



**TOWN OF ACTON**  
472 Main Street  
Acton, Massachusetts, 01720  
Telephone (978) 264-9631  
Fax (978) 264-9630

**Open Space Committee**

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November 12, 2013

Mr. Roland Bourdon, Chair  
Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee  
c/o Planning Department  
Acton Town Hall  
472 Main Street  
Acton, MA 01720

**RE: Community Preservation Plan Project Application Form  
Wright Hill Open Space Purchase**

Dear Chairman Bourdon and Community Preservation Committee Members:

On behalf of the Town of Acton, the Town of Acton Open Space Committee is pleased to submit the attached Project Application Form for the purchase of approximately 13 acres of the Wright Hill property in West Acton. The Wright Hill property abuts the West Acton Historic District, includes open fields and woodlands, links the West Acton village center to existing conservation lands west and north of the village, and, as one of the highest points in Acton, includes magnificent view sheds. The Open Space Committee is excited about the potential purchase of this unique Acton property and is pleased to present this proposal to the Community Preservation Committee and the citizens of Acton.

The Open Space Committee thanks you for your consideration of this proposal and looks forward to working with the Community Preservation Committee in advancing this proposal to the April 2014 Annual Town Meeting.

Respectfully yours,

Andrew D. Magee, Chair  
Town of Acton Open Space Committee

cc. S.Ledoux, Town Manager  
T.Tidman, Director of Natural Resources

## PROJECT APPLICATION FORM – 2014

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**Applicant:** TOWN OF ACTON

**Submission Date:** November 12, 2013

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**Applicant's Address:**

Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager  
472 Main Street Acton, MA 01720  
Phone Number: 978-264-9612  
E-mail: manager@acton-ma.gov

**Purpose: (Please select all that apply)**

- Open Space
- Community Housing
- Historic Preservation
- Recreation

**Town Committee (if applicable):** Open Space Committee

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**Project Name:** Wright Hill Open Space Purchase

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**Project Location/Address:** 18 Wright Terrace, Acton, MA

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**Amount Requested:** \$ 1,280,000

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**Project Summary:** In the space below, provide a brief summary of the project.

The Town of Acton Open Space Committee proposes the purchase of the Wright Hill Open Space property, an approximately 13 acre parcel of hill top open space in West Acton. This potential acquisition represents a large step forward in the ongoing effort for achieving many of the town goals as expressed in the *Town of Acton 2020 Plan*, the *Town of Acton Open Space and Recreation Plan*, and the *Town of Acton Community Preservation Plan 2013*. Specifically, the purchase will

- **Conserve** historic land and structures, including the farm corn crib, building foundations, outbuildings, stone walls, cart path and scenic vistas, and will provide a tangible link to West Acton's commercial and agricultural history.
- **Expand** the existing open space trail system.
- **Create** new, unique loop for walking, recreation and nature study between the walkable West Acton Village and the Guggins Book Conservation Area.
- **Improve recreational opportunities** including a walking loop from West Acton, historical walks for schools, picnicking, cross-country skiing, star-gazing,



# Community Preservation Act Proposal

## Wright Hill Open Space Purchase

### Narrative and Background

The property at 18 Wright Terrace includes a single family residence and approximately 17.45 acres of residentially zoned land, approximately 13 acres of which is the subject of this proposal (see Figure 1). The existing house was built in 1911 and is located within the West Acton historic district. Property frontage for the parcel consists of 180 linear feet on Wright Terrace and 453 linear feet on Central Street.

Wright Hill is one of nine glacial drumlins in Acton and rises directly to the northwest of West Acton Village. The landscape of the property is a combination of open fields, old orchards and woodlands. The center of Wright Hill is one of Acton's highest points of land, with a view to the west to Mt. Wachusett and, before trees grew up on the eastern side of the property, east to the skyline of Boston.

In the Spring of 2013, a group of nine West Acton families formed the Wright Hill Association LLC (WHA - the current owner) with the express purpose of purchasing this property so as to slow the imminent development of this property into a subdivision and to allow time to formulate a plan to permanently protect all, or at least a portion, of this hilltop open space. The former owner, Joseph Rice, worked closely with WHA to ensure that the goals of conservation were kept in mind as the sale proceeded. This was in keeping with Mr. Rice's understanding in 2002 when he purchased the land from the long-time owners, the Mead family, who also desired, at a minimum, to make sure that the high meadows of this land were conserved.

Since the WHA purchase in July of 2013, WHA has worked with engineers, lawyers and appraisers, as well as Acton town committees, historians, neighbors, past owners and the public to understand the best use for this historic piece of land. The ultimate goal of conservation was strengthened throughout these discussions and research.

