



Citizens for
Lexington
Conservation

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February, 2002
Kate Fricker, editor

Eileen Entin, President

CANDIDATES' FORUM ISSUE

Citizens for Lexington Conservation, Inc. once again devotes this annual issue of its newsletter to candidates' statements in order to help you, the voter, cast your ballot effectively. All candidates for office were sent a letter soliciting their response to the following questions:

1. *Would you support the passage of a debt exclusion override to pay for the acquisition of portions of the Wright Farm that the Conservation Commission is negotiating?*

2. *Over 40 communities in Massachusetts have adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to provide a local revenue source dedicated to protection of open space, historic preservation, and acquisition of affordable housing. The CPA allows a town to enact a real estate tax surcharge of up to 3 per cent for this purpose. (Some towns have set the rate as low as 0.5% - others have gone to 3%.) The town can, within limits, specify the division of revenues between historic preservation, open space and housing. Towns can also provide certain exclusions (such as excluding*

the first \$100,000 of a property's value from the surcharge). Lexington is studying the CPA to determine if some form of the CPA would be appropriate for our town. Do you think a CPA measure would be desirable to protect open space, preserve historic sites, and increase affordable housing in Lexington? Do you have any suggestions regarding the best parameters for the measure?

CLC does not endorse any candidate. Rather, we urge you to read the candidates' statements, make your own decisions, and VOTE for your candidates on **Monday, March 4.**

CLC publications, guides to the conservation land of Lexington and other interesting materials, are available on the CLC website:
<http://www.lexingtonma.org/clc/HomePage.htm>

See article on Great Meadow, page 10

CLC dues for 2002 are payable now.
Please use the form on page 2.



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Mail to: CLC Inc., P. O. Box 292, Lexington, MA 02420-0003

Candidates for Town-Wide Office

Margery M. Battin
Candidate for Moderator
781-862-3639

Regretfully, as Moderator, I cannot give my opinion on either the Wright Farm for debt exclusion or the merits of the Community Preservation Act. I would, however, encourage the study of any measure that might be desirable and appropriate for Lexington.

If the Moderator is to preside fairly and impartially over Town Meeting, her opinion on issues, persons or groups should not be known.

All questions facing Town Meeting deserve balanced, thoughtful consideration.

Therefore, the Moderator should make certain that the subject under debate is clear, Town Meeting practices and procedures are understood, and all points of view are fully explored. As Moderator I feel it is my role to protect and improve the process by which decisions are made which can affect the quality of life in Lexington.

As Moderator I will continue to do everything possible to see that Town Meeting members receive the information needed to make informed choices and that citizen participants thoroughly understand Town Meeting procedures. Citizen article sponsors have been sent written

instructions to aid them in preparing for Town Meeting. These citizens will be included in the Moderator's meeting with article sponsors during which we establish Town Meeting format, timing, chronology and note areas of potential disagreement. A workshop will again be held for new Town Meeting members to answer questions, explain legal issues, parliamentary procedures and land use as well as financial terms and concepts. I will be readily available for consultation and explanation of meeting procedures to all citizens and officials wishing to be heard at Town Meeting. I will write a newspaper article to explain the protocol for citizen participation.

Cathy Abbott
Candidate for Selectmen
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cathya@rcn.com

1. I support the use of a debt exclusion to purchase conservation land. Without details of the costs and provisions for acquisition of portions of the Wright Farm, I am unable (at the time of writing this) to commit to an override for that purchase. I hope that we will have the opportunity to consider purchase of Wright Farm land this year.

2. The Community Preservation Act (CPA) appeals to me because it creates access to state funds for qualifying initiatives without loss of local control. Unfortunately, the local share of this funding relies on property taxes--an already strained resource--

and adoption of the CPA could challenge affordability for taxpayers. However, the CPA provides options to soften the blow of a property tax increase. Local adoption can include an exemption of the first \$100,000 of property value and for taxpayers who qualify for low-income residential assistance. I believe that these provisions should be included in any CPA proposal to Lexington voters.

Among the elements provided for by CPA, Lexington's commitment of resources has been strong for conservation, less rigorous for affordable housing, and very limited for historic preservation. Allocation of CPA funds beyond the mandated 30% (10% to each) will reflect the demands before us. Targeting CPA funds for a specific project is an attractive option. For example, if Town Meeting voted for a land purchase to be funded through a debt exclusion, it would be worth considering adoption of the CPA in order to leverage state matching funds. The impact on taxpayers would be the same, but our local dollars would go further and a dedicated funding source for progress toward our goals would be in place.

