



**Citizens for  
Lexington  
Conservation**

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Eileen Entin, Chair

February, 2020

Elaine Quinlan, Editor

## **CANDIDATES' FORUM ISSUE**

### **Save the Date for CLC's Annual Meeting, April 29**

Citizens for Lexington Conservation will hold its annual meeting on **Wednesday, April 29, at 7 pm in Room 237 at the Lexington Community Center**. Our featured speaker will be Lexington resident Sandra L. Anagnostakis, whose topic will be **New Chestnuts for Food and Timber**. Sandra is an Emeritus Agricultural Scientist at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven, CT. She will talk about the history of chestnuts in the United States, and what she and her colleagues have done to help provide chestnut trees for timber diversity in the forests and orchard selections for superior nuts. The meeting is open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. Please join us.



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**2020 CLC dues are payable now.** The status of your dues payment can be found on the address label of snail-mailed newsletters, or near the top of the email announcing this issue. If it says Dues Paid through February 2020 (or earlier), it is time to renew your membership for 2020.

Annual membership to CLC is \$20.00. Suggested membership levels are:

\$ 20 (Twig)

\$ 50 (Branch)

\$100 (Tree)

\$(Other)

You may pay your dues using PayPal on the CLC Website (<https://www.clclex.org>).

If you prefer to contribute by mail, please send your name and the other information requested on the form below, along with your check, to:

Citizens for Lexington Conservation  
P.O. Box 292  
Lexington, MA 02420-0003

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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New Member       Renewal

Go Green. Check here if you would like to have your newsletter in color with live links, using a download link from an email, instead of the paper snail mail.

Membership fees support our organization. CLC is a registered 501(c)(3) organization and all contributions are tax deductible.

## **CLC 2020 Question for candidates, sent to all candidates:**

Citizens for Lexington Conservation, our local environmental advocacy and education organization, has been collecting candidates' responses to environmental issues for many years. Please take a few minutes to draft a response to the question below, and it will be shared with all our members in our February newsletter.

The subject of this year's Candidates' Question is focused on an application by the Conservation Department for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding to develop a site access and design plan with cost estimates for Conservation land access, parking and trail access for the Town's Wright Farm property. Located in the northern corner of the Town, the bulk of the property was acquired in 2012 to preserve as open space, with a second purchase in 2016 of the house and barn with the intent to develop the house for affordable housing and the barn as a community environmental center. Both purchases were achieved using CPA funds.

Since acquiring the two parcels the Conservation Department has engaged consultants to prepare a land management plan for the open space and an engineering assessment of the barn. The house is presently being renovated by LexHAB as affordable housing with a projected occupancy date scheduled for this summer, which will have a decided impact on the existing parking.

At present the property is open to the public but there is little in the way of signage to direct users upon arrival. The property abuts the Burlington Landlocked Forest property with its extensive and heavily used array of hiking and off-road biking trails, the users of which have already created informal trail access connections to the Wright Farm property and to Grove Street.

This application for CPA funds will allow the Conservation Department to create an environmentally sensitive, safe and inviting access plan for the property incorporating parking and trail connections for all users, as well as to consider future possibilities for developing the barn as a community environmental center and creating community garden plots on a portion of the property. It is anticipated that this will be the first of several increasingly significant requests for CPA funding over the next several years for this property to develop more extensive plans and eventually construction allocations for creating the proposed community environmental educational center.

Our question to you as a candidate for Town office is not simply whether you would support this application for CPA funding, but to ask you to provide a few reasons why you feel, or do not feel, that this is a worthy expenditure of CPA funds. Please take the opportunity to visit the CLC website (<https://www.clclex.org>) to review the supporting materials for the Conservation Department's application. If you do not feel that this is a project that you can support, please provide one or more suggestions as to how the Conservation Department should fund this part of the overall planning process for this property.

## **CANDIDATES FOR TOWN-WIDE OFFICE**

### **Candidates for Select Board Member: 3-Year Term**

**Douglas M. Lucente**  
[doug.lucente@gmail.com](mailto:doug.lucente@gmail.com)  
[www.douglucente.com](http://www.douglucente.com)

Lexington has consistently and correctly placed a high value on our precious open space. As we all know, once it is gone you can't get it back. With that said, I would strongly support the spending of CPA funds on the Wright Farm Site Access Planning and Design. The Wright Farm site and the contiguous Land Locked Forest is already well used by several Lexington residents participating in nature activities, but it needs to be more clearly marked for the entire community.

