

**ARTICLE 37. COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND -- ACQUISITION OF BROADACRES FARM**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate an amount of Community Preservation Funds, as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee, for the purpose of permanently protecting, by purchase by the Town upon such terms as the Board of Selectmen determine or another conservation organization for conservation purposes, or by granting of a conservation restriction to the Town, pursuant to General Laws chapter 184, sections 31- 32, all or part of approximately 34.5 acres of land located at 82 Morse Road, and all expenses in connection therewith; to see whether this sum shall be raised by borrowing, under General Laws chapter 44, section 7 the Community Preservation Act, or any other enabling authority; and to appropriate a sum sufficient to pay the annual debt service from FY19 Community Preservation Fund Revenue including bond and note issuance expense; and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to grant a conservation restriction on said parcel if purchased by the Town; or act on anything relative thereto. This appropriation is to be allocated to the Open Space and Recreation categories and funded from unrestricted reserves.

Submitted by the Community Preservation Committee.

(Two-thirds vote required, if borrowed)

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT:** Broadacres Farm is a 34.5+/- acre horse farm located on both the north and south sides of 82 Morse Road. The portion north of Morse Road contains approximately 15 acres, consisting of a 5-acre open field and a portion that has been improved with a house, barn and indoor riding arena. The portion southwest of Morse Road includes approximately 19.5 acres with areas of pasture, wetlands, woodland, and a barn. This farm is listed as a priority parcel for preservation in the 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan and a priority Heritage Landscape in the 2006 Heritage Landscape Inventory Report. Protection of this property provides historical, cultural, agricultural, ecological, and recreational benefits. The property is currently enrolled in Chapter 61A tax classification which allows for a significant reduction in taxes in exchange for a right-of-first refusal to the Town. Under this classification, the Town has the right to meet a bona fide offer within 120 days of receipt of the offer. This Article is intended to anticipate the right of first refusal and work with the owner on the establishment of a fair market value based on the development potential of the land.

This article requests an appropriation to fund the purchase of all the Broadacres Farm property or a portion thereof. The land will be protected for uses as allowed in the Community Preservation Act. The parameters of the potential acquisition are being negotiated. The property abuts the Wake Robin Woods Conservation Land, Featherland Park, and the proposed Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. Acquisition of this property will create more than 50 acres of contiguous conservation land which is part of a larger complex of an additional 63 acres of town-owned parcels containing public trails and protecting natural resource features. The acquisition could also potentially expand the Featherland Park Complex by approximately 30%. The structures on the property including the house, barns, and a large indoor riding arena offer numerous opportunities for potential reuse by the Town.

Access from south of Morse Road through Broadacres Farm will enable better upland access to Wake Robin Woods Conservation Land and provide the ability to create an expanded public trail network. It abuts a large area of mostly off-site floodplain. The protection of this section of Broadacres Farm as an undeveloped parcel will help retain the flood storage capacity of the abutting flood-prone areas.

At the time of warrant production, prior to the valuation being finalized, both the Land Acquisition Review Committee and Conservation Commission voted unanimously to support the Town pursuing acquisition of this parcel subject to establishment and acceptance of a fair market value for the property.. The committees will update their positions at Town Meeting.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN POSITION:** The Board of Selectmen will report at Town Meeting.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:** The Finance Committee will report at Town Meeting.