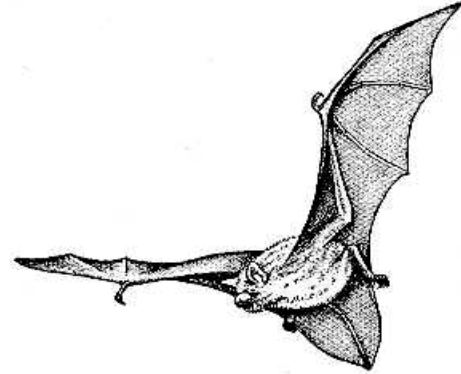
William P. Kennedy
Candidate for Selectman
And Candidate for Town Meeting, Precinct 9
781-862-2502
wpkennedy@hotmail.com

1. Lexington should protect open space whenever possible throughout town and purchase of the Wright farm should be pursued for this reason. The purchase, however, should also fit into an overall plan for appropriations that account for the impact of the tax burden on homeowners.

The purchase should be made when appropriate and in conjunction with the matching funds available from the Community Preservation Act. I believe in the advice given by the Selectmen's Blue Ribbon Committee that the Town must continue to maintain a delicate balance between meeting service demands, responding to capital investment requests (such as the Wright farm) and keeping the real estate tax burden affordable.

2. I support the passage of the CPA in a form that allows it to be used in conjunction with opportunities such as this. Passage should be tied to a definitive plan to purchase open space, affordable housing and historic preservation. This would be in keeping with the Town's long term goals and would allow us, at the same time, to take advantage of the State's matching funds.

Passage should also include safeguards for the less affluent and provide a mandated \$100,000 exclusion to all homeowners.



Dawn McKenna
Candidate for Selectman
781-862-8777

1. As drivers enter the Town of Lexington, they immediately see a reflection of our community values. Along all of the major gateways to Lexington there are large stretches of open space that have been preserved. There are also vestiges of our farming history. The acquisition of Wright Farm would help maintain a piece of our heritage, and visually impact the view coming from Bedford into Lexington. In addition, one of the core values of the town has been the preservation of open space. For these reasons, I would support asking the voters to support a debt exclusion to pay for the acquisition of this important piece of land.

2. Under the Community Preservation Act, the voters determine whether they support an increase in taxes to fund land acquisition, historic preservation, affordable housing and recreation. I have long been an advocate for providing the citizens with the background information and letting them decide whether or not to vote in favor of a program. I would, therefore, support placing the question before the voters through a referendum.

All of the uses specified under the Act are items the citizens have asked the Selectmen to proactively fund over the years. The ability to have a funding source, outside of the constraints of proposition 2 1/2, is attractive. However, there are many capital and operating challenges facing the Town. Asking the voters to raise their taxes has to be done in the context of the size and number of debt exclusions and operating overrides we are likely to face. I would support a 1%-2% increase in property taxes, but would not want to see the increase any higher.

Karl Kastorf
Candidate for Planning Board
And Candidate for Town Meeting, Precinct 7
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1. Yes, I support a debt exclusion override to acquire Wright Farm. The Conservation Commission has done a very good job in identifying critical properties. Decisive action and strong support is required when land such as Wright Farm becomes available.

2. I strongly support the adoption by Lexington of the Community Preservation Act. Again and again the people of Lexington have ranked open space acquisition, diverse and affordable housing, and historic preservation as the highest of community goals. I look forward to the report now being prepared by some of our most capable and thoughtful neighbors; this should provide useful insight to how best to proceed. A recommendation to set a rate at between 1% and 1.5% will have my strong support.

Robin DiGiammarino
Candidate for School Committee
And Candidate for Town Meeting, Precinct 2
781-863-5333
roblex@aol.com

1. Yes, I would support the effort of the Conservation Commission to acquire portions of the Wright Farm through passage of a debt exclusion override.