This CPA funding request seeks to do exactly the type of project that the CPA funding was intended for. It is a very worthy and exciting project for the following reasons: 1) This project takes into consideration the educational goals related to conservation, 2) Planning for parking allows hikers, bird watchers, mountain bikers, etc. the opportunity to make use of this beautiful Town asset, 3) I feel very strongly that creating a handicap accessible experience is extremely important. The completed version of the project would truly make the statement that our conservation assets are for everyone of all abilities. 4) The Wright Farm conservation area is an asset that everyone can enjoy at all ages. Our community puts a large emphasis on assets that foster the learning and development of our students, but we must continue to spend on projects and programs that are attractive and usable for all ages. With the appropriate parking and friendly access to trails, I believe that Wright Farm will truly become one of our most popular conservation areas for all generations.

**Mark D. Sandeen**  
[marksandeen@gmail.com](mailto:marksandeen@gmail.com)

I have visited the Wright Farm property and agree that this beautiful property would benefit from a small parking lot to provide improved and safer access to the landlocked forest. The Wright Farm property was acquired with CPA funds in 2012. It is time that we began making the improvements envisioned at that time.

In addition, the house and the barn were acquired in 2016 with the intention that the home would be transferred to LexHAB to provide affordable housing and the barn would be used as an environmental education center. It only makes sense that the Town would develop a plan to provide access to the landlocked forest, the educational center, and the affordable housing home in a consistent manner.

Since the property and the structures were both acquired with CPA funds, I would support the proposed use of CPA funding to engage a consultant to develop a site access design plan considering all three uses.

### **Candidate for School Committee: 3-Year Term**

**Sara Cuthbertson**  
843-513-7467  
[saracuthbertson14@gmail.com](mailto:saracuthbertson14@gmail.com)

I support the use of the requested \$69,000 in CPA funds for the development of a comprehensive plan to ensure the responsible use, accessibility, and further protection of Wright Farm. As a resident of Precinct 7, I have enjoyed spending time in the Landlocked Forest in all seasons, and have been eagerly anticipating this project.

We are a family of avid backpackers, including my young children, and I firmly believe in the value of educating children at a very young age to be good stewards of our resources. Being immersed in the natural environment is the best way to develop their intrinsic motivation to take the lead on issues of environmental conservation. Developing the Wright Farm barn for educational programming would offer a wealth of opportunities for Lexington's students and families, as well as the broader community.

Further, I have seen firsthand the damage that can be done when comprehensive planning isn't initiated early to protect our shared spaces. I believe that the funding of the design phase is essential to protect Lexington's investment in this property, and to ensure that Wright Farm is accessible to all for many years to come.

I look forward to following the Wright Farm project closely in the upcoming years, and can't wait to see the outcome!

### **Candidates for Planning Board: 3-Year Term**

**Charles Hornig**  
781-862-1112  
[hornig.lex@charleshornig.org](mailto:hornig.lex@charleshornig.org)

As a member of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC), I already voted to bring a funding request for the Wright Farm site access and design plan to the 2020 Annual Town Meeting. In previous years, both as a CPC and Town Meeting member, I supported the acquisition of both the farm and house lot, as well as each request for supplemental funds (barn assessment in 2016; contaminated soil and meadow preservation in 2017).

The Wright Farm property represents a significant investment of Town resources for open space, and a great opportunity for future improvement. It is important that we use it as

effectively as possible to achieve a variety of goals. While whatever future projects come out of this study will each need to be judged on their own merits based on available resources, I support the possible uses that have been discussed.

**Robert K. Creech**  
bobcreech@aol.com

This application for CPA funds will allow the Conservation Department to create an environmentally sensitive, safe and inviting access plan for the property incorporating parking and trail connections for all users, as well as to consider future possibilities for developing the barn as a community environmental center and creating community garden plots on a portion of the property. It is anticipated that this will be the first of several increasingly significant requests for CPA funding over the next several years for this property to develop more extensive plans and eventual construction allocations for creating the proposed community environmental educational center.

First, I am not an expert on the use of CPA funds and I rely on the CPC for their focus and decision making with respect to limited CPA funds. I am aware that every year the Committee faces spending decisions based upon a finite budget.

Having said that, I think that this is a good use of CPA funds for the following reasons:

- Planning is everything and the time to consider all implications for this project is during the planning phase. The Wright Farm property, the immediate neighbors and the wildlife that still occupy this area deserve a detailed, context sensitive plan. For me, wildlife should be at the top of the stakeholder list. I am very interested in providing environmental education to young people at this location.
- The amount of money requested is a doable amount for the CPC.

