



## Town of Lexington Community Preservation Committee

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Articles 6 and 7: Community Preservation Committee

Report to Special Town Meeting  
May 2009

Released May 6, 2009

## **Community Preservation Committee**

### **Special Town Meeting May 2009**

The CPC is recommending two articles to Special Town Meeting for its consideration. The first, Article 6, is for the acquisition of land for recreation, affordable housing and open space. The second, Article 7, regards the administrative budget. Each of these articles has been evaluated in light of the articulated criteria for acceptable CPA projects as described in our report to Annual Town Meeting, released on April 1, 2009. For further information on the criteria or the CPA, please refer to our report to Annual Town Meeting or to our website, <http://ci.lexington.ma.us/Comittees/CommunityPreservationCommittee/CPC.cfm>

## **ARTICLE 6**

<b>Request:</b>	<b>Land Acquisition</b>
<b>CPA Category:</b>	<b>Recreation, Affordable Housing, Open Space</b>
<b>Amount Requested:</b>	<b>\$ 4,197,000</b>
<b>Amount Recommended:</b>	<b>\$ 4,197,000</b>
<b>CPC Vote:</b>	<b>(9-0)</b>

### **Project Description:**

This project requests funding for the purchase of three parcels of land, Lots 38, 40A and 43 on Assessors' Property Map 20, and its associated due diligence and site planning costs. The costs for this acquisition break down as follows:

- Acquisition - \$4,100,000
- Master Plan - \$25,000
- Survey- \$25,000
- Legal- \$35,000
- Site Assessment (MGL c. 21E) - \$12,000

The total of \$4,197,000 covers all anticipated costs for this project. The acquisition price is below the appraised value of the property (\$4,400,000).

Collectively these parcels total 7.93 acres and are located just west of the intersection of Lowell Street and Westminster Street on the Arlington town line. The frontage for the property is on Lowell Street, and the parcel lies just north of the Arlington Reservoir and east of the Munroe Brook. It is presently the site of the Busa Farm, and falls under Chapter 61A. It contains a variety of land uses, including active agricultural, greenhouses, and related farm buildings.

Acquisition of this parcel is key to creating a greenway corridor in East Lexington from Lowell Street to the Minuteman Bikeway via the Arlington Reservoir trail, Rindge Park and the Jerry Cataldo Conservation Area. There is an existing trail from Rindge Park to the southern edge of the parcel, which would be formalized and expanded. In addition to its open space qualities, the parcel also has important watershed value. It lies 150 feet north of the Arlington Reservoir, and 200 feet east of Munroe Brook, both important wetland resources.

While the recreation plan for this land is in its early stages, possibilities include a multipurpose field, a tot lot, picnic area, community gardens, trails and associated parking. In addition to preserving the land for open space purposes, 31,000 square feet off Lowell Street will be designated for community housing.

### **Project Goals and Objectives:**

- Acquire property for recreational open space (active or passive) and community housing
- Preserve an important connecting parcel of open space in east Lexington
- Create an important recreation resource for Lexington residents with a potential to create multiple fields such as a multi-purpose field and a little league field
- Create a neighborhood park with a tot lot and picnic area
- Improve conditions on the site to better protect wetlands, including keeping the wetland resource area and buffers protected and in their natural state
- Create a greenway corridor linking the site with adjacent open space areas, such as Rindge Park and the Minuteman Bikeway.
- Create an opportunity for additional community gardens
- Create community housing

**Project Benefit:**

This purchase will benefit Lexington by protecting the open space near the Arlington town line, promoting recreational opportunities, and creating lots for community housing.

**Funding Request:**

The project is requesting a total of \$4,197,000 in CPA funds for the preservation of open space, the creation of recreation opportunities and the creation of community housing.

Hard copy for STM will have map of Busa Farm on this page.

## ARTICLE 7

<b>Request:</b>	<b>Administrative Expenses</b>
<b>CPA Category:</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b>Amount Requested:</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>
<b>Amount Recommended:</b>	<b>\$ 25,000</b>
<b>CPC Vote:</b>	<b>(9-0)</b>

### **Background:**

According to the Community Preservation Act, up to 5% of annual CPA funds may be used for the operation and administration costs of the Community Preservation Committee. Permissible uses of these funds are for staff salaries, mailings, public notices, overhead, legal fees, membership dues, and other miscellaneous expenses related to CPA projects. In FY '09, the Committee budgeted \$50,000 for its administrative costs. Midway through the fiscal year, however, the CPC's three day a week Administrative Assistant moved to a full time position within the Town, but in another department. In an effort to attract and retain qualified staff, the part-time CPA position was combined with a part-time position supporting the offices of the Town Manager and Finance Department, resulting in one full-time benefit-eligible position. The CPC's pro-rated share of these benefits was not reflected in the original administrative budget of \$50,000. It is estimated that \$8,000 in additional funds is needed to cover this cost.

The CPC also anticipates that it will exceed its estimate for legal fees in FY '09. This is due in part to the necessary legal review of CPC articles for three town meetings that will have been held this fiscal year: the November 2008 Special Town Meeting, the 2009 Annual Town Meeting, and the May 2009 Special Town Meeting, and to the periodic legal services related to previously authorized projects. For these reasons, the anticipated overrun in the CPC budget due to legal fees is estimated at \$16,500.

The CPC also anticipates miscellaneous overruns for legal advertisements, printing costs and supplies. This anticipated overrun is projected at \$500.

<b>Administrative Costs</b>	<b>8,000</b>
<b>Legal Fees</b>	<b>16,500</b>
<b>Misc. (legal ads, printing, etc)</b>	<b><u>500</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 25,000</b>

### **Funding Request:**

The CPC respectfully requests \$25,000 to cover unanticipated administrative, legal and miscellaneous costs in FY'09. Any unused portion of these monies will close to the Undesignated Fund Balance of the Community Preservation Committee at the end of the FY'09 fiscal year on June 30, 2009, where it will be available for future CPA appropriation at the following Annual Town Meeting.