2. In theory, the Community Preservation Act fits nicely within the core values of the town of Lexington. It works to protect historic resources, add to open space, acquire community housing and land for recreational use. Passage of a special by-law within Town Meeting establishing such a fund is consistent with our town values. The additional dollars provided by the state is tempting for all Massachusetts communities. Yet, with any policy decision, there is a financial impact during implementation of policy. Even with state dollars, the anticipated tax impact must be evaluated in the context of Lexington's financial health, future tax projections and the long term planning around known capital needs ranging from roads to senior center to schools. To decide to enter into a formal community preservation agreement, we must do so cognizant of the benefits and the drawbacks on a limited source of financial resources that are available for other worthy projects. The question I am left to ponder is whether Lexington needs a formal preservation

act to continue to uphold the values dear to our community.

Thomas V. Griffiths
Candidate for School Committee
And Candidate for Town Meeting, Precinct 7
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1. I live about three houses down from Wright Farm and am not unbiased about this beautiful piece of Lexington. I would support either debt exclusion or bonding against CPA revenues to finance the Wright Farm package, assuming the Conservation Commission can negotiate a reasonable purchase/easement arrangement with the owners.

2. The CPA is not perfect, and it presents a political problem peculiar to Lexington: we will be requesting voters to approve a debt exclusion in May or June and, next year, almost certainly, to approve an operating override for FY2004. In this atmosphere, some voters will feel a request to adopt CPA reeks of fiscal carelessness.

Yet, the opposite is true if we use CPA revenues to undertake projects that the town, otherwise, would be likely to undertake with its own resources: the CPA would provide some state money to leverage the projects and the CPA would offer one of the few opportunities to moderate, to a degree, the regressive impact of Real Estate taxes on homeowners.

Notwithstanding great worry about public perception, I favor adopting the CPA to achieve specific town goals and with three of the allowable Real Estate tax exemptions: the first \$100,000 of value and the further exemptions for moderate-income seniors and low-income families.

Candidates for Town Meeting

Precinct 1

John Bartenstein
Precinct 1
781-863-9925
JBartenstein@msn.com

1. Yes. I believe that the pace at which open land in Lexington is disappearing is a matter of serious concern. An investment in open space will help to preserve the character of our town, provide a valuable resource for citizens of all ages, and ultimately enhance the value of every citizen's

property. Once the land has been subjected to development, there is no going back. Although the Wright Farm property may not be as accessible as other town conservation land, I do not believe we can afford to pass up the opportunity to preserve and protect such a lovely tract if a purchase can be made on reasonable terms.

2. The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is an extremely complex piece of legislation. The goals of the Act, its financial impact on taxpayers, and its potential for providing benefits to the Town in the form of state matching grants have been masterfully explicated in the January 30, 2002 Report of the town's Community Preservation Act Advisory Committee. In essence, the Act seeks to induce the town to increase its tax levy for the stated goals with a promise of state matching funds. Although these matching funds might be significant at first, they are not guaranteed in amount and can be expected to dwindle over time. I therefore support the approach favored by a majority of the CPA Committee, namely a "targeted" adoption of the CPA only to help projects that the town has otherwise indicated its intent to fund on its own.

Precinct 2

Robin DiGiammarino
Precinct 2

See Candidates for School Committee

Precinct 3

Alex Nedzel
Precinct 3
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1. Recognize that a debt exclusion is something that goes directly to voters -- Town Meeting's role in approval is in practice very limited. On this question, my position as an individual is therefore more germane than my opinion as a TM candidate. That having been said, I support land acquisitions such as Wright Farm on a planned, prioritized basis. With rare exception, once an open space goes, it's gone for good.

2. Towns, Lexington included, are chronically unable to preserve services without expenditures beyond Prop 2.5 limits. To make ends meet, our town puts a multi-million dollar operating override to voters approximately every three years. In practice, even a full 3% year-after-year CPA surcharge amounts to less than just a single such override. I support the Act's stated objective of

ensuring that at least some town money is spent each year on causes such as those mentioned, but would need to be comfortable that adoption and the associated parameter settings would not unduly limit the town's flexibility in challenging times.

Dan H. Fenn, Jr.
Precinct 3
781-863-5238
fennhdh@aol.com

1. Although at this writing it does not seem likely that the Conservation Commission can reach agreement with the owners of the Wright Farm, I would most certainly favor a debt exclusion override to make it possible for the town to acquire or protect that property. I see it as a long-term investment which will bring great benefit to the community.