Other thoughts:

- 1) Consider roof mounted solar and solar canopies rather than ground mounted solar.
- 2) I see that you do not want to create a large parking lot – I agree.
  - a. Visitors, including the mountain biking community, have excellent access to the Burlington Forest via Turning Mill Rd. The Estabrook School provides for good parking most of the time.

## CANDIDATES FOR TOWN MEETING

### Precinct 1

No responses were received from Precinct 1 candidates.

## Precinct 2

### **Paul H. Lapointe**

781-863-1987

paulhlapointe@gmail.com

#### Overview

I am not yet prepared to support the Conservation Department's \$69,000 request for Wright Farm Site Access Planning and Design. Before voting for this request, I want to:

- See evidence of planning for future Wright Farm CPA funding requests. (The Conservation Department's \$69,000 request does not indicate the need for any funds beyond FY 2021.)
- Confirm that the Conservation Department has coordinated planning and site access with Bedford and Burlington, who own and manage adjacent conservation properties.
- Better understand the context of other CPA funding requests and the status of the CPA fund in general.

#### 10 CPA Funding Context

Article 10 of the warrant for the 2020 Annual Town meeting presents FY 2021 CPA expenses of about \$5.4 million, consisting of:

- \$2,233,495 to support thirteen specific funding requests, with funding for Conservation Land Acquisition to be determined (TBD)
- \$3,016,730 for debt service
- \$150,000 for administrative costs

The warrant does not include forecasts of the July 1 beginning fund balance, forecast of anticipated revenue, nor of the June 30, 2021, fund balance. I will also need to know what the request is for land acquisition. These are the essential financial facts that I will need before deciding whether to support the Wright Farm request.

### **Jonathan E. Suber**

781-862-4725

jsuber2000y@gmail.com

I support the usage of CPA funds for this project.

The improvements would formalize access to Wright Farm. With the help of CPA funding a greater diversity of users will be able to make use of these resources. A Town resource should be shared with Town residents. By improving access, under-served communities will be able take advantage of the outdoor space. The very young, the very old, and those with

limited mobility will benefit. Planned usage will prevent over-use. Proper maintenance will preserve the land for future residents.

If we do not preserve open public spaces, we will lose them to private uses.

**Charles Hornig**

This candidate's response is under Candidate for Planning Board.

**Avram S. Baskin**

617-680-2938

avram.baskin@icloud.com

Since the Town already owns the Wright Farm property, I believe the requested funds are a worthwhile expenditure. We should not acquire property only for preservation's sake. When the Town acquires new property it should be so the open space can be enjoyed. When property is acquired as open space it should be "developed" enough — trails, signage, etc. — to allow all Lexington residents to use and enjoy the space. This includes accommodations for residents with disabilities, including access to trails.

I was happy to see the inclusion of affordable housing units on the Wright Farm property. We should always welcome new friends and neighbors, especially when the family includes children who will benefit from enrolling in the Lexington school system.

I started out by saying "since the Town already owns the Wright Farm property". If I'm elected to be a town meeting member, I would have to think carefully about future land acquisitions. I believe that elected officials have a fiduciary responsibility to be good stewards of the residential real estate taxes which provide the bulk of the Town's revenue. With new capital projects looming, including a new police station and a new high school, and a limited amount of revenue to go around, the acquisition of additional open space, while desirable, may not be the fiscally responsible decision in the future.

**Nathan Shnidman**

617-308-8971

nshnidman@gmail.com

Thank you for allowing me to participate in the discussion of the proposed use of funds to explore improved access to the Wright Farm property owned by the Town. My name is Nathan Shnidman and I am a Town Meeting Candidate in Precinct 2. My Precinct includes Dunback Meadows, which is a great example of community conservation. I regularly enjoy walking its trails and I appreciate the fact that CPA funds have granted Lexington residents access to and continued maintenance of this and other conservation areas.

I am in favor of investing CPA funds to explore improving the usability and maintainability of the Wright Farm property for the reasons given below. While my final thoughts will be informed by feedback from all stakeholders, including the Conservation Department, I feel it

is important for the Town to continue to invest in improving the usability of conservation areas.

The funds requested to help improve access and conserve the property represent a small fraction of the purchase price of the property. Given the cost to obtain the Wright Farm property, it is incumbent on the Town to educate itself on available options to provide a good return on investment. Improving the usability and sustainability of the property will serve this purpose. In addition, when compared to the other CPA requests for 2020, this request is relatively modest in size and is in keeping with the other proposed projects.

