment of such local law,
45 but shall not apply to conveyances made on or after such date pursuant
46 to binding written contracts entered into prior to such date, provided
47 that the date of execution of such contract is confirmed by independent
48 evidence such as the recording of the contract, payment of a deposit or
49 other facts and circumstances as determined by the treasurer.

50 § 1439-ccc. Payment of tax. 1. The real estate transfer tax imposed
51 pursuant to this article shall be paid to the treasurer or the recording
52 officer acting as the agent of the treasurer upon designation as such
53 agent by the treasurer. Such tax shall be paid at the same time as the
54 real estate transfer tax imposed by article thirty-one of this chapter
55 is required to be paid. Such treasurer or recording officer shall

1 endorse upon each deed or instrument effecting a conveyance a receipt
2 for the amount of the tax so paid.

3 2. A return shall be required to be filed with such treasurer or
4 recording officer for purposes of the real estate transfer tax imposed
5 pursuant to this article at the same time as a return is required to be
6 filed for purposes of the real estate transfer tax imposed by article
7 thirty-one of this chapter. The treasurer shall prescribe the form of
8 return, the information which it shall contain, and the documentation
9 that shall accompany the return. Said form shall be identical to the
10 real estate transfer tax return required to be filed pursuant to section
11 fourteen hundred nine of this chapter, except that the treasurer shall
12 adapt said form to reflect the provisions in this chapter that are
13 inconsistent, different, or in addition to the provisions of article
14 thirty-one of this chapter. The real estate transfer tax returns
15 required to be filed pursuant to this section shall be preserved for
16 three years and thereafter until such treasurer or recording officer
17 orders them to be destroyed.

18 3. The recording officer shall not record an instrument effecting a
19 conveyance unless the return required by this section has been filed and
20 the tax imposed pursuant to this article shall have been paid as
21 required in this section.

22 § 1439-ddd. Liability for tax. 1. The real estate transfer tax shall
23 be paid by the grantee. If the grantee has failed to pay the tax imposed
24 pursuant to this article or if the grantee is exempt from such tax, the
25 grantor shall have the duty to pay the tax. Where the grantor has the
26 duty to pay the tax because the grantee has failed to pay the tax, such
27 tax shall be the joint and several liability of the grantee and the
28 grantor.

29 2. For the purpose of the proper administration of this article and to
30 prevent evasion of the tax hereby imposed, it shall be presumed that all
31 conveyances are subject to the tax. Where the consideration includes
32 property other than money, it shall be presumed that the consideration
33 is the fair market value of the real property or interest therein. These
34 presumptions shall prevail until the contrary is proven, and the burden
35 of proving the contrary shall be on the person liable for payment of the
36 tax.

37 § 1439-eee. Exemptions. 1. The following shall be exempt from the
38 payment of the real estate transfer tax imposed by this article:

39 (a) The state of New York, or any of its agencies, instrumentalities,
40 political subdivisions, or public corporations (including a public
41 corporation created pursuant to an agreement or compact with another
42 state or the Dominion of Canada); and

43 (b) The United Nations, the United States of America or any of its
44 agencies or instrumentalities.

45 2. The tax shall not apply to any of the following conveyances:

46 (a) Conveyances to the United Nations, the United States of America,
47 the state of New York, or any of their instrumentalities, agencies or
48 political subdivisions (or any public corporation, including a public
49 corporation created pursuant to agreement or compact with another state
50 or the Dominion of Canada);

51 (b) Conveyances which are or were used to secure a debt or other obli-
52 gation;

53 (c) Conveyances which, without additional consideration, confirm,
54 correct, modify or supplement a deed previously recorded;

1 (d) Conveyances of real property without consideration and otherwise
2 than in connection with a sale, including deeds conveying realty as bona
3 fide gifts;

4 (e) Conveyances given in connection with a tax sale;

5 (f) Conveyances to effectuate a mere change of identity or form of
6 ownership or organization where there is no change in beneficial owner-
7 ship, other than conveyances to a cooperative housing corporation of the
8 real property comprising the cooperative dwelling or dwellings;

9 (g) Conveyances which consist of a deed of partition;

10 (h) Conveyances given pursuant to the federal bankruptcy act;

11 (i) Conveyances of real property which consist of the execution of a
12 contract to sell real property without the use or occupancy of such
13 property or the granting of an option to purchase real property without
14 the use or occupancy of such property;

15 (j) Conveyances of real property or a portion or portions of real
16 property that are the subject of one or more of the following develop-
17 ment restrictions:

18 (1) agricultural, conservation, scenic, or an open space easement,

19 (2) covenants or restrictions prohibiting development where the prop-
20 erty or portion of property being conveyed has had its development
21 rights permanently removed,

22 (3) a purchase of development rights agreement where the property or
23 portion of property being conveyed has had its development rights perma-
24 nently removed,