2. As a member of the CPA Feasibility Committee appointed by the Selectmen to study the question of Lexington's acceptance of the Act, I do think that, on balance, it could be very beneficial for Lexington. However, it is a complex act, it does involve an added tax, and the new revenues are not allocated in the first instance to a specific project. In my view, the community has not had anything like adequate information or time to consider and discuss the subject. So I think we should raise it for discussion at this Town Meeting and formally consider adopting it next year. I would support the \$100,000 and the low income exclusions.

Gloria V. Holland
Precinct 3
781-862-1284

1. I am committed to preserving and protecting Lexington's open space for now and for generations to come. I will continue to support the acquisition of open space and recreational land protection. A debt exclusion override to pay for the acquisition of portions of the Wright Farm that the Conservation Commission is negotiating seems to me to be a solution I would very seriously consider.

2. The Community Preservation Act (CPA) would provide a very desirable and most needed source of revenue dedicated to the protection of open space. With the astronomical real estate prices, CPA seems a perfectly fair method to help protect open space, preserve historic sites and increase affordable housing. Excluding some portion of the property's value would provide equity and

minimize hardship.

CPA could help to provide the means to purchase conservation land such as part of the Wright Farm. The pressure to develop land is great; the abundance of open land is diminishing. Both of these realities demand our constant attention.

Dan Pion
Precinct 3
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I strongly support Lexington's commitment to preserving open space and historic preservation. However, with a weakened economy, increased unemployment and a debt override question coming before the voters for the school's capital projects, now does not seem to be the appropriate time to ask for more tax increases. While the town might have some flexibility in assigning real estate tax surcharges, we need to be careful how much of a tax burden we place on our community. I think it prudent to search for other sources of revenue at this time to support these important goals.

Since the town is still studying the appropriateness of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) for Lexington, I'd like to see more data that reflects the true impact on our taxpayers. I'd like to see more information on how the CPA has been implemented by and affected the 40 other communities in Massachusetts that have adopted it. More importantly, much more needs to be done to educate our community about the effects and effectiveness of the CPA.

Precinct 4

Lisa Baci
Precinct 4
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1. Yes. As a member of the Conservation Commission, I have worked for many years to protect key parcels of open space such as the Wright Farm. While I would support a debt exclusion override to fund the purchase, I would prefer to see the town adopt and use the Community Preservation Act (CPA) for this purpose.

2. The CPA would provide both a dedicated revenue source and matching state funds to help the town accomplish its open space, affordable housing, and historic preservation goals. I would

support a CPA that includes the exemptions for low-income households and the first \$100,000 of value for residential properties.

Beverly Kelley
Precinct 4
781-861-1546

1. In general, I very strongly support conservation acquisitions. As in any case I would need to hear the proposal and see what the price tag is.

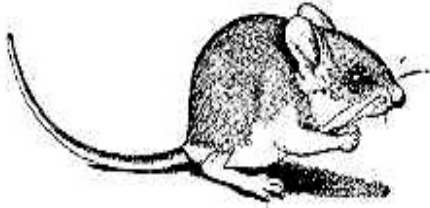
2. The CPA is a noble idea but there are many questions to be answered before a decision should be made. I don't like combining three very important causes - open space, historic sites and affordable housing - together in one financial basket. They are very different matters and should be considered individually as their financial needs arise. Who would decide how these funds would be divided? You say the town can, within limits, specify the division of the funds. Why are there limits? Why doesn't the town have total control over the money it gets from this tax surcharge? Is the state involved and would they have a say in how the money is spent? It seems like a relatively painless way to fund these three causes so why have only 40 of the 351 communities in the state adopted the CPA? I will be very interested to hear the debate on this issue.

Ruth S. Thomas
Precinct 4
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rthomas@bu.edu

1. Yes.

2. Lexington, with its history, density, recent accelerated development, and mandated affordable housing obligations, should have been among the first towns to adopt the Community Preservation Act. Its objectives are compatible with the townspeople's core values as expressed in the Lexington 2020 Vision report.

I favor for the first round a 3% surcharge on residential, commercial, and industrial property with exemptions for the first \$100,000 of taxable value and for low-income property owners. The estimated surcharge for \$300,000 (\$400,000 actual assessment) property would be \$73.50/year. A possible eligible property for historic preservation, affordable housing, and beautification along the Battle Road is 1991 Mass. Ave. in front of St. Brigid's Church.



