



COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

7 MAIN STREET, WHITINSVILLE, MA 01588

GLENN KING, CHAIR

cpc@northbridgemass.org

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 31, 2022

To: Town Manager/Board of Selectmen; Board of Assessors; Board of Health; Conservation Commission; Historical Commission; Planning Board; Playground & Recreation Commission; Building Inspector/ZEO; Conservation Agent; & Director of Public Works

From: COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner/CPC Administrator

RE: **CASTLE HILL FARM PROPERTY**

ASSESSOR MAP 3 PARCEL(S) 1 & 4 and ASSESSOR MAP 4 PARCEL(S) 29 & 33
2022 Fall Annual Town Meeting -Land Acquisition (via CPA Funds)

The Northbridge Community Preservation Commission (CPC) has sponsored a warrant article for the 2022 Fall Annual Town Meeting, to consider land acquisition (± 95 acres) of property known as Castle Hill Farm (portion of). The subject property, located along Castle Hill Road includes Assessor Map 3 Parcels 1 & 4 and Assessor Map 4 Parcel 29 & a portion of Parcel 33, where the property owner intends to retain 7.85 acres of AP 4/33 for a single-family house lot. Referenced is made to Planning Board ANR approval [01-FA-2022] dated August 10, 2022, accompanied by plan entitled "Plan of Land for Castle Hill Road" and letter dated August 08, 2022 from W. Robert Knapik, P.L.S. (attached hereto).

The Commission seeks Town Meeting approval to purchase the property utilizing Community Preservation Funds (w/borrowing), from proceeds of the 1% local property tax surcharge collected by the Town, where at the November 2017 General Elections the Town adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

As required for all CPA land acquisitions, the Community Preservation Commission has sought an independent appraisal of the property to help determine acquisition price. The CPC anticipates a formal report by the end of September from LandVest, Inc. a real estate appraisal firm in Boston. In addition, a Conservation Restriction shall be placed on the property as part of conveyance to Northbridge. A Conservation Restriction (CR) is a permanent deed restriction, recorded with the Registry in accordance with MGL Ch 184 [General Provisions Relative to Real Property]. It is the intention of the Community Preservation Commission to have the property conveyed to the Conservation Commission on behalf of the Town.

As the property owner, the Town would not be allowed to hold the restriction, a qualified conservation organization such as a local land trust or state agency would be responsible for enforcing the terms of the restriction on the land. The CPC shall review with Metacomet Land Trust (a local non-profit) of their interest and ability to oversee a Conservation Restriction to be placed on the subject property.

As part of due diligence, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was completed for the subject property. Report prepared by SAGE Environmental, Inc. date May 31, 2022 may be viewed online via the Northbridge Community Preservation Committee webpage <https://www.northbridgemass.org/community-preservation-committee>

At this time, the Community Preservation Commission kindly seeks your input; noting any concerns, questions, and/or recommendations (in support of or in opposition to). If you wish to convene a meeting with the CPC before offering comment please let me know and arrangements shall be made. The Commission shall review correspondence received at its meeting(s) of September 12 and October 17, 2022.

Thank you & take care.