With the goal of permanently protecting these lands, the Town of Acton Open Space Committee is asking the Town of Acton to purchase, with Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, approximately 13 acres of Wright Hill. Doing so will provide a direct link between West Acton Village and the Town's existing conservation lands of Guggins Brook and the Jenks Lands. With the implementation of a conservation restriction, as required for CPA open space purchases, Acton residents and visitors will be able to cross from sidewalks, either on Mass Avenue or Central Street, and enter onto a network of public lands for hiking, skiing and other passive recreational uses.

The remaining approximately 4 acres of the Wright Hill property will remain with the existing house at 18 Wright Terrace, possibly with an easement that would allow for parking and/or pedestrian access to both proposed and existing trails on the property.



Wright Hill Acton, Massachusetts

Figure 1  
Aerial Locus Map

Additionally, consideration will be given to a provision for parking at the Central Street gate of the property to provide access to the historic cleared woodland cart path up to the meadows.

There are both existing and proposed trails that cross Wright Hill and extend through open space owned by the New View Neighborhood Association PCRC and Gregory Lane Homeowners Association into Guggins Brook conservation land (See Appendix A, Trail Map, prepared by Jim Snyder-Grant, Acton Land Steward). Discussions with New View and Gregory Lane neighbors have been ongoing, and both groups have responded favorably to the proposed trails (see Appendix D: Letters of Support).

## **Project Scope**

The proposed purchase is for approximately 13 acres of the Wright Hill property, but does not include the existing house at 18 Wright Terrace. Lot lines will be redrawn as necessary to produce a legal lot for the house parcel which will remain in possession of WHA (See Appendix B, Conceptual Plan). Easements will be established to provide public access to the town lands from Wright Terrace and Mead Terrace.

## **Cost Estimate**

The cost for the 13 acre land parcel is \$1,280,000, which represents the fair market value of the existing house lots as determined by recent appraisal (See Appendix C, Subdivision Development Analysis, prepared by Avery Associates).

## **Determining Project Eligibility**

### **Consistency with Town of Acton Planning Documents and CPA Goals**

The purchase of the Wright Hill land is clearly consistent with the goals of a preferred model of open space preservation, limited growth, passive recreational use, and historic preservation. Of particular note, this parcel was placed on the prioritized parcel list of the appendix of the 2002-2007 *Town of Acton Open Space and Recreation Plan*, and the then Open Space Committee had been in communication with the previous owner to discuss conservation of the land during that earlier time period.

Also listed in the *Town of Acton Open Space and Recreation Plan* is a strong preference for less growth of residential developments in town. This parcel, so close to West Acton Village, would be a target for developers: indeed, the past owners of this parcel have chosen to turn down many offers from developers. A purchase by the town for conservation and passive recreational purposes would put an end to this risk. As part of preparing the land for appraisal, the current owners have confirmed that the land is

suitable for septic systems and “percs well,” and has appeal as a conventional development, or could fit a large number of houses under a 40B development or under the density allowance of a Planned Conservation Residential Community (PCRC).

The 1911 residence is in the West Acton Historic district. Although the residence is not a component of this application, the protection of the surrounding open space will aid in the preservation of the visual and aesthetic character of West Acton Historic District by preventing development of this upland land adjacent to and overlooking the District.

### **Population Served**

The purchase of the Wright Hill land will increase the total acreage of Acton's conservation lands, and create a link with the Guggins Brook and Jenks Land conservation lands. This land has superb wildlife and natural environment values and will contribute to the passive recreational value of the Jenks and Guggins Brook Conservation Lands.

This purchase would make possible a walking loop from West Acton Village. This sort of passive recreation, including walking, nature and historical study, is highly valued by residents. There are sidewalks along Massachusetts Avenue that go to Gregory Lane, and up Central Street beyond the proposed trail entrance shown on the attached trails map (see Item #8 in Appendix A). Acton citizens and visitors will be able to walk from West Acton along sidewalks to either the Gregory Lane or Central Street trail entrances, travel through either 18 Wright Hill land or Guggins Brook land or both, and complete their loop after exiting at the other trailhead. There appears to be no other opportunity like this in Acton, where a walkable town business center can be the base for a loop walk through conservation lands, with sidewalks along the entire road route (see Appendix A for proposed trails).

### **Historical Significance**

This land provides a direct link to West Acton's vibrant history as an agricultural and commercial center. After the railroad came to West Acton in 1845, George C. Wright, the original owner of the land, kept dairy cattle and made daily milk deliveries to 200 customers in Boston. After two years, he gave up that business to join what became New England's largest coffee, tea and spice business. He nonetheless continued to make milk deliveries to Acton customers before boarding the first train to the city in the morning. Some years later, three Mead brothers, doing business as A.O.W. Mead Company, raised vegetables and Gravenstein apples on the property, shipping their produce by train or wagon daily to Boston's Quincy Market.

