



Town of Lexington

Special Town Meeting 2020-3

Article 7: Land Acquisition

This article seeks to use money from the Community Preservation Fund to purchase 4.5 acres of land at the end of Highland Ave to add to the Upper Vine Brook Conservation Area. This property has been on the Conservation Commission Land Acquisition Subcommittee list of desirable properties for several years. The total acquisition cost of \$3,560,000 is below the appraised values for this property.

As shown on the conceptual layout map, the house lot will be retained by the current owner. After consulting with members of the Lexington Housing Assistance Board, the Select Board concluded that the existing house was not suitable to create affordable housing units. Given the historical significance of the existing house, the rehabilitation costs associated with a historic preservation project, and the lack of appropriate utilities at the property, the overall project costs would be excessive. Therefore, the recommendation is to purchase only the land, and not the portion of the land with the house.

Further, the Select Board concluded that the entirety of the remaining land would be best suited for conservation purposes rather than carving out a portion for building new affordable housing units. This lot of land is not suitable for creating affordable housing because of the significant associated costs. This property has a substantial downhill slope, a wetland area, dense forestation, an unpaved paper street, and a lack of access to proper utility hookups. Given these factors, any effort to create affordable housing would be too costly.

The Select Board unanimously supports passage of this Article.