

Article 4. Feasibility Study for Review of Potential Third Site for a Grass Field

Proposed by: Board of Selectmen, Recreation Commission

Estimated Cost: \$50,000

To determine whether the Town will vote to:

- a) appropriate a sum of money, not to exceed \$50,000, to be expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen for a feasibility study to investigate and identify a site for a multi-purpose, natural grass playing field in Wayland, Massachusetts, and those sites to be considered shall include, but not be limited to, Greenways, the Route 20 South Landfill, and Orchard Lane/Holiday Road, and
- b) to determine whether such appropriation shall be provided by taxation, by transfer from unappropriated funds, by transfer of funds already appropriated for another purpose, by borrowing under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44 or other enabling authority, or otherwise. (If borrowing, the article should include standard authorization language for Treasurer and to apply bond premium.)
- c) authorize the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow up to said sum in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, section 7 and 8 and any other enabling authority, and issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor; and
- d) authorize any premium received by the Town upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved hereunder in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, section 20, thereby reducing by a like amount the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs.

FINANCE COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

This is one of three articles proposed by the Board of Selectmen for a vote at Special Town Meeting in 2021 for the purpose of planning or studying the addition of new athletic fields in the Town of Wayland. This article specifically requests funding to study a potential new athletic field or fields multiple sites in Wayland, including the Greenways, the Route 20 South Landfill, and Orchard Lane/Holiday Road. Other fields that could be included in the study include, but are not limited to, Alpine Field and Claypit Hill School. A map showing the locations of these sites may be available at Special Town Meeting.

The Recreation Commission has studied and presented numerous times to Town Meeting and Town residents the need for additional playing fields for school and recreation sports and activities. As noted in the write-up for Article 2 of this Special Town Meeting (Grass Field at Loker Conservation & Recreation Area Design Fees), several reports since 2010, and demand by Town residents, have demonstrated the need for additional playing fields in Wayland. Two of the sites noted in this article for potential study, the Greenways and Orchard Lane/Holiday Road, have been noted in some of those studies. The Route 20 South Landfill site was identified as a site for potential development as a recreational area in the 2016 Open Space and Recreation Plan and the 2017 WRAP Report, and the Board of Selectmen created a Visioning Committee to provide feedback on the Town's vision for the Route 20 South Landfill site. Recreation fields

are one use being considered. This study would help determine whether recreation fields are feasible at the Route 20 South Landfill site.

A difference between the sites noted in this proposed field study and the other articles presented at this Special Town Meeting is that there is the potential to develop more than one field at some of these locations, which could provide an option for meeting more of the stated need for fields with a single construction project. Something that has not previously explored in other requests for funding of athletic fields.

The Board of Selectmen recommends _____. Vote:

The Recreation Commission recommends _____. Vote:

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR:

- The parcels noted are assets of the Town of Wayland that are not being utilized and studying their potential use as playing fields would make them active and beneficial assets to the Town.
- The potential to develop more than one athletic field on a site could have significant financial benefits to the Town, as once work is commenced at an area, the cost for more than one field may become substantially less on a per field basis.
- If an area can be developed with multiple playing fields, it might satisfy the Town's need for athletic fields for several years and therefore allow the Town to focus on other assets that are a priority to many in Town.
- This study could provide a good comparison to other sites being considered for athletic field development, as the Town should focus such development in areas that are most cost-effective.
- Feasibility studies sometimes provide a decision-making framework to help the town make the best decisions that are cost effective.

ARGUMENTS OPPOSED:

- It could be argued that if the Town is moving forward with the development of a field at the Loker Recreation site, it should not simultaneously be expending funds to study the development of other fields.
- A capital committee in Wayland might be the place to commence studying the use of this parcel and others, and that initial study, by residents or a Town board or committee, does not require any funding.
- The source of funding for this article has not yet been determined and would be better done in conjunction with the Fiscal Year 2023 budget at Annual Town Meeting in the Spring of 2022.
- Some may feel that this article is too open ended to obtain a positive result.

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RECOMMENDATION: The Finance Committee recommends _____. Vote

Quantum of Vote: *2/3 vote if borrowing funds under General Laws, Chapter 44, Sections 7 and 8. Majority vote to appropriate funds pursuant to General Laws Chapter 40, Section 5.*

For more information about this article, contact Louise Miller, Town Administrator at lmiller@wayland.ma.us