25 (4) a transfer of development rights agreement, where the property
26 being conveyed has had its development rights removed,

27 (5) real property subject to any locally adopted land preservation
28 agreement, provided said exemption is included in the local law imposing
29 the tax authorized by this article;

30 (k) Conveyances of real property, where the property is viable agri-
31 cultural land as defined in subdivision seven of section three hundred
32 one of the agriculture and markets law and the entire property to be
33 conveyed is to be made subject to one of the development restrictions
34 provided for in subparagraph two of paragraph (j) of this subdivision
35 provided that said development restriction precludes the conversion of
36 the property to a non-agricultural use for at least eight years from the
37 date of transfer, and said development restriction is evidenced by an
38 easement, agreement, or other suitable instrument which is to be
39 conveyed to the town simultaneously with the conveyance of the real
40 property; or

41 (l) Conveyances of real property for open space, parks, or historic
42 preservation purposes to any not-for-profit tax exempt corporation oper-
43 ated for conservation, environmental, or historic preservation purposes.

44 3. An exemption of one hundred thousand dollars shall be allowed on
45 the consideration of the conveyance of improved real property or an
46 interest therein, and an exemption of fifty thousand dollars shall be
47 allowed on the consideration of the conveyance of unimproved real prop-
48 erty.

49 § 1439-fff. Credit. A grantee shall be allowed a credit against the
50 tax due on a conveyance of real property to the extent tax was paid by
51 such grantee on a prior creation of a leasehold of all or a portion of
52 the same real property or on the granting of an option or contract to
53 purchase all or a portion of the same real property by such grantee.
54 Such credit shall be computed by multiplying the tax paid on the
55 creation of the leasehold or on the granting of the option or contract
56 by a fraction, the numerator of which is the value of the consideration

1 used to compute such tax paid which is not yet due to such grantor on
2 the date of the subsequent conveyance (and which such grantor will not
3 be entitled to receive after such date), and the denominator of which is
4 the total value of the consideration used to compute such tax paid.

5 § 1439-ggg. Cooperative housing corporation transfers. 1. Notwith-
6 standing the definition of "controlling interest" contained in subdivi-
7 sion two of section fourteen hundred thirty-nine-aaa of this article or
8 anything to the contrary contained in subdivision five of section four-
9 teen hundred thirty-nine-aaa of this article, the tax imposed pursuant
10 to this article shall apply to (a) the original conveyance of shares of
11 stock in a cooperative housing corporation in connection with the grant
12 or transfer of a proprietary leasehold by the cooperative corporation or
13 cooperative plan sponsor, and (b) the subsequent conveyance of such
14 stock in a cooperative housing corporation in connection with the grant
15 or transfer of a proprietary leasehold by the owner thereof. With
16 respect to any such subsequent conveyance where the property is an indi-
17 vidual residential unit, the consideration for the interest conveyed
18 shall exclude the value of any liens on certificates of stock or other
19 evidences of an ownership interest in and a proprietary lease from a
20 corporation or partnership formed for the purpose of cooperative owner-
21 ship of residential interest in real estate remaining thereon at the
22 time of conveyance. In determining the tax on a conveyance described in
23 paragraph (a) of this subdivision, a credit shall be allowed for a
24 proportionate part of the amount of any tax paid upon the conveyance to
25 the cooperative housing corporation of the real property comprising the
26 cooperative dwelling or dwellings to the extent that such conveyance
27 effectuated a mere change of identity or form of ownership of such prop-
28 erty and not a change in the beneficial ownership of such property. The
29 amount of the credit shall be determined by multiplying the amount of
30 tax paid upon the conveyance to the cooperative housing corporation by a
31 percentage representing the extent to which such conveyance effectuated
32 a mere change of identity or form of ownership and not a change in the
33 beneficial ownership of such property, and then multiplying the result-
34 ing product by a fraction, the numerator of which shall be the number of
35 shares of stock conveyed in a transaction described in paragraph (a) of
36 this subdivision, and the denominator of which shall be the total number
37 of shares of stock of the cooperative housing corporation (including any
38 stock held by the corporation). In no event, however, shall such credit
39 reduce the tax, on a conveyance described in paragraph (a) of this
40 subdivision, below zero, nor shall any such credit be allowed for a tax
41 paid more than twenty-four months prior to the date on which occurs the
42 first in a series of conveyances of shares of stock in an offering of
43 cooperative housing corporation shares described in paragraph (a) of
44 this subdivision.

45 2. Every cooperative housing corporation shall be required to file an
46 information return with the treasurer by July fifteenth of each year
47 covering the preceding period of January first through June thirtieth
48 and by January fifteenth of each year covering the preceding period of
49 July first through December thirty-first. The return shall contain such
50 information regarding the conveyance of shares of stock in the cooper-
51 ative housing corporation as the treasurer may deem necessary, includ-
52 ing, but not limited to, the names, addresses and employee identifica-
53 tion numbers or social security numbers of the grantor and the grantee,
54 the number of shares conveyed, the date of the conveyance and the
55 consideration paid for such conveyance.