A cart path, still extant on the east side of the property, led from the hilltop farm to the ice house formerly sited on Central Street (now 315 Central Street), where produce was gathered and stored by the Meads and other local farmers, and shipped by train to the city. According to The Beacon newspaper (8/23/1990, page 5) the Mead brothers are "credited with building the first refrigerated produce facility in Massachusetts. [In] 1890...the Meads had cold storage capacity of 1,000 tons at West Acton. At least two cold storage buildings are listed in the 1900 tax records."

The Historical Society possesses some important treasures from the Mead estate, donated by Priscilla Mead: family photos, a photo of the Meads' prized bull taken on the hillside by the stone wall, framed ribbons from the Acton Agricultural Fair, a framed land plot from the 1800s, a stone pestle (possibly of Native American origin?), numerous farm implements and the Meads' lovely sleigh. These artifacts (or photos of these artifacts) could provide vital context for visitors seeking to understand the farm's remarkable story.

Priscilla Mead's niece, Dottie Pitt, has some quilts that her great-grandmother received as gifts in the late 1800s, including one signed by many members of a West Acton church whose names are familiar to present-day Actonians because they sound like a list of local streets. When the grandfather retired, he lived in the Parker House in Boston and delivered slop from that hotel to Wright Hill, for the pigs. Dottie has some Parker House cutlery that emerged from the pig slop and was saved by the family.

While today's walkers admire the lovely view of the mountains to the west, the Wright and Mead families looked east to Boston (now occluded by the trees). They saw the city's expanding commercial possibilities that ultimately enabled them to thrive, create a livelihood for local farmers, and invest in West Acton Village.

### *A Link to West Acton's Precolonial History*

On a triangle of land between Massachusetts Avenue and Arlington Street in West Acton rests a historical marker which notes that George Varnum Mead and Effie Wright Mead donated land to the town of Acton in the 1900s. Also mentioned on the inscription is the location of a Native American trail to the north of the marker, which creates even more curiosity about the deeper historical value of this land. Perhaps the same Native people who built an encampment on a south facing slope by the Assabet River (Pine Hawk archaeological site) lived on this hill, near the later-named Fort Pond Brook.

### *Educational Value*

Visitors can experience the hilly farmland bounded by stone walls and undisturbed by visible houses, cross through open meadows, peer into the corn crib, examine the foundation of the piggery and other outbuildings, and hear the train still passing through the village after almost 175 years - all evocative reminders of West Acton's agricultural past and vital links to the city. The site may also hold intriguing new possibilities for exploring the history of the Native Americans who predated European settlers.

### **Agricultural Significance**

WHA is in the process of piecing together the history of the farm on Wright Hill. The Mead family came from Boxborough, where they farmed the Wetherbee Farm from 1778 to 1901. Wright Hill was an active, working farm from the 19th century, at least, until the beginning of World War II. Effie Wright and George Mead were given the land on Wright Hill by her father, George Wright. They built the house in 1911. The farm produced Gravenstein apples, milk, pigs, eggs, chickens, hay, potatoes, and other vegetables. After World War II, farming operations cut back, and 1957 marked the end of the farming operations (See Appendix F for a map of historic structures).

According to Dottie Pitt, the granddaughter of Effie and George, Wright Hill was the last holding of the Mead family in Acton, after they had lived and worked in Acton and Boxborough for 350 years. Although the fields have not been farmed for the last few decades, the owners have kept the fields open, and during the last five years, Joseph Rice has leased the fields to a sheep farmer who allows the sheep to graze on the land. Possible future agricultural uses include grazing heritage cows or sheep, community gardens, or leasing to farmers.

### **Conservation and Recreation Value**

From both a conservation and recreation viewpoint, an important aspect of this parcel is the open meadows near the top of Wright Hill. There are currently no publicly accessible open meadows near the tops of any of Acton's hills. The property also invites visitors to explore an unusual cart path, consider new forest progression after agricultural use, and wander paths throughout the woods. A local boy recently created a challenging mountain bike trail through the steepest parts of these woods. Cross-country skiers can circle the meadows and glide gently down the cart path. Picnickers can carry lunch up from West Acton center.

Protecting this parcel and including some permanent trail easements will create additional sets of connections for walking and nature study between the West Acton

Village center and Guggins Brook and Jenks Land Conservation Areas. The permanent protection of this parcel will also preserve a wildlife area between the Guggins Brook/Jenks Land Conservation Lands, the uplands of 18 Wright Terrace, and the wetlands on the far side of Central Street. A large variety of animals moves across the land, coming up the hill from the red maple swamp at Guggins Brook conservation land (See Appendix E for wildlife list and Appendix A for trail map).

