

An Open Letter to the Residents of Scituate

By Peter Kelly-Detwiler
February 19, 2006

40 Acres of Open Space – A Great Opportunity for Scituate Residents

At the Town Meeting on March 4th, Scituate Voters will have the opportunity to approve the purchase of 40 acres of open space in the West End of Scituate. The cost of the purchase will be approximately \$600,000, of which half will be paid for by town funds which have already been raised. The other half will come from matching state funds under the Community Preservation Act. Thus the average cost per acre to the town's taxpayers will be \$7,500.

This land will be owned by the Town of Scituate, and subject to a Conservation Restriction held by the Scituate-based Maxwell Conservation Trust. Development will be prohibited, and the land will remain open space in perpetuity – a resource for the town which will protect the watershed, preserve wildlife habitat, and provide a great place for hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing.

We believe this land is worth preserving for the following reasons:

- The land constitutes a critical part of an un-fragmented 400-acre forest, of which 180 acres is already protected.
- It is part of the open space specifically referred to in the Scituate Master Plan, the Conservation Open Space and Recreation Plan, the 2003 Open Space Committee Report, and the 2004 Surface Water Supply Protection Plan.
- Preserving the land will help protect valuable watershed resources for both the towns of Cohasset and Scituate.
- The purchase has been approved by a 7 to 1 vote of the Community Preservation Committee, and a unanimous 7 to 0 vote of the Town Advisory Committee.

According to the Massachusetts Audubon Society, an estimated 40 acres of Massachusetts open space are lost to development every day. Your vote to purchase this land can help to slow that trend and make Scituate a better community to live in for years to come. Please vote to purchase the land at the Scituate Town Meeting on March 4th at 9:00 AM.

Peter Kelly-Detwiler
Executive Committee, Maxwell Trust