Precinct 5

Marjorie M. Daggett

Precinct 5

781-862-1651

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1. Depending on the cost of the farm, I would support either a debt-exclusion override or a capital item to be funded within the town's budget by borrowing.

2. The needs and goals of Lexington dovetail with the uses to which the CPA can be put. Lexington has unique and precious historical sites whose maintenance and repair are costly. Lexington needs more affordable housing and recreation land as well as conservation-type open space. Adopting the CPA would allow us to accomplish some of our goals with help from the state through the deed transaction fees. Without the CPA, repairs to the historic houses, for example, would have to come from the town budget and without state help.

Because of the current proposed capital projects, I support a 1% surcharge with exemptions for the elderly and those with limited incomes. The first \$100,000 of real estate assessment should be exempt. Families with incomes less than \$55,000 and residents over the age of 65 with incomes less than \$65,000 should be exempt. Some commercial and industrial properties could also be exempted.

David Williams

Precinct 5

781-862-9922

1. Of course.

2. As a member of the committee studying the possibility of presenting an article to Town Meeting to allow for the adoption of the CPA, I am well aware of all aspects of this question. Since the committee as of this writing has not taken a specific position I will only state that I do support the CPA in some form. As to the specifics of the distribution of the monies collected, exclusions and rate of tax, the committee and myself have yet to reach an opinion.

Precinct 6

Norman P. Cohen

Precinct 6

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1. I would support a debt exclusion override to pay for the acquisition of portions of the Wright Farm if the Conservation Commission is able to negotiate a fair price. The acquisition of land for open space is a core value of the town. Past open space land acquisitions (many at bargain prices compared to today) have enhanced property values throughout the town and have helped preserve Lexington's character by limiting over-development.

2. I am inclined to support legislation which would make it possible for Lexington to acquire more conservation and recreation land, preserve historic sites and provide more affordable housing. I am concerned, however, that the CPA offers false expectations, and its tax surcharge source of funding could prove less than beneficial to the town if it leads to the defeat of other important capital projects. The amount of state funding will diminish as more municipalities accept the act. I believe that when worthwhile projects are put forward in these areas, voters will support the necessary overrides without imposing a tax surcharge. The CPA should not be accepted until a specific eligible project is identified and it is shown that CPA funding would be in the best interests of the Town.

Marshall Derby

Precinct 6

781-862-9556

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1. I do not have the facts that will be presented to Town Meeting with regard to the potential acquisition. I have voted for all prior conservation warrant articles and would lean toward voting for the acquisition; but until all is known including how it fits into the total Town capital program, I can not make a commitment.

2. I served on the CPA Committee and after much review would not be in favor of its implementation unless it were for a targeted project. The town has a lot on its capital plate and I think the voters would be hard pressed to pass an additional tax increase for a future, unspecified use. Too many items on the override ballot could spell defeat for all of them. If, on the other hand, there was a

Town Meeting approved project on which we could save money by enacting a targeted CPA, I would support it.

Jonathan Himmel
Precinct 6
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1. I feel that open space is one of the most valuable long-term investments we can make. I recognize that few parcels such as the Wright Farm remain in Lexington, and would support its acquisition. However, the town faces some daunting fiscal challenges, with school renovations, the DPW facilities, and other infrastructure upgrades as immediate priorities. We'll need more than one debt exclusion to fund them. I am very concerned that the tax burden makes the town less and less affordable for more and more of its citizens. I would therefore strongly favor other funding options in addition to debt exclusions, as long-term revenue sources.

2. Although I recognize that the Community Preservation Act is another property tax increase, two aspects make it somewhat more palatable, those being state matching funds and the fact that proceeds would be dedicated to three specific purposes: open space acquisition, historic Preservation, and affordable housing. While we might all agree on these as important priorities, the CPA will also assure a long-term, dedicated funding mechanism.

I would like to see the CPA tax rate limited to 1 or 2 percent. Having said this, I will add that I am very concerned about Lexington's property tax rate. There is little merit in supporting affordable housing on one hand while making the town less affordable on the other. I therefore recommend investigating alternative funding sources. In addition to the modest CPA tax surcharge, I think we should explore either a levy on home sales or a surcharge on developers building multiple speculative houses in a given year.