### **Water Resource Protection Value**

The Wright Hill parcel lies in the Town of Acton Groundwater Protection District Zone 3 and 4. While these are not the most critical groundwater protection areas, the parcel has important attributes making it a valuable parcel for water resource protection. There is a component of surface water flow from the top of the hill that flows to the west towards property owned by the Acton Water District, and the western property boundary is located 600 feet from the Zone 2 and 880 feet from the Zone 1 of the West Acton wells. Based on the hydrology of the area, significant changes in the natural flow regime of Wright Hill could impact downgradient conditions within the more critical Zone 1 and 2 protection districts. Another highlight of this property is the preservation of the hillside on the northeast side of the property. Runoff from this portion of the parcel flows directly to the Fort Pond Brook watershed. The District owns a well site in West Acton that is bordered by Fort Pond Brook which does not currently have a formally designated Zone 1 or 2. As part of the *Acton 2020 Community Plan*, the District advocated for protection of this future water supply source in land use planning and protection efforts in this area of Town.

### **Economic Feasibility**

WHA, the Acton Conservation Trust, and the Town of Acton Open Space Committee have been discussing the potential preservation of these lands along with the associated historic value of the property and have been working in good faith toward a fair and timely purchase and transfer of the property.

The \$1.28 million appraised land value, combined with the private selling of the existing house (WHA currently owns and will sell this house separately) should allow WHA to recoup its investment in the preservation of this land. Ideally, WHA would sell the house first and then sell the land to the Town, knowing how much more is needed from the land to recoup the preservation investment. However, engineering options necessitate selling the land first. For marketing purposes regarding the house, WHA does not want to publicly share the appraised value of the existing house at this time. However, as a show of good faith and to demonstrate their sole interest in the preservation of these resources, WHA has created a plan to limit their profits on the

sum of the house and land sales. The WHA proposes a profit-limiting system using a cost-plus-fixed-fee approach as follows:

If the total of the proceeds from the sale of the house (less outstanding liabilities) plus the proceeds from the sale of the land to the CPC exceeds the net cost (price of land plus expenses plus mortgage interest, less rental income) plus 6% of WHA's initial outlay of \$1.65 million, then the excess will be donated to the Community Preservation Fund.

Although not included herein, WHA is willing to publicly share the estimates of house expenses and other carrying costs.

### **Leverage of Funding**

The WHA formed with the express purpose of slowing the potential development of Wright Hill in order to allow time to develop a plan for the preservation of these lands. In the world of conservation, such buyers are often described as "White Knights," or "Conservation Buyers." Whatever the name, the individual members of the WHA have taken the risk and collectively leveraged their own money in order to see this land become available for the townspeople of Acton to enjoy.

The dream of putting Wright Hill lands into conservation has been an ongoing discussion by the past two owners of the property, Joseph Rice and Priscilla Mead. Priscilla Mead was in conversation with the Town concerning a possible conservation restriction when she died in 2001. Recently, Joseph Rice turned away multiple offers by developers wanting to purchase the land, and sold the land instead to the WHA, appreciating WHA's goals.

Acton Conservation Trust (ACT) identifies and provides support for landowners interested in pursuing conservation. ACT has created visibility for this project with publicity and public walks and has facilitated the WHA's efforts to make a compelling application. ACT encourages and supports neighborhood action such as that of the WHA, and facilitates work with the Open Space Committee.

The WHA has also spoken with Sudbury Valley Trustees. They prioritize projects based on location in relation to other SVT properties, the habitat values, and the current staff capacity; at this time their efforts are focused on another large project, though they agreed to write a letter of support for this project application to the CPC as well as for any other grants. Earlier in the process the WHA spoke with Trust for Public Lands and are currently in conversation with the New England Forestry Foundation.

## **Relation to Town Assets**

The purchase of the Wright Hill land will add approximately 13 acres to an existing Town-owned conservation parcel, and will permanently protect an historic resource listed on the Town of Acton List of Cultural Resources.

## **Consistency with Past Town Meeting Actions**

The Project is consistent with recent Town of Acton Town Meeting actions, which included the setting aside of CPA funds in 2013 for open space acquisition of the Anderson property.

## **Competency to Implement**

The Town of Acton will be the applicant of this proposal to utilize CPA open space funds. The Town has successfully demonstrated competency in the implementation of CPA projects.

## **Site Control**

The ownership of the parcel will lie with the Town of Acton and will not include the pre-existing house.

