

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TOWN OF WESTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE</b> <b>Project Submission Form – FY20</b> <b>Summary Form</b></p>
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**Submission Date:** January 22, 2019

**Project Name:** Wellington Farms Land Protection Project

**Project Address:** 500 Wellesley Street

**Brief Project Description:**

The Weston Conservation Commission (WCC) respectfully requests \$2,517,300 from the Community Preservation Act to purchase 13.04 ± acres known as Wellington Farms. The Town is in the process of finalizing the purchase and sale agreement (P&S) with the owner, Nick Danforth, who is interested in protecting the land for conservation purposes.

The WCC has been in negotiations with Mr. Danforth to purchase this property for conservation for over 10 years. In 2017, the Commission filed a CPA application to protect 11.32 acres of Mr. Danforth's land (known as the Farming Development Lot). Shortly after that CPA application had been filed, lead-impacted soil was discovered on the site. As a result, the original Purchase & Sale Agreement was cancelled and Mr. Danforth was asked to remediate contaminated areas on the property before the WCC could begin another round of negotiations to purchase this property. Mr. Danforth hired a licensed site professional (LSP) company which conducted additional testing and established a remediation plan. The Town's LSP reviewed and approved this remediation plan. As of December 2018, the site has been remediated. The Town's LSP oversaw each step of the remediation work and the Town is awaiting the Final Comprehensive Risk Assessment Report (expected February 2019).

The WCC ordered a new appraisal, which was completed in November, 2018. The recent appraisal valued the land at the identical amount as in 2017. While the land is valued at exactly the same amount, the cost of the land in this new CPA request is higher than the prior CPA request because the amount of land to be conserved has increased by Lot 7, which is about 1.72 ± acres. Originally, the Historical Commission expected to seek protection of Lot 7, which is the lot on Wellesley Street south of the Danforth Homestead. Under the new plan, which the WCC developed in coordination with the Historical Commission, the WCC includes Lot 7 in its acquisition request. Purchasing Lot 7 for conservation serves the dual purpose of retaining that land as open space as well as protecting the viewscape of the historic Danforth homestead.

The WCC respectfully requests \$2,517,300 for the protection of 13.04 ± acres for conservation purposes.

**Contact Person:** Michele Grzenda

**Contact Title:** Weston Conservation Administrator

**Contact Phone #:** 781-786-5068

**Contact Email Address:** Grzenda.m@westonmass.org

**Contact Mailing Address:** PO Box 378, Weston, MA 02493

**Sponsoring Organization:** Conservation Commission

**Eligibility - Only activities designated in “Yes” boxes, below, are eligible uses of CPA Funds. Please mark the box, or boxes, that apply:**

	Open Space	Historic Resources	Recreational Land	Community Housing
Acquire	Yes			
Create	Yes			
Preserve	Yes			

**Projected Cost (Please add information for additional fiscal years as necessary):**

Fiscal Year	Total Project Cost	CPC Funds Requested	Reason	Other Funding Sources
2016	\$4,250	\$4,250	Appraisal	
2017	\$3,950	\$3,950	Phase I	
2018	\$14,400	\$12,525	LSP Peer Review	\$1,875
2019	\$5,000	\$5,000	LSP Peer Review	
2019	\$3,950	\$3,950	new Appraisal	
2019	\$3,000	\$2,000	Final LSP work	\$1000 (WCC budget)
2020	\$3,375,000	\$2,497,300	Purchase of 13.04 Ac.	\$877,700 (MWRA fund)
2020	\$20,000	\$20,000	Legal Fees (closing costs), CR Drafting, Initial Field Edge Management	

<b>Total FY20 CPA Funding Requested</b>	<b>\$2,517,300</b>
<b>Total Amount of CPA funds Used/Requested (FY16-FY20)</b>	<b>\$2,548,975</b>
<b>Total Project Cost:</b>	<b>\$3,429,550</b>

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Please address the following questions/categories using additional sheets as necessary.

- 1. Goals/Community Need:** 500 Wellesley Street is a 13.04 acre of undeveloped land which has been identified in both the 1996 and 2017 Open Space and Recreation Plans as a priority property for protection. The WCC has been in negotiations with Nick Danforth, the owner, who is interested in seeing this parcel permanently protected. The parcel contains several active agricultural fields, which are annually leased to Waltham Fields Community Farm (WFCF). The remaining areas of the property are comprised of forested and wetland habitats. A trail along the northern property boundary connects this land with open space to the north, managed by Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, and trail easements and Weston Conservation land to the west. If protected, the land will be open to the general public for passive recreation for future generations.
- 2. Project Timeline:** As discussed above, in August 2017, the WCC entered into a purchase and sale agreement with the owner. However, due to the discovery of lead contaminated soil later that year, the P&S was cancelled and Mr. Danforth was asked to clean up the property prior to continuing the land protection project. Mr. Danforth hired a licensed site professional company who conducted additional testing and determined an appropriate remediation plan, with review and oversight by the Town's LSP. In December 2018, the site was remediated. The Town's LSP oversaw the remediation work and the Town is awaiting the Final Comprehensive Risk Assessment Report (expected February 2019). WCC is now prepared to bring this request to May Town Meeting.
- 3. Community Support:** The Commission anticipates receiving support from the Agricultural Commission, Historical Commission, Board of Selectmen, and the Community Preservation Commission. The Commission has helped facilitate discussions between the Historical Commission and Mr. Danforth. As a result, Mr. Danforth has agreed to place a voluntary Historic Preservation Restriction on his home. The Commission facilitated conversations between Mr. Danforth and the Affordable Housing Trust about the possibility of placing affordable housing units on a portion of the property. Although an agreement was not reached, the Affordable Housing Trust was appreciative of the opportunity to investigate possible affordable housing on the parcel.
- 4. Budget:** After several months of negotiations, the landowner agreed to sell the property for \$3,375,000, slightly below the assessed value of 3,500,000. In addition, the Commission is requesting \$15,000 for legal expenses (Closing Costs and Conservation Restriction drafting) and \$5,000 for initial field edge restoration.
- 5. Other Funding Sources:** In addition to CPA Funds, WCC intends to utilize the \$877,700 remaining from the MWRA Mitigation Fund (created as part of a land swap and land taking for the MWRA covered storage tank project).

- 6. Implementation:** The Weston Conservation Commission is leading this land protection effort. Former Commission Member George Bates spearheaded this project for over 10 years. Upon Mr. Bates death in February 2018, Laurie Bent, Chair of the Commission and Michele Grzenda, Conservation Administrator has been managing this project.
- 7. Comparable Projects:** This project is similar to the Sunday Woods land protection project (2006), and the Gateways Farm land protection project.
- 8. Operations/Maintenance:** The Commission anticipates allowing WFCF to continue farming the agricultural fields and maintain the field edges through a License Agreement. The WCC will be responsible for mowing the other non-agricultural fields. The WCC expects that the additional annual expense of field mowing (estimated to be \$1,500) and will be offset by the anticipated annual license fee from WFCF.
- 9. Multiple Projects:** This is the only CPA project sponsored by the WCC this fiscal year.
- 10. Provide Supporting Documentation as Applicable:**
  - a. Evidence of Site Control** - Purchase and Sale Agreement - Forthcoming
  - b. Feasibility Studies** – Site Remediation Report – See Attachment 3
  - c. Appraisal** – See Attachment 2
  - d. Letters of Support** - WCC will seek letters of support from the Agricultural Commission and Historical Commission
  - e. Maps** – See Attachment 1