David L. Kaufman
Precinct 6
781-862-2386
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1. I would almost certainly support a debt exclusion override to pay for the acquisition of portions of the Wright Farm. (That is assuming that the price is a fair and reasonable one acceptable to both the town and the Wrights. We do not yet know the amount requested for such an

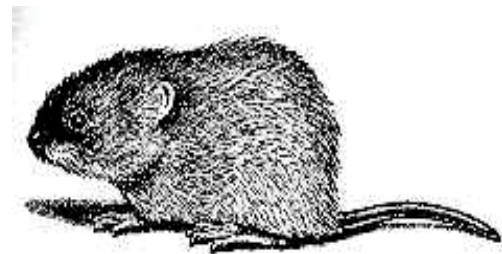
exclusion and at some point even a desirable piece of conservation land can become too expensive.)

2. I am generally supportive of the adoption of the CPA by Lexington. I have not had enough opportunity, at this time, to study it or the suggested rates carefully and I do not yet have any suggestions on implementation parameters or details. The impacts on homeowners who pay the surcharge are in the details of the implementation.

Robert V. Whitman
Precinct 6
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1. I very much hope that the town can acquire portions of the Wright Farm for conservation. While I must await the recommendations from town boards before making a final decision, I am inclined toward support of the proposed debt exclusion override.

2. On the other hand, I am quite torn by the issue of implementing the Community Preservation Act. I understand that historic preservation, open space acquisition and provision of affordable housing tend to be regarded as matters of lesser priority when financial resources are squeezed, and hence I have been a supporter of the concepts behind the Act. However, I am quite disappointed that the Legislature chose to allow special funding for such needs only via what amounts to a surcharge on almost every household's real estate tax. The permissible exclusions do not go far enough in mitigating the already large burden on households that are land-rich relative to income. Hence my mind is still open about this issue, and I look forward to the debate before and at Town Meeting.



Precinct 7

Thomas Griffiths
Precinct 7
See Candidate for School Committee

Philip Hamilton
Precinct 7
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1. I strongly support the passage of a debt-exclusion override to pay for the Wright Farm acquisition. I am a member of the Conservation Commission (currently vice-chair) and a member of the Commission's Land Acquisition Planning Committee. At Town Meeting two years ago, I presented a Conservation Commission article asking for a \$3 million bonding authorization for land acquisition, and it was passed. The preservation of open space has been identified as one of Lexington's core values, and the Wright Farm, with its beautiful fields and woods, located at one of the entrances to the town, is a good example of the kind of open space we should preserve.

2. I favor adoption of the Community Preservation Act. By allowing a real estate tax surcharge and limiting the expenditure of the resulting revenue to open space, historic preservation and affordable housing, the CPA would provide a mechanism to fund expenditures in three areas which I believe are of particular importance to Lexington. Adoption of the CPA would also enable the town to receive certain limited state aid for those purposes. I would favor a surcharge formula that excluded part of a property's value, to cushion its effect, especially on residents with modest homes and modest incomes.

Karl Kastorf
Precinct 7
See Candidate for Planning Board

Martha C. Wood
Precinct 7
781-862-0645
marthacwood@cs.com

1. I urge passage of a debt exclusion override to pay for purchase of the Wright Farm. The farm is one of our last opportunities to purchase such a beautiful, useable piece of land. (Note: a debt exclusion is for a specific purchase. Once that debt is paid off, it is gone. It does not

automatically become available for other purposes.)

2. Since protecting open space, providing for historical preservation and affordable housing are all major interest of mine, I support the goals and concepts of the CPA. However, until I see what specifically is being proposed, I do not know how I would vote on a future proposal.

Florence Connor (DeDee)
Precinct 8
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1. Yes, yes, yes! It would be unconscionable to let this coveted farm slip into the developer's hands.

2. This is where the war against England and taxation was fought -- how can we in good conscience add another tax as we also consider overrides? What we need to do is rely on our citizens and ask and encourage them to act responsibly and preserve what little open space is still here.

Whenever there has been a crisis and a part of our town has been at risk, we Lexingtonians have made a stand. To offer just two examples: Pine Meadows and the station at Depot Square. There is a reason the Minuteman is our symbol; he represents action. Let's not tax the newcomer; let's take the responsibility ourselves and then welcome the newcomer to be a "Minuteman". (A Lexington homeowner who values open space, our historic past, and diversity.)