## **Appendices**

**Appendix A: Map of Proposed and Current Trails including Narrative**

**Appendix B: Conceptual Plan**

**Appendix C: Subdivision Development Analysis**

**Appendix D: Letters of Support: SVT, Neighbors, New View**

**Appendix E: List of Animal Evidence on Wright Hill/Guggins Brook**

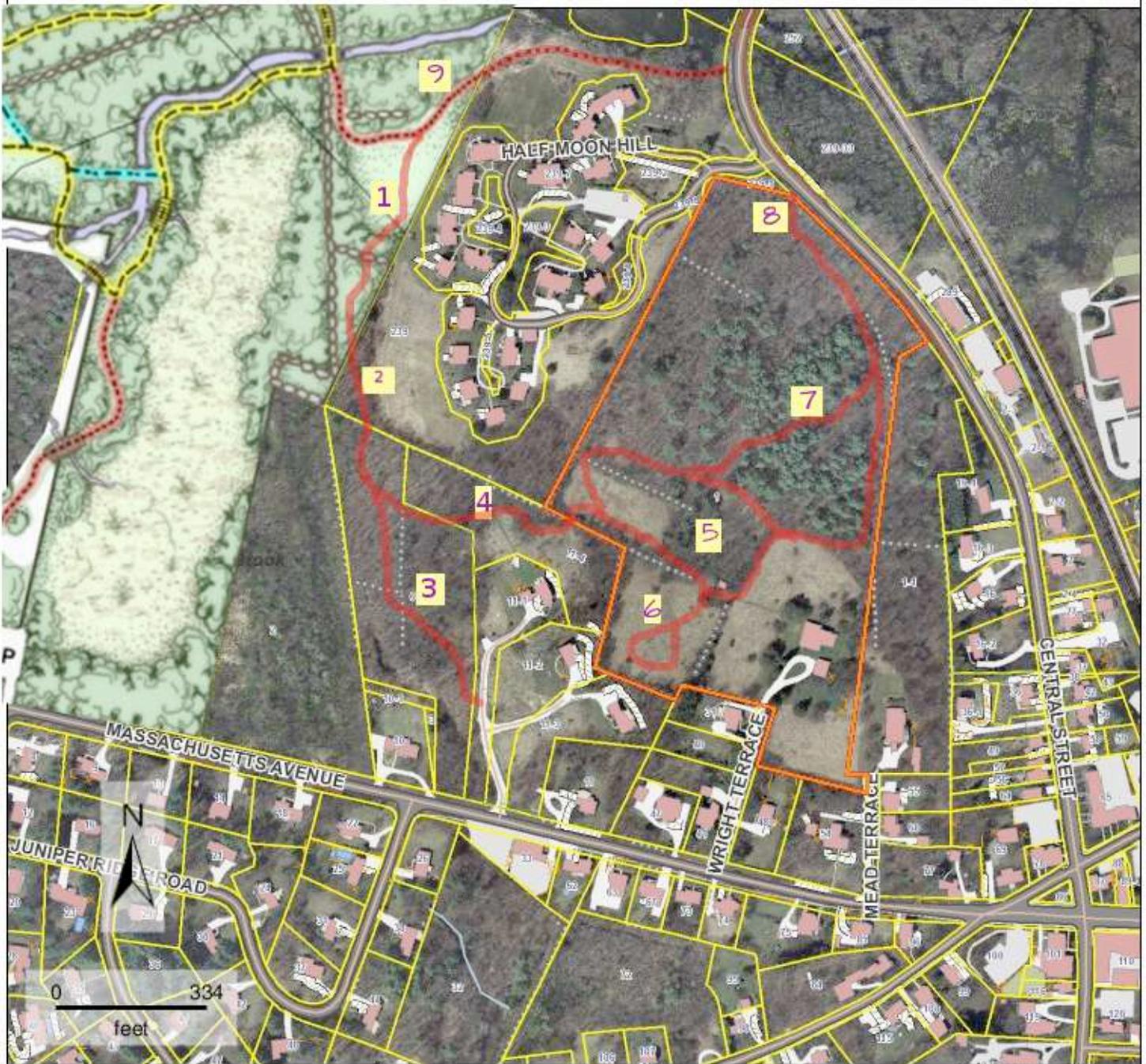
**Appendix F: Historic Structures**

**Appendix A**

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**Map of Proposed and Current Trails including Narrative**



**Property Information**

Property ID F2A-1  
 Location 18 WRIGHT TERR

Trail Concept: Red lines connecting Guggins Brook Conservation Land to 18 Wright Terrace and adjacent properties.

Dotted Lines: Existing trails

Orange Line: Property Bounds.

10/3/2013

Jim Snyder-Grant



## **Appendix A (accompanies Map): Narrative of Trail development for Wright Hill/Gregory Lane connecting to Guggins Brook**

(Prepared by Jim Snyder-Grant, Acton Land Steward, October 2013)

The most recently published Open Space and Recreation Plan lists these three overall goals, all of which are served by this potential purchase:

- 1) Preserve the remaining elements of Acton's rural character
- 2) Protect the environment
- 3) Improve recreational opportunities

The woods and meadows between 18 Wright Terrace and Guggins Brook Conservation area are privately owned, but permanently protected. On the map, these intervening areas are numbered 2,3 and 4.

Near (2) is the meadow belonging to the New View Condominium Trust. By the terms of its PCRC permit (Planned Conservation Residential Community), this land is forever reserved for conservation and recreation. Near (3) is land owned by the Gregory Lane Homeowner's Association (PCRC). This is also reserved as open space, except for a right to build a horse paddock in part of the parcel. Near (4) is a partly-wooded, partly-meadow parcel also owned by the New View Condominium Association, also reserved as protected common space. Both the boards of these two homeowner associations are enthusiastic about the possibility of a trail easement creating a permanent connection between 18 Wright Hill and Guggins Brook.