The requested expenditure for a site access and design plan also represents a good usage of CPA funds. It not only satisfies a number of the CPA candidate criteria, it addressed multiple CPA purposes at once by linking open space, recreation facilities, and community housing. It preserves and provides access to open space, which is a clear need given the current demand and *ad hoc* usage. It improves the Town recreational resources by enabling access to multiple recreational uses (e.g. hiking and off-road biking), while maximizing the utility of land already owned by the Town. Further, it promotes community housing by promoting the use of the town owned site.

Given the importance of open spaces, recreational resources, and community housing to our environment and quality of life, I support determining how best to utilize Town properties to satisfy these needs.

### **Precinct 3**

**Steven P. Heinrich**  
617-780-5115  
[sheinrich@rcn.com](mailto:sheinrich@rcn.com)

I reviewed the request for \$69,000 in CPA funding for the Wright Farm Access Planning and Design. I've been a Town Meeting Member since 2005 and have always supported CPA funding for acquiring properties for conservation purposes. I supported the purchase of the Wright Farm and will support this request also. Proper planning is absolutely necessary before we start spending funds for access roadways and parking areas. The many accessible conservation areas we have in Town make Lexington a great place to live. Lexingtonians have spent a great deal of money to acquire these exceptional properties. We need to maintain them so that they are preserved and utilized. Having said that, I realize as a Town Meeting Member that we have many things competing for Town expenditures these days. The upcoming LHS High School Project (the elephant in the room) is going to challenge us to use funds wisely, both regular tax and CPA revenue. I believe we are going to have to limit how much money we will be able to spend on new acquisitions of conservation parcels for the next several years. Our focus should be on the parcels we have already purchased so that we preserve, improve, and maintain what we have. I worry that we cannot buy everything we might have on our wish list. We will need to spend the necessary funds on those properties we already own. Constructing and maintaining trails, access roadways, and parking areas should be priorities. We also should strive to educate

people about conservation in every possible way. So, in summary here's my thinking: (1) I will continue to vote to support conservation of the properties we already own; (2) I will continue to support fully funding the CPA as the CPA tax has done much good for the community; (3) I believe we should carefully scrutinize and possibly defer future acquisitions of land until we are sure that we can afford to purchase them. In short, I strongly support Lexington's conservation efforts, but I believe we need to balance future acquisitions of additional land parcels against other things competing for our attention in Town. To date, I believe my record will show that I have been a strong supporter of Lexington's conservation efforts and requests for funding.

**Cynthia E. Arens**

781-354-3806

cindyaren@hotmail.com

I'll start with saying that the CPA program overall seems to have been a good idea for Lexington. Getting state funding to help subsidize projects that preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities, has clearly helped Lexington do more for its community.

As a member of the Sustainable Lexington Committee, I believe anything that Lexington does has to be through a lens of sustainability. This includes how Lexington uses CPA funds. What can the Conservation Department do with its funds and Lexington's open spaces to promote a fossil-fuel-free future? Certainly having spaces for walking, hiking, and biking are part of that. Creating community gardens and growing more food locally is beneficial. Having the site generate the power that it needs is essential. However, there are other points that I believe need more scrutiny.

Is there any plan to generate any revenue to help with the maintenance of the property? What are the other possibilities for use and perhaps revenue? Including a composting site or horse stable for Lexington residents could generate revenue, for example. This property is at one far corner of Lexington. Does this create a deterrent for Lexington residents, for the education center or in general? Is there data available describing the utilization of this property and other open spaces in Lexington?

I'm generally in support of using CPA funds to develop plans for the site. However, I would stress that it should include multiple options for the use of the land, with a sincere effort to also understand what the long-term costs/needs would be for each option.

**Precinct 4**

**Norman P. Cohen**

781-862-3098

linorm@comcast.net

Developing a site access and design plan for the Wright Farm Site is a worthy expenditure of CPA funds. In order to acquire the Site, the Town used CPA funds to support open space

acquisition, provide affordable housing, preserve historic buildings and plan for future recreational opportunities. Long before passage of CPA, the Towns of Lexington and Bedford took strategic steps and spent money on conservation land acquisitions which eventually led to saving the abutting Burlington Landlocked Forest property from being developed. Now it is time to consider how the public can safely make use of this site in a way that will not damage it. This requested CPA money can result in a plan which will preserve the site in an environmentally sensitive way for years to come. Furthermore, the planning can take into account the future use of the barn on the property for use as a center for environmental education.

**Nancy Ann Shepard**

781-674-9296

nshep12@verizon.net

I am currently running for my 3rd term as a town meeting member. I was a town meeting member in 2012 when CPA funds were used to purchase the Wright Farm property. I voted in favor of that project.

