



# Town of Lexington - FY 2017-FY 2021 Capital Improvement Projects

**Project Name:** Wright Farm Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study **Date:** 15-Oct-15  
**Project ID Number:** 1007 **Revision Date:** 19-Nov-15  
**Submitted By:** Conservation Commission **Department:** Land Use - Conservation **Priority:** 1  
**First Year Submission?**  **Phone #:** 781-698-4531 **E-mail:** Conservationcomm@lexingtonma.gov

## **Description of Project:**

With the acquisition of the Wright Farm residential lot, the Town now has an enclosed barn on a portion of land to be incorporated into the previously acquired 12.6 acre Conservation parcel. The barn is in some disrepair and this funding request is to investigate what it would take to renovate the building into a space useable for environmental education programs, among other uses.

Located at 241 Grove Street, this is the northernmost property in Lexington. The historic barn is a three story structure with a shed portion on the back side. While the building appears structurally sound, it is most definitely a barn, and would need significant upgrades to be used as a public space.

The vision for this barn is a rehabilitation into a gateway to Lexington from both Bedford and Burlington, and a new life as an educational center for all community members. Initial conversations have taken place with Lexington Public Schools staff and with education planners at Mass Audubon regarding the possibilities for the property and the space.

The next steps will be to conduct an environmental programming feasibility study and a barn structural and architectural needs assessment to provide such environmental programming. The assessment would involve having the barn thoroughly researched and inspected by an architectural professional to identify structural stability and feasible renovation alternatives and associated costs related to having the barn accessible by the public and providing educational programming.

## **Justification/Benefit:**

Renovation of the Wright Farm Barn would benefit many members of the Lexington community, and would extend to Bedford and Burlington as well, and perhaps beyond. As an educational facility the barn could house a number of activities, from adult education classes to school field trips to preschool nature adventure programs. As we learn more and more about the advantages of outdoor learning experiences for all ages, a space such as this could put Lexington on the forefront of public environmental education.

In addition, maintaining the historic barn will preserve a piece of Lexington's history as an agricultural village. Since there is a significant amount of space available, exhibits on wetland conservation and other town projects could be created to educate community members of various requirements and ongoing projects.

## **Impact if not completed:**

In its present state, the historic barn is only suitable for storage, and is already in need of some maintenance, and will continue to deteriorate without maintenance and upkeep. We have learned that school field trips for off-site learning opportunities are increasingly difficult to schedule, for reasons of both available time during the school day and associated costs. An in-town environmental and outdoor learning center, potentially open to schools of neighboring towns as well, would be welcome addition, especially one that allows easy access to three diverse natural environments-open meadows and grassland areas, protected wetland resource areas, and forested areas-as is true of the Wright Farm. A renovated historic barn could add shelter, bathrooms, classroom, and exhibit space. Such a use would ensure continued presence and preservation of an historic barn structure at the northern entrance of town. If this is feasible, it is an opportunity that the Town should not miss out on.

## **Timeframe:**

This is a long-term project considering the actual, physical rehabilitation of the Wright Farm Barn, but the needs assessment and feasibility study could be completed before the end of FY2017.

## **Replace. Freq:**

0 Years

## **Stakeholders:**

Conservation Commission  
Board of Selectmen  
Conservation Department  
Lexington Public Schools  
School Committee  
Community Members

## **Operating Budget Impact:**

N/A

## **Cost Analysis:**



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**Funding Source:**  Levy  CPA  Revolving  State Aid  Water  Sewer  Recreation  Private  Other

## Capital Funding Request

1007	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Totals
Site Acquisition	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Design/Engineer	\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$35,000
Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Contingency	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>
<b>CPA Amt. Req.</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	

Recurring Cost

\$0.00

Maintenance Cycle

0 Years

### CPA Purpose

- Open Space
- Recreation
- Historic
- Housing

## Basis of Cost Projection:

In process of obtaining cost estimates from professional environmental education organizations and professional architects who specialize in historic structures and educational structures.