The path of this possible trail system is shown on the map, going through parcels 2, 3 and 4. A further extension through (4) out to Gregory Lane is also shown on the map, and has been favorably reviewed by the Gregory Lane Homeowners. The exact location of these trails is still to be worked out and a formal easement signed, but there have been no obstacles so far. The right to build a horse paddock creates a challenge, but the easement as envisioned will require the Town and the association to make a good faith effort to relocate the portion of the trail to Gregory Lane.

Small and large animal scat has been found along these connecting meadow and wooded areas, creating plenty of evidence of animal travel in the area between the conservation land and the 18 Wright Hill parcel.

The other part of the travel cycle, for animals that use wetlands, is from the conservation lands along the course of Guggins Brook across Central Street. This land in turn reconnects with 18 Wright Terrace near the area numbered (8).

For people, the other important cycle that this purchase would make possible is a loop from West Acton center. This sort of passive recreation, including walking and nature study, is highly valued by residents. There are sidewalks along Mass Ave. to Gregory Lane, and up Central Street beyond the proposed trail entrance shown as (8) on the map. That means people will be able to walk from West Acton along sidewalks to either the Gregory Lane or Central Street trail entrances, travel through either 18 Wright Hill land or Guggins Brook land, or both, and complete their loop after exiting at the other trailhead.

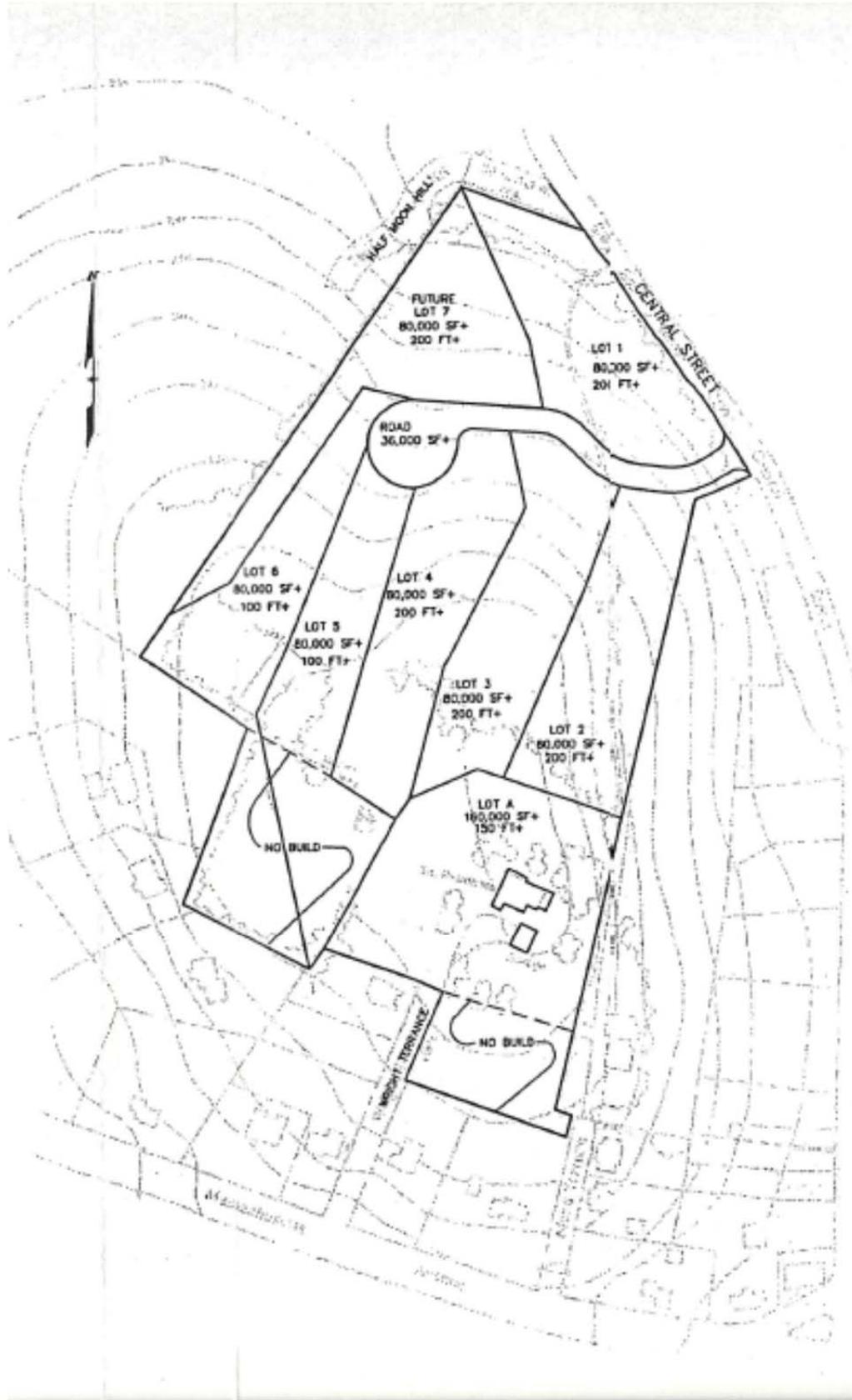
Open meadow is important habitat in the Northeast. It used to be much more universal in the 19th century, with the ubiquity of small farming operations. A whole system of plants and animals developed around this environment. But with the big drop in agriculture, and the resulting reforestation, animals and plants that depend on this environment have become more scarce. The large meadows maintained by the Wright, Mead, and Rice families are a treasure. Once a year brushhogging, and some invasive species removal, will be all that will be needed to maintain these wonderful habitats.

