

West Falmouth Village Association



The West Falmouth Village Association strongly supports the proposed amendment to Petitioners Article 18, which seeks to permanently conserve 2.8 acres of forest land at 0 West Falmouth Highway. The amendment to be presented at town meeting is as follows....

To see if the Town will vote to transfer the care, custody and control of the Town-owned parcels located on West Falmouth Highway in Falmouth, Barnstable County, Massachusetts, identified as 0 West Falmouth Highway (Parcel ID 26-04-057A-001) and (Parcel ID 26-04-062A-000), to the Falmouth Conservation Commission pursuant to M.G.L. c.40, §8C, for conservation, recreation, and water protection purposes, and to authorize the Select Board to execute and deliver any deeds, instruments and other documents necessary to effectuate such transfer and to include in any deed or instrument appropriate language dedicating the land for conservation purposes in accordance with Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution, and to authorize the Conservation Commission to manage, protect, and regulate the property as conservation land; or to take any other action relative thereto.

These parcels were allocated for housing development by a two-thirds majority vote of Town Meeting Members on Article 19 in November 2024. Our association has been presented with extensive historical records—maps, deeds, Falmouth Enterprise articles, and Town Meeting minutes—concerning the town’s purchase of this land in 1931. The evidence is clear: this land, along with hundreds of acres surrounding Long Pond, was intentionally acquired by the Town for watershed protection and forestation.

In 1929, Town Meeting created a “Committee for the Protection of the Long Pond Watershed,” including water commissioners and forestry officials. Two years later, the Town voted 231 to 5 to purchase the West Falmouth Highway acreage for conservation purposes. Unfortunately, at the time of the 2024 Town Meeting, this land was understood to have been acquired through a “tax title taking,” leading to the mistaken impression it was suitable for development. The history of the purchase of this land was not made available to town meeting members. It may be that coding errors in the town's land records database could have led to this misinterpretation.

For nearly a century, the Town has upheld this area’s conservation intent—A school was proposed on some of this protected land in 1949 and was rejected. More recently, the proposed location for a new police station on a similar parcel on Brick Kiln Road has been challenged due to watershed concerns. To continue that legacy of stewardship, not only do we support Article 18, transferring custody of the 0 West Falmouth Hwy parcels to the Falmouth Conservation Commission, but we also urge the town to review the records of ownership and GIS database classifications of all the land surrounding the Long Pond watershed and take whatever actions necessary to ensure its protection for generations to come as those before us intended.

Tammy Gilbert, Secretary
West Falmouth Village Association