As an outdoor enthusiast, I do take advantage of the many walking trails and conservation areas around Lexington. I feel like this is an important resource in our Town and the health benefits of spending time out in nature are well documented.

This project is an excellent use of CPA funding. Any project that increases access to open space for residents is a worthwhile endeavor. The landlocked forest is a well used area and making access easier is a great idea. Also, making it easier to park to get to these trails and to add signage to direct users will be really helpful.

I am in favor of this project. I appreciate all the efforts of the CLC for this and the future projects that will increase the utilization of this property.

**Ruth S. Thomas**

781-861-1575

rthomas@bu.edu

I enthusiastically support CPA funding to develop a site access and design plan for the Wright Farm property.

To maintain the rural character of the site, I would hope no asphalt, brick, concrete, or other similar material is used for the walks, driveways, and parking lots. Gravel is my preference; presumably, visitors will wear appropriate walking footwear. I also would hope that the Commission seeks additional private donations for the proposed conversion of the barn into a community environmental educational center.

## **Precinct 5**

**Pamela Lyons**

781-861-7879

pammy57@rcn.com

I support CPA funding for a site access/management plan because it is essential that property access be designed to protect the natural landscape and wildlife. I am especially enthused that the barn is envisioned as a community environmental center. Suburban pollinator and wildlife friendly landscaping should be a major component of the programming. There is so much we can do, right here, right now, to bring nature back to our front yards. The barn at Wright Farm can be a catalyst for this.

Although I serve on the Board of Citizens for Lexington Conservation I did not participate in the development of, or discussions regarding, the candidates' question.

**Steven B. Kaufman**

781-856-8758

sbkaufman1@gmail.com

As a candidate for Town Meeting in Precinct 5, I am supportive of the CPA funding proposal to develop and site access and design plan. My family and I have enjoyed using the outdoor trails in the Town and welcome the addition of this site.

I am strongly supportive of an environmental education center at this site, especially given its proximity to Estabrook Elementary School. This center could be focused not only on outdoor education needs but also on educating students and community members about climate change and ways the Town works to improve sustainability. To that end perhaps the site could integrate some renewable energy, sustainable farming and composting exhibits.

I am also supportive of the plans to develop the site for trails and appropriate parking. Given the importance of the site as one of Lexington only open meadows, care must be taken both to identify what parts of the sites should be developed and what parts of the site should be protected from development and traffic, whether foot or bicycle traffic. Developing well marked paths should help this effort. This will be especially important with the additional housing coming to the site.

As a Town Meeting member I would be very focused on supporting sustainability initiatives that help protect the Town's environment. I am also supportive of investments in the community and in neighborhoods that preserve our landscapes. I hope I can have the support of Precinct 5 members affiliated with CLC.

## Precinct 6

**Jonathan A. Himmel**

781-862-3580

jonhimmel@verizon.net

My wife and I walked the Wright Farm Sunday afternoon and were struck by the beauty of the fields and woods. I believe prudent use of CPA funds at Wright farm is appropriate.

While we are cautioned that the April 26, 2018 “Wright Farm Barn: Needs and Feasibility Study” plan is just a concept,

- 3) it does convey an expansive, Phase 1 project Scope.
- 4) there is also expected to be a subsequent phase that reflects the Conservation Commission’s “long term plan.” and
- 5) the barn is in disrepair and should be stabilized, similar to what was done on the East Lexington Stone building.

Thus, I suggest that the Phase 1 Consultant be tasked with developing

- a) a base scope consisting of provisions for parking, signage and basic path improvements,
- b) “priced alternates” for the other desired Phase 1 improvements to help determine the final Phase 1 project sitework bid scope,
- c) better definition and pricing of the Conservation Commission’s “long term plan” scope, complete with building improvements, timeline, and anticipated operating cost, thus giving the Phase 1 work context and
- d) bid documents for basic stabilization of the building, consistent with “c” above.

With the above strategy, the Wright farm could return to the next Annual Town Meeting for 1) CPA funding for bidding and construction of the Phase 1 site scope and building stabilization and potentially 2) CPA funding for design services for a further refined “long term scope.”

**Morton G. Kahan**

781-861-0994

mkahan@partners.org

The application for CPA funding to develop a site access and design plan for Lexington’s Wright Farm property has my strong support. This is precisely the kind of project for which CPA funding was established—developing facilities that can enhance the lives of many in our community, young and old. Having the barn as a community environmental center makes great sense at a time when our environment is severely threatened. Every age group can benefit from this planned facility.