**Appendix B**

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**Conceptual Plan**



**CONCEPTUAL PLAN  
CONVENTIONAL SUBDIVISION  
ACTON, MA.**

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FOR:            ARONSTEIN  
                         SEPT. 30, 2013

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**STAMSKI AND McNARY, INC.**  
1000 MAIN STREET    ACTON, MASS.  
ENGINEERING - PLANNING - SURVEYING

0    50    100    200    400 FEET

64-5080    (5090 CONCEPTS)

Appendix C

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**Subdivision Development Analysis**

**SUBDIVISION DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS**

**SUBJECT PROPERTY**

Lots 1 Through 7  
at 18 Wright Terrace  
Acton, Ma 01720

**Date of Valuation:**

**15-Oct-13**

Period Lot Appreciation 0%  
Real Estate Taxes Per Lot/period (during sellout) \$3,000  
Legal - \$1,000 per lot + \$4.76/\$1000  
Advertising/Brokerage 5%  
Developer's Overhead & Profit 7.5%  
Discount Rate 8.0%

**6 Month Periods**

**INCOME:**

		<u>Period 1</u>	<u>Period 2</u>	<u>Period 3</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Proceeds From Lot Sales					
Lot 1	\$270,000		\$270,000		\$270,000
Lot 2	\$280,000		\$280,000		\$280,000
Lot 3	\$290,000		\$290,000		\$290,000
Lot 4	\$290,000		\$290,000		\$290,000
Lot 5	\$280,000			\$280,000	\$280,000
Lot 6	\$280,000			\$280,000	\$280,000
Lot 7	\$270,000			\$270,000	\$270,000
<b>Total Proceeds</b>		\$0	\$1,130,000	\$630,000	\$1,960,000

**EXPENSES:**

Approvals		\$15,000			\$15,000
Engineering	7 lots @ \$5000 per lot	\$35,000			\$35,000
Roadway/Infrastructure	500 ft @ \$400 per foot	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$200,000
Real Estate Taxes	@ \$3,000 Per Lot/Period	\$21,000	\$9,000	\$0	\$30,000
Legal Expense/Closing Costs	Legal - \$1,000 per lot + \$4.76/\$1000	\$0	\$9,379	\$6,951	\$16,330
Marketing	@ 5% Of Gross Sales	\$0	\$56,500	\$41,500	\$98,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>		\$271,000	\$74,879	\$48,451	\$394,330
<b>Development Proceeds</b>		-\$271,000	\$1,055,121	\$781,549	\$1,565,670
Developer's Overhead & Profit of Gross Sales	@ 7.5%	\$0	\$84,750	\$62,250	\$147,000
<b>Net Development Proceeds</b>		-\$271,000	\$970,371	\$719,299	\$1,418,670
<b>Present Worth of Net Proceeds @</b>	8.0%	\$1,276,040			

**ROUNDED TO:**

**\$1,280,000**

Appendix D

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**Letters of Support: SVT, Neighbors, New View**

## **APPENDIX D- Wright Hill Letters of Support**

**From:** Bob Tabor <bobtabor@verizon.net>

**To:** osc <osc@acton-ma.gov>

**Subject:** Wright Terrace Open Land

**Date:** Thu, 7 Nov 2013 8:57 pm

Open Space Committee,

My wife and I have lived for over 30 years in the old barn on Mead Terrace that abuts the land you are considering at your meeting. We support the application to Community Preservation Committee recommending the Town purchase the beautiful and historic open land from Wright Hill Association. This land also is adjacent to the trails of the Water District, and affords a rare opportunity to have the town preserve historic old Wright farm land and fields with sweeping vistas to the north and west from one of the highest points in Acton.

