

**ARTICLE DA            COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PROGRAM – MORRISON FARM**  
(Two-thirds vote)

To see if the Town will (i) appropriate \$2,505,000, or some other greater or lesser amount, to pay costs of carrying-out the Morrison Farm Implementation Plan, so-called, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto; (ii) authorize the Treasurer with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow said amount for a repayment term of not less than 15 years under and pursuant to Chapter 44B of the General Laws, or pursuant to any other enabling authority; (iii) authorize the Town Manager to take any other action necessary to carry out this project, and (iv) take any other action relative thereto.

**SUMMARY**

The Morrison Farm Committee, on behalf of the Board of Selectmen, prepared a concept plan for Morrison Farm to create an historic, nature, open space and recreation park on approximately 50 acres of land and pond area owned by the Town of Acton stretching from East Acton Village to the Robbins Homestead site on Concord Road, including Ice House Pond, all of the farmland along Ice House Pond, and stretching further upstream along Nashoba Brook.

The concept plan presents a multi-element, multi-year implementation program that seeks a total of \$2,764,000 in Community Preservation funding support. It calls for approximately 15 acres of forested land to be protected under the care of the Conservation Commission, a large open meadow, the continuation of community garden plots and the Pam Resor Orchard; formal preservation of the Robbins Homestead site and Alarm Stone, the preservation of the Ice House Foundation, and the creation of a new building envisioned as the Morrison Nature and History Center; boardwalks and trails and a connecting bridge, a picnic area, playground and the East Acton Village Green, and a playing field for informal pick-up games. Attention would be given to universal designs to accommodate people with various accessibility needs. The existing house will remain. But the barn would be demolished, with funds for the demolition coming from non-CPA sources.

With this article the Community Preservation Committee recommends that the Town authorizes the borrowing for most of the project cost. This recommendation is conditioned as follows: (1) that the Town repurposes approximately 15 acres of forested backland of the subject property from ‘general municipal’ to ‘conservation’ and place that acreage under the care and protection of the Town of Acton Conservation Commission, (2) that the Robbins Homestead site and Alarm Stone shall not be disturbed without the written consent of the Historical Commission, and (3) that no Community Preservation funds shall be used for the demolition of the existing barn.

This project is eligible for funding in three CPA categories – open space, historic preservation, and recreation; the Committee has assigned this recommended appropriation to the CPA categories in the following proportions: open space – 5%, historic – 5%, and the rest remains unassigned. In a separate article, the Committee will recommend a direct appropriation from available funds to begin project planning and design and make other project preparations.

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**Recommendations:**

**Board of Selectmen**

**Finance Committee**