From personal experience I am aware that the hiking and biking trails adjoining the property are unique in our community and offer opportunities for physical challenge within easy reach

of our homes. For the many enthusiasts attracted to the area, well planned and developed trail access will be essential. Having wisely purchased this property, it is now incumbent on us to develop it and encourage as many as possible to enjoy visiting this special place.

**Dinesh Patel**  
781-861-6064  
[dgpatel1@me.com](mailto:dgpatel1@me.com)

Yes, of course full heartedly support CLC vision, and would support CPA funding.

Conservation of land, the plants, flowers, trees, streams, small pond and animal kingdom provides extraordinary pleasure and peace and tranquility with nature so all the efforts you do for this is appreciated and thanks.

I would simply stick to this goal and let the citizens, children and seniors and those with disability enjoy the preserved land and its natural treasure.Tracks for walking - may be running as principal objective can fulfill this with peace and tranquility.

I would prefer this land be not used for much needed affordable housing and that those who are abutters or close by be brought in confidence for what and why CLC is planning to do.

When done would be good idea to have specific signs of regulations, etc and perhaps the neighbours be brought in confidence - most likely this is done so forgive me for duplication.

Anyhow CLC deserves our thanks. Lexington is historical progressive Town and others will follow so let us protect and preserve the nature and be an example for others as well.

**Jyotsna Kakullavarapu**  
978-387-9461  
[jkakulla@yahoo.com](mailto:jkakulla@yahoo.com)

Application by the Conservation Department for CPA funding to develop a site access and design plan with cost estimates for Conservation land access, parking and trail access for the Town's Wright Farm property is a great idea, I would totally support it. It sounds like a great property development idea that CPA funds will be well utilized for. It looks like if only design and engineering takes \$69,000 it takes more finances to get this property developed to go into business. Instead of leaving land to cause damage by the bike riders, develop the property in a strategic way and have visitors enjoy the property and further plans for use the barn for environmental education and community gardening. Overall benefits are satisfied by development and worth development.

**Innessa Manning**  
[innessa\\_manning@yahoo.com](mailto:innessa_manning@yahoo.com)

Thank you for the opportunity to address this question. I moved to Lexington almost ten years ago when my three boys were ages 2, 2 and 4. As a family we have spent countless

of hours wandering around in Willard's Woods, Arlington Great Meadows and Whipple Hill. And, as a runner, I have run on many of the trails they offer. However, I had never heard of the Burlington Landlocked Forest until just last year. As a Town Meeting member, I would support ideas for improved access to this remarkable natural resource.

Access to trails and open spaces improves a town's well-being, both physically and mentally, and creates a more livable community. One of the wonderful aspects to living in Lexington are the acres of public land we have to explore. I believe connection, and access, to nature is especially important as climate change continues to evolve since it can engender a greater sense of responsibility and urgency to protect our natural resources.

Additionally, I wonder if there could be an academic tie-in as well? When my kids were in elementary school I volunteered as a Big Backyard program coordinator and it is my understanding that the elementary school science curriculum is evolving to including additional opportunities for hand-on learning. With improved access and parking, perhaps the venal pools and natural habitats within the Landlocked Forest could serve as an additional outdoor classroom for our children.

I know LexHAB (The Lexington Housing Assistance Board) is working on rehabilitation of the farmhouse associated with Wright Farm to create affordable housing units. The CLC's proposal appears to complement this initiative by clarifying how the property would be used by non-residents to protect their investment and renovation.

In closing, I recognize that CPA funds are finite, and I may not be aware of other proposals for use of these funds. However, assuming that sufficient funding is available to complete the CLC's project as proposed and LexHAB's renovations of the farmhouse, I support this initiative.

## Precinct 7

### **Robert K. Creech**

This candidate's response is under Candidate for Planning Board.

### **Harry C. Forsdick**

781-799-6002

forsdick@gmail.com

I support the request for CPA funds to create a site access and development plan for the Wright Farm property. Wright Farm is a multi-use set of buildings and land that represents Lexington's farming history, something that has almost disappeared in Town due to residential development. We should ensure that we preserve as much of this farm as possible so that residents and other visitors can understand this part of Lexington's history. Planning for such preservation is the first step in the process of making sure that this resource is here for people to enjoy in the future.

**David G. Kanter**  
617-966-5669  
[david@kanters.com](mailto:david@kanters.com)

I support the funding addressed by that Question.