1 § 1439-hhh. Designation of agents. The treasurer is authorized to
2 designate the recording officer to act as his or her agent for purposes
3 of collecting the tax authorized by this article. The treasurer shall
4 provide for the manner in which such person may be designated as his or
5 her agent subject to such terms and conditions as the treasurer shall
6 prescribe. The real estate transfer tax shall be paid to such agent as
7 provided in section fourteen hundred thirty-nine-ccc of this article.

8 § 1439-iii. Liability of recording officer. A recording officer shall
9 not be liable for any inaccuracy in the amount of tax imposed pursuant
10 to this article that he or she shall collect so long as he or she shall
11 compute and collect such tax on the amount of consideration or the value
12 of the interest conveyed as such amounts are provided to him or her by
13 the person paying the tax.

14 § 1439-jjj. Refunds. Whenever the treasurer shall determine that any
15 moneys received under the provisions of the local law enacted pursuant
16 to this article were paid in error, he or she may cause such moneys to
17 be refunded pursuant to such requirements as he or she may prescribe,
18 provided that any application for such refund is filed with the treasur-
19 er within two years from the date the erroneous payment was made.

20 § 1439-kkk. Deposit and disposition of revenue. 1. All taxes, penal-
21 ties and interest imposed by the town under the authority of section
22 fourteen hundred thirty-nine-bbb of this article, which are collected by
23 the treasurer or his or her agents, shall be deposited in a single trust
24 fund for the town and shall be kept in trust and separate and apart from
25 all other monies in possession of the treasurer. Moneys in such fund
26 shall be deposited and secured in the manner provided by section ten of
27 the general municipal law. Pending expenditure from such fund, moneys
28 therein may be invested in the manner provided in section eleven of the
29 general municipal law. Any interest earned or capital gain realized on
30 the moneys so deposited or invested shall accrue to and become part of
31 such fund.

32 2. The treasurer shall retain such amount as he or she may determine
33 to be necessary for refunds with respect to the tax imposed by the town,
34 under the authority of section fourteen hundred thirty-nine-bbb of this
35 article, out of which the treasurer shall pay any refunds of such taxes
36 to those taxpayers entitled to a refund pursuant to the provisions of
37 this article.

38 3. The treasurer, after reserving such refunds, shall on or before the
39 twelfth day of each month pay to the town supervisor the taxes, penal-
40 ties and interest imposed by the town under the authority of section
41 fourteen hundred thirty-nine-bbb of this article, collected by the trea-
42 surer, pursuant to this article during the next preceding calendar
43 month. The amount so payable shall be certified to the town supervisor
44 by the treasurer, who shall not be held liable for any inaccuracy in
45 such certification. Provided, however, any such certification may be
46 based on such information as may be available to the treasurer at the
47 time such certification must be made under this section. Where the
48 amount so paid over to the town in any such distribution is more or less
49 than the amount due to the town, the amount of the overpayment or under-
50 payment shall be certified to the town supervisor by the treasurer, who
51 shall not be held liable for any inaccuracy in such certification. The
52 amount of the overpayment or underpayment shall be so certified to the
53 town supervisor as soon after the discovery of the overpayment or under-
54 payment as reasonably possible and subsequent payments and distributions
55 by the treasurer to the town shall be adjusted by subtracting the amount
56 of any such overpayment from or by adding the amount of any such under-

1 payment to such number of subsequent payments and distributions as the
2 treasurer and town supervisor shall consider reasonable in view of the
3 overpayment or underpayment and all other facts and circumstances.

4 4. All monies received from the treasurer shall be deposited in the
5 fund of the town, pursuant to section sixty-four-k of the town law.

6 § 1439-lll. Judicial review. 1. Any final determination of the amount
7 of any tax payable under section fourteen hundred thirty-nine-ccc of
8 this article shall be reviewable for error, illegality or unconstitu-
9 tionality or any other reason whatsoever by a proceeding under article
10 seventy-eight of the civil practice law and rules if application there-
11 for is made to the supreme court within four months after the giving of
12 the notice of such final determination, provided, however, that any such
13 proceeding under article seventy-eight of the civil practice law and
14 rules shall not be instituted unless (a) the amount of any tax sought to
15 be reviewed, with such interest and penalties thereon as may be provided
16 for by local law shall be first deposited and there is filed an under-
17 taking, issued by a surety company authorized to transact business in
18 this state and approved by the state superintendent of financial
19 services as to solvency and responsibility, in such amount as a justice
20 of the supreme court shall approve to the effect that if such proceeding
21 be dismissed or the tax confirmed the petitioner will pay all costs and
22 charges which may accrue in the prosecution of such proceeding or (b) at
23 the option of the petitioner, such undertaking may be in a sum suffi-
24 cient to cover the taxes, interest and penalties stated in such determi-
25 nation, plus the costs and charges which may accrue against it in the
26 prosecution of the proceeding, in which event the petitioner shall not
27 be required to pay such taxes, interest or penalties as a condition
28 precedent to the application.