Sincerely,

Robert and Victoria Tabor

11 Mead Terrace

Acton

**From:** Jeanne Abboud <abbouddesign@mac.com>

**To:** osc <osc@acton-ma.gov>

**Subject:** Wright Hill Association Land

**Date:** Thu, 7 Nov 2013 9:52 pm

To the Acton Open Space Committee,  
As neighbors of the Wright Hill Association land we would like to support the application to the Community Preservation Committee recommending the Town consider purchasing the property for open space and recreation. The land is some of the most beautiful in Acton and preserving this old historic farm would enable the whole Acton community to have the opportunity to enjoy the spectacular land, wildlife and views.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Abboud and Paul Harrison, Jr.

12 Wright Terrace

Acton

**Fro**  
**m:** Paul Harrison <pharrison@mxschool.edu>

**To:** frannyola <frannyola@aol.com>

**Dat**  
**e:** Fri, Nov 8, 2013 9:20 am

Franny, I did not open the e-mail until I got to work this morning...this is what I wrote/sent at 9:10 a.m.

*To Whom it May Concern:*

*My wife Jeanne and I have lived on Wright Terrace for the past twenty-three years. When we moved in the adjacent property was owned by Priscilla Mead who was a wonderful steward of the land. It is an exceptional piece of property sitting above the Village. It's orchards and pastures were once the Wright farm. Priscilla would tell me stories about the Mead's wholesale food business in which they supplied Boston hotels with produce gathered in a West Acton storage facility and shipped by rail into the city.*

*The Mead home that sits on the property was built to "escape the summer heat of Belmont." It is a one of a kind structure. The land itself is notable for its mix of pasture and forest as well as a view of Mt. Wachusett. With its old corn crib, stone walls, and old foundations it is a living museum of our town's past. Rare indeed is the opportunity to preserve such a spectacular piece of land and make it available to the community. With its proximate location next to the water district its purchase by the town would ensure the conservation of a spectacular property and the conservation of some of West Acton's rich history. The original farmhouse still exists on Mead Terrace and the barn, although turned into a single family home, still looks like a barn.*

*With plans/recommendations to increase the density of building in West Acton, it seems only fitting that we would preserve the most spectacular piece of open space in the Village for the enjoyment of all villagers.*

*Some simple trails and a small parking area would be all that is required to help preserve our heritage.*

*This is a very special piece of property and the opportunity to share it with the entire Village is a rare opportunity indeed. This is a hugely important moment for the security and preservation of our Village.*

*We heartily endorse the offer to the Town of Acton to purchase the land from the Wright Hill Association.*

*Sincerely,*

*Paul Harrison, Jr.  
12 Wright Terrace*

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Paul Harrison, Jr.

Development Officer  
Alumni and Development Office  
Middlesex School  
1400 Lowell Road  
Concord, MA 01742  
phone: 978-371-6516  
fax:978-369-5378

MORE LETTERS OF SUPPORT TO BE ADDED

**Appendix E**

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**List of Animal Evidence on Wright Hill/Guggins Brook**

## Appendix E

The following is a list of fauna found on Wright Hill. This list is by no means exhaustive.

Red-tailed hawk (possible mating pairs)  
Wild Turkey  
Great Horned Owl  
Barred Owl  
Screech Owl  
Turkey Vulture  
American Woodcock/Timber Doodle  
Grouse  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Northern Flicker  
Red-winged Blackbird  
American Crow (possibly a roost on Wright Hill)  
Baltimore oriole  
Barn Swallow  
Tree Swallow  
Hummingbirds  
Eastern Bluebird  
Carolina Wren  
Fox Sparrow  
All common song birds  
Various migratory birds

Red Fox  
Coyote  
Fisher  
Striped Skunk  
Raccoon  
Virginia Opossum  
Woodchuck  
Eastern Cottontail Rabbit  
White-tailed Deer  
Eastern Gray Squirrel (and black variation)  
Red Squirrel  
Southern Flying Squirrel  
Eastern Chipmunk  
White-footed Mouse  
Meadow Vole  
Mole

Shrew  
Little Brown Bat  
Eastern Red-back salamander (red-back and lead-back phases)  
American toad  
Green Frog  
Bull Frog  
Spring Peeper  
Grey Treefrog  
Garter Snake  
Ribbon Snake  
Milk Snake  
Brown Snake

Luna moth  
Monarch Butterfly  
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly  
Mourning Cloak Butterfly  
Rosy Maple Moth  
Clymene Moth  
Virgin Tiger Moth  
Nais Tiger Moth  
Common Wood Nymph  
Eight-spotted Forester  
Common White-tail Dragonfly  
Northern Bluet Damselfly  
Ebony Jewelwing Damselfly

There are **mink** and **river otter** and **beaver and wood frog** close by in the Guggins woods - this is part of the local web that includes Wright Hill.

**Appendix F**

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**Historic Structures**

217 ft

# Appendix F Historic Structures

white dotted lines represent  
stone walls

← foundation #1

← foundation #2

farm outbuilding →  
farm outbuilding →  
ruins →

Narrow Meadow

Lower Pasture

corn crib →

GREGORY LANE

WRIGHT TERRACE

CENTRAL STREET