My reasons include:

- (1) Town Meeting, representing everyone in Town, has long supported funding the acquisition of property that our Conservation Division has demonstrated as a worthy addition to our Town's already large number of properties now under Conservation Restrictions.
- (2) A common goal is that actions would be taken to enhance public access, as deemed appropriate by the Conservation Division—which I respect, whenever practical and affordable.
- (3) One of the three primary objectives of the Community Preservation Act (CPA)—which Act Town Meeting had adopted for our Town to permit the surcharge on our tax bills—is preservation and appropriate use of Open Space.
- (4) Town Meeting has already appropriated the funding for the acquisition of the Wright Farm; the request for additional funding is so warranted so access and uses can be achieved.
- (5) Our Community Preservation Committee—which is the sole authority for allowing requests for use of CPA funding to be presented to Town Meeting—has vetted and approved the instant request.

Having agreed previously to all of the above is my basis for supporting, if re-elected, the Motion to be presented to the 2020 Annual Town Meeting regarding the Town's Wright Farm.

**Taylor Carroll Singh**  
781-632-2208  
[taylorcarrollsingh@gmail.com](mailto:taylorcarrollsingh@gmail.com)

I believe investing CPA funds to develop the area around the barn at Wright Farm is a worthy expenditure. As I live in Precinct 7, I have been eagerly awaiting the purchased property to become a vitalized space for environmental education.

I am not without bias: I have a 7-year-old daughter in second grade at Estabrook and I cannot remove the vision I have for her to learn in this space. I volunteer guiding her class in Big Backyard walks throughout the year, as I have done since she began as a kindergartener in the Lexington Public Schools. I imagine CLC readers are well aware what this program is, but just in case, “The Big Backyard Program is a series of nature walks on school property and adjacent lands that enhances the existing science and social studies curriculum in each

*grade." I have felt that incredible passion for the environment and nature stir in my child and her classmates as they discover the world surrounding them on these walks.* For my child and her peers alone, I know what an invaluable resource this project could be for our budding biologists and nature lovers.

As an incumbent, I was present at Town Meeting last spring for the report of the Community Preservation Committee. I foresee funding to be available for this project not only for the \$69,000 appropriation for the Design at this year's Annual Town Meeting, but also for the construction costs in future Town Meetings. (Readers can find the CPC's report to 2019 Annual TM here:

[https://www.lexingtonma.gov/sites/lexingtonma/files/uploads/final\\_cpc\\_2019\\_report\\_to\\_at\\_m\\_0.pdf](https://www.lexingtonma.gov/sites/lexingtonma/files/uploads/final_cpc_2019_report_to_at_m_0.pdf).

I agree with the justifications for and benefits of the project as outlined in the project's submission as well as the impacts listed if the project were not to be completed (submission can be found on the CLC homepage here: <https://www.clclex.org>).

I am very enthusiastic to see these concepts come to life and cannot wait to bring my daughters to the environmental education center!

**Sara Cuthbertson**

This candidate's response is under Candidate for School Committee.

**Samita A. Mandelia**

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I am supportive of the fundings required to engage a consultant in order to develop a site access and design plan with cost estimates for conservation land, parking, and trail access at the Town's Wright Farm Property. This is assuming there is appropriate oversight and an independent process in the selection of the consultant who would be best suited for this project.

This proposal now sets into motion the necessary next steps to move forward with the overall objectives around the acquisition for conservation purposes and to avoid any other development.

Overall I agree with the justification provided for this project as doing so will create safe and universal access to one of Lexington's popular open space properties in a planned, environmentally friendly way. Also, as mentioned above, the benefit in doing so is that it will protect the value of the Town's investment in the property making the barn and property accessible and appealing to the public. If this is not properly planned from the get-go, uses for the barn and property, including environmental education and community gardening, could be at risk.

## Precinct 8

**Robert M. Avallone**

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I was a Town Meeting member in 2012 at the time that the Wright farm property was acquired. I supported that initiative and every enhancement to the project since then.

When deciding how to vote on any article coming before Town Meeting I always listen to the debate and consider the opinions of the Select Board and the relevant committees. Having stated that, the project enhancements as outlined in your question and supporting documents appear to be a worthy next step. I see no reason why I would not support it.

I consider myself an environmentalist and like many of our citizens my wife and I enjoy the undeveloped areas of Lexington. Your proposal would make the property more inviting to the public. I am particularly excited about the possibility of an environment education center in the future. This would help educate Lexingtonians and other members of the public about the importance of conservation.

We need a balance between new development and maintaining a portion of our land as undeveloped. That is why I have always supported projects like this one.