29 2. Where any tax imposed hereunder shall have been erroneously, ille-
30 gally or unconstitutionally assessed or collected and application for
31 the refund or revision thereof duly made to the proper fiscal officer or
32 officers, and such officer or officers shall have made a determination
33 denying such refund or revision, such determination shall be reviewable
34 by a proceeding under article seventy-eight of the civil practice law
35 and rules; provided, however, that (a) such proceeding is instituted
36 within four months after the giving of the notice of such denial, (b) a
37 final determination of tax due was not previously made, and (c) an
38 undertaking is filed with the proper fiscal officer or officers in such
39 amount and with such sureties as a justice of the supreme court shall
40 approve to the effect that if such proceeding be dismissed or the tax
41 confirmed, the petitioner will pay all costs and charges which may
42 accrue in the prosecution of such proceeding.

43 § 1439-mmm. Apportionment. A local law adopted by the town of Chester,
44 pursuant to this article, shall provide for a method of apportionment
45 for determining the amount of tax due whenever the real property or
46 interest therein is situated within and without the town.

47 § 1439-nnn. Miscellaneous. A local law adopted by the town of Chester,
48 pursuant to this article, may contain such other provisions as the town
49 deems necessary for the proper administration of the tax imposed pursu-
50 ant to this article, including provisions concerning the determination
51 of tax, the imposition of interest on underpayments and overpayments and
52 the imposition of civil penalties. Such provisions shall be identical to
53 the corresponding provisions of the real estate transfer tax imposed by
54 article thirty-one of this chapter, so far as such provisions can be
55 made applicable to the tax imposed pursuant to this article.

1 § 1439-ooo. Returns to be secret. 1. Except in accordance with proper
2 judicial order or as otherwise provided by law, it shall be unlawful for
3 the treasurer or any officer or employee of the county or town, includ-
4 ing any person engaged or retained on an independent contract basis, to
5 divulge or make known in any manner the particulars set forth or
6 disclosed in any return required under a local law enacted pursuant to
7 this article. However, that nothing in this section shall prohibit the
8 recording officer from making a notation on an instrument effecting a
9 conveyance indicating the amount of tax paid. No recorded instrument
10 effecting a conveyance shall be considered a return for purposes of this
11 section.

12 2. The officers charged with the custody of such returns shall not be
13 required to produce any of them or evidence of anything contained in
14 them in any action or proceeding in any court, except on behalf of the
15 county or town in any action or proceeding involving the collection of a
16 tax due under a local law enacted pursuant to this article to which such
17 county or town is a party, or a claimant, or on behalf of any party to
18 any action or proceeding under the provisions of a local law enacted
19 pursuant to this article when the returns or facts shown thereby are
20 directly involved in such action or proceeding, in any of which events
21 the court may require the production of, and may admit in evidence, so
22 much of said returns or of the facts shown thereby, as are pertinent to
23 the action or proceeding and no more.

24 3. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit the delivery to a
25 grantor or grantee of an instrument effecting a conveyance or the duly
26 authorized representative of a grantor or grantee of a certified copy of
27 any return filed in connection with such instrument or to prohibit the
28 publication of statistics so classified as to prevent the identification
29 of particular returns and the items thereof, or the inspection by the
30 legal representatives of such county or town of the return of any
31 taxpayer who shall bring action to set aside or review the tax based
32 thereon.

33 4. Any officer or employee of such county or town who willfully
34 violates the provisions of this section shall be dismissed from office
35 and be incapable of holding any public office in this state for a period
36 of five years thereafter.

37 § 1439-ppp. Foreclosure proceedings. Where the conveyance consists of
38 a transfer of property made as a result of an order of the court in a
39 foreclosure proceeding ordering the sale of such property, the referee
40 or sheriff effectuating such transfer shall not be liable for any inter-
41 est or penalties that are authorized pursuant to this article or article
42 thirty-seven of this chapter.

43 § 3. Severability. If any provision of this act or the application
44 thereof shall for any reason be adjudged by any court of competent
45 jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or
46 invalidate the remainder of this act, but shall be confined in its oper-
47 ation to the provision thereof directly involved in the controversy in
48 which such judgment shall have been rendered.

49 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, that
50 section two of this act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it
51 shall have become a law and shall expire December 31, 2040 when upon
52 such date the provisions of such section shall be deemed repealed.