Precinct 8
Stewart Kennedy
Precinct 8
781-861-7697
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1. Yes, as a Town Meeting member I would support a debt exclusion override for this purpose. Preserving key parcels of open space such as the Wright Farm as conservation land is clearly one of the wisest investments we can make. The portion of the Wright Farm under negotiation is seen by the Conservation Commission as a key parcel because of its proximity to existing Lexington conservation areas and abutting open space in Bedford and Burlington. Connecting to Paint Mine and Hennessy's Field and thus across Grove Street to Simond's Brook, and in the other directions to

open space that the neighboring towns are trying to preserve, this parcel could be a key link in an intertown greenway of inestimable value to the entire region.

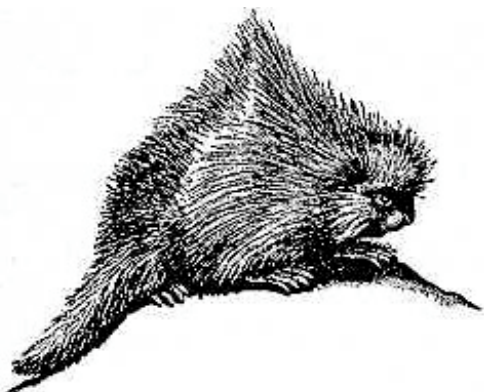
As a member of CLC and as a conservation steward, I regard the town's 1300 acres of current conservation land as an invaluable resource. The importance of open space preserved as conservation land can only increase as the urban sprawl of the metropolitan area continues. We must remember well that once open space is gone it is gone forever.

2. As the answer above shows, I am firmly dedicated to preservation of open space as a highest priority. At the same time I remain sensitive to the need to balance new land acquisitions, along with investments for historical preservation and affordable housing, within a property tax framework that residents can afford, in order to maintain Lexington's very special status as a beautiful, historically rich, livable and yet affordable town. Thus I would seriously consider adopting the CPA under a targeted strategy, Scenario Four of the CPA Feasibility Advisory Committee's 1/30/02 report, as the vehicle to purchase Wright Farm property. Doing this now would allow taking advantage of the near-term higher state share – probably 75% this year – greatly reducing the town's cost for the purchase, while providing funds for historical preservation and affordable housing uses as required by the Act. I would favor applying the two permissible exemptions for residential taxpayers, thereby reducing the resulting tax burden for low-income households and for low- and middle-income seniors. The recommended tax surcharge rate would depend on the cost of the targeted land.

Precinct 9

**William Kennedy
Precinct 9**

See Candidate for Selectman



Friends of the Great Meadow

All are invited to a meeting marking the formation of the Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows. This introductory meeting will take place on Tuesday, March 12 at 7:30pm at the Arlington Community Safety Building, 112 Mystic St, Arlington. The agenda of the meeting will focus on two main interest areas, Great Meadows as an educational resource, and natural resource management of the area. The educational group will work to organize educational and recreational activities such as nature walks and field trips. The natural resource group will work on issues such as trail signage, removal of invasive plants, and enhancing wildlife habitat. People attending the meeting will have a chance to contribute their own ideas and establish priorities.

Arlington's Great Meadows is a 183-acre parcel of land located in East Lexington. It is the largest piece of undeveloped land in the Arlington/Lexington area. Once a glacial lake, it is now a wet meadow surrounded by uplands created by glacial outwash. The Meadows was purchased by Arlington in 1871 to serve as a supplementary water storage area, but was only briefly used for that purpose. It has long served as public open space and is a popular recreational spot, particularly since the opening of the Minuteman Bikeway on its southern border. It also provides a hope for local wildlife. To date, 56 species of birds have been found nesting in Great Meadows, we species of amphibians and reptiles live there, and 251 species of plants grow in the wet meadow and uplands. Last summer's Biodiversity Day's survey of the area recorded nearly 400 species of plants and animals there.

Because it is situated between two schools, the Waldorf School of Lexington and Lexington Christian Academy, the Great Meadow is a valuable resource for teaching children about nature and the environment.

For more information, read the Natural Resource and Stewardship Plan, commissioned by Arlington's Conservation Commission. It is available online at

<http://www.town.arlington.ma.us/town/concom/GM/concomGM1001.htm>