**Andrei Radulescu-Banu**

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We appropriated \$3,072,000 in 2012 for the purchase of the 12.6 acre Wright Farm, followed by an appropriation of \$618,000 in 2014 for the Wright Farm residential lot that included a house, garage and barn. \$200,000 in CPA funds were appropriated in Nov 2015 for LexHab, who planned to convert the house into an affordable housing unit. \$37,000 in CPA funds were appropriated in 2017 to deal with extra administrative costs caused by pesticides in the soil. \$35,000 in CPA funds were appropriated in 2016 to assess if the barn can be used as an environmental education facility.

The proposed new expenditure, \$69,000, to develop site access and an environmental center design plans for FY2021 are a good idea, based on the information I have, but what troubles me is that, five years later, the house has still not been converted to an affordable housing unit.

I have been supportive in the past of most all CPA appropriations for open space, historical renovation, and affordable housing. But, sometimes, it is worth asking some tough questions to ensure the money appropriated is spent for the intended purpose.

**Wendy S. Reasenberg**  
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My family and I have been enthusiastic supporters of conservation, preserving special natural places, protecting the environment and being outdoors for many years. We like to hike, walk and garden. We are long-standing members and supporters of many conservation groups: Citizens for Lexington Conservation, Massachusetts Audubon Society, Nature Conservancy, Student Conservation Association, Conservation Law Foundation, East Coast Greenway, Manomet Bird Observatory, Friends of the Middlesex Fells, Friends of the Blue Hills and many other conservation and hiking groups. We recently received 35-year membership pins from the Society for the Protection of the New Hampshire Forests.

In 1990, my husband and I created the green and white bumper sticker "Save Our Open Space" used in the successful campaign that saved the Pine Meadows Golf Course and the adjacent Meagherville land for recreation, conservation of open space and protection of wetlands. As a resident since 1972, it has been my experience that every conservation land acquisition has been a good investment by the Town: for recreation, preserving open space, supporting wild life and protecting natural streams. Conservation is more important than ever to mitigate climate change.

I support the Wright Farm Project. If trails are well marked, it better protects the land because people do not get confused and inadvertently create "meta trails." With well marked trails, the wildflowers can grow right up to the trail edge. Well marked trails encourage more people to feel confident to explore the area and discover the beauty of the outdoors without fear that they will get lost. Well marked areas help a diverse set of users utilize the same area in greater harmony.

The winter issue of the Appalachian Mountain Club Magazine has an article about a study that shows that being outdoors helps children be happy, creative, healthy and smart. Spending time outdoors in nature destresses us, boosts our memory, helps us overcome trauma, improves attention, is good for our hearts, improves our sleep, relaxes our eyes and prevents disease.

## Precinct 9

**Jeanne P. Canale**  
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Wright Farm, a beautiful 12.6-acre parcel providing a gateway to Lexington, is used daily by residents, bikers and others for many forms of active and passive recreation. CPA funds to convert barn into an environmental education center will provide quality environmental education for the public, including outdoor experiences, trained staff, exhibits, events and programs. The Town should:

- Promote public use of trail access and open space for many user types.
- Provide navigation signage throughout the site to assist users on how to navigate the site in an environmentally safe and sensitive way.
- Protect the value of the property with designated restricted parking areas for public site access.

A more comprehensive land management, survey, and site assessment plan to protect the area and the fragile environment within the landscape is needed to ensure that future projects here will be implemented in the most effective way.

I strongly support CPA funding for this project to protect the many assets this property has to offer including any future use, management, alteration or repair.

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We are fortunate that our legislators fought so hard to have the state release the full CPA grant money this year: 20 million dollars that allows member communities to invest back into preserving deserving projects. These funds have allowed Lexington to not only acquire much needed land but also to expand affordable housing, and active and passive recreation spaces for all residents.

The Wright Farm project meets the goals of the CPA and I feel the proposed mindful development of the property will benefit all generations of the community for many decades. As more and more neighborhoods are being tightly developed, open and free space becomes a precious resource for the entire community. In their application to the Community Preservation Committee, the Conservation Committee cites immediate need for space for mountain biking and hiking. Evidence of this need is the growing popularity of foot trails that the non-profit ACROSS Lexington group has developed over the past decade as well as the year-round use of the Center Track. Our community sorely needs a covered educational space in a natural area for educational programming for school-aged children and the entire community.

**Suzanne E. Lau**  
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Based on the information available, I am in favor of using CPA funding to create an access plan for the Wright Farm property. This is a multi-use property with historical, recreational and educational value to a wide variety of stakeholders in the community. The property also attracts users from neighboring communities. The property is already being used for hiking and biking trail access and educational walks and events, and parking and access are currently identified as issues in need of a plan. Given the anticipated need for significant and on-going future funding, it would also be important to identify near, medium and long term goals in order to have a roadmap for developing this property.