

Public Forum: Potential Town Acquisition of the Cape Cod Sea Camps

Brewster Select Board & Brewster Town Administration

August 17, 2021





Forum Purpose

Provide information about:

- Potential Town purchase of the Cape
 Cod Sea Camps parcels for public use
- Property details
- Acquisition costs, financing & tax rate impact
- Possible Town partnerships
- Potential future Town uses
- Concerns about private development
- Next steps



Credit: Town of Brewster



The Cape Cod Sea Camps' Legacy

- Owned and operated by the Delahanty family for almost 100 years.
- More than 17,000 campers attended the Sea Camps since 1922.
- The Camps had a fleet of 50 boats & offered 35 activities including waterskiing, drama, windsurfing, woodworking, marksmanship & art.









Credit: capecodseacamps.com



Sale of the Cape Cod Sea Camps

- The Sea Camps closed in November 2020 after operating nearly 100 years as a residential children's camp.
- The sale offers the people of Brewster an unexpected opportunity.
- The Select Board & Town Administration have evaluated acquisition since the closing was announced.
- Town acquisition would prevent private development and offer the public many benefits.





Credits: Town of Brewste



A Rare Opportunity

The Long Pond Parcel:

Largest privately-owned parcel in Brewster & one of the largest undeveloped parcels on Cape Cod.

The Bay Parcel:

4th largest privately-owned parcel in Brewster.

- Most Cape Cod parcels of this size have been developed.
- It is extremely rare for parcels as large as these, especially with waterfront, to become available.
- An opportunity like this is unlikely to occur again in Brewster.





Credits: Town of Brewster



Overview of the Bay Parcel

Address 3057 Main Street, Brewster

Camp Wono, Inc. **Owner**

Size 54.92 acres

Parcel ID 101-45

RM (Residential Medium Density) Zoning

Zoning Old King's Highway Historic District,

Considerations soil conservancy district & wetlands

Frontage 824 feet (on Main Street)

Shoreline ~800 feet

Buildings More than 50 cabins, cottages, dorms & other

structures

Utilities Town water, solar meets 20% of energy needs,

natural gas in some buildings, 2 back-up

generators





Credit: capecodseacamps.com



Credit: Town of Brewster



Sea Camps Bay Parcel Location



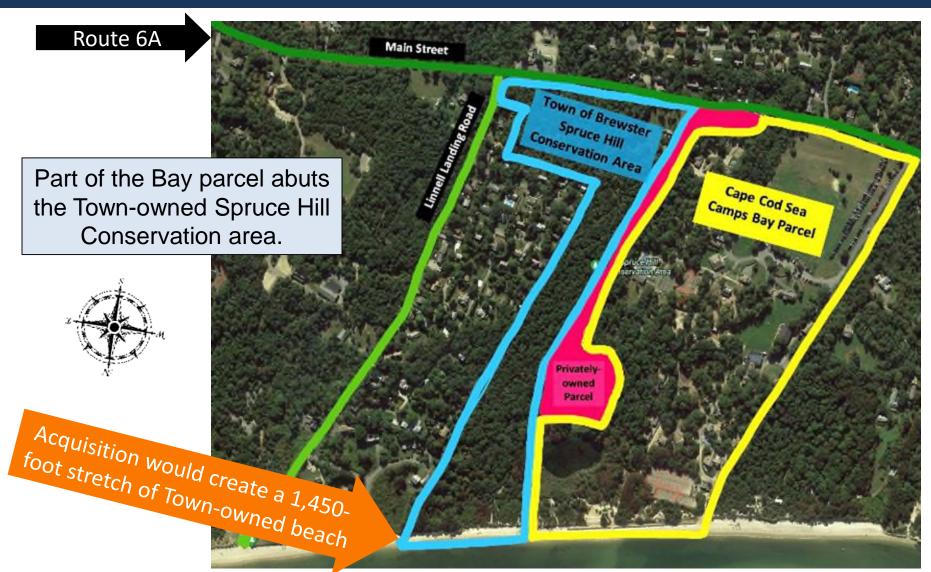








Sea Camps Bay Parcel Location





Sea Camps Bay Parcel Facilities

- Administration building
- 50+ cabins, cottages & dorms
- Beachfront
- Boathouse
- Dining hall with commercial kitchen area
- Olympic-sized swimming pool with swimming pavilion
- Art center
- Basketball courts
- 9 lighted tennis courts
- Fields for soccer, lacrosse, baseball, archery, field hockey & other sports
- 2 outdoor theatres
- Maintenance building & garage
- Woodworking shop



Credit: Cape Cod Sea Camps



Credit: Keen-Summit; Phoenix Management



How Could Brewster Use the Bay Parcel?

- New public beach & beach parking (residents only?)
- Community center(s) & group meeting spaces
- Expanded municipal recreation facilities: swimming pool, tennis, basketball, outdoor theatres, basketball, boating/sailing, playgrounds, trails
- Town offices
- Conservation, open space & habitat protection, coastal resiliency
- Potential partnerships to expand recreational activities & programs
- Bike trail spur from Cape Cod Rail Trail to beach
- Boat moorings



www.Catalystarchitects.com



Credit: Town of Brewste



Credit: Town of Brewster



Overview of the Long Pond Parcel

Address 500 W.H. Besse Cartway

Owner Camp Wono, Inc.

Size 66 acres

Parcel ID 84-45

Zoning Residential Medium (RM) &

Residential Rural (RR)

Zoning About half of parcel is in Zone II

Considerations (aquifer recharge area), Brewster

Water Protection District & Natural

Resource Protection District

Frontage 765 feet (Route 137)

Shoreline ~1,200 feet

Buildings Undeveloped; equipment storage





Credits: Town of Brewster

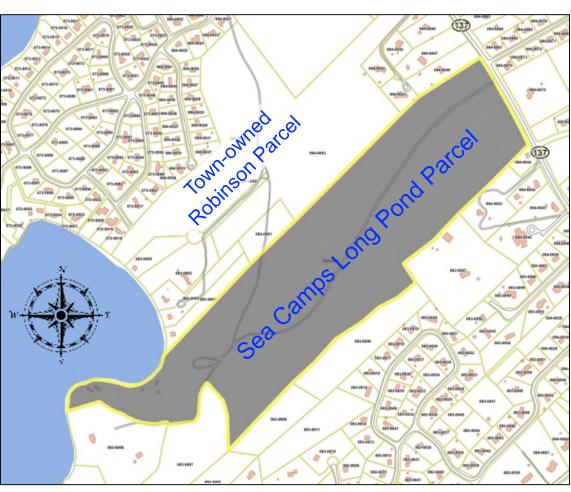


Sea Camps Long Pond Parcel Location





Credit: Town of Brewster



This Sea Camps parcel abuts the Town-owned Robinson parcel.



Sea Camps Long Pond Parcel Facilities

- The Pond parcel is largely undeveloped
- Structures include boating equipment storage & an office





Credits: Keen-Summit; Phoenix Management

 At 66 acres, there is sufficient space to meet multiple community needs.



How Could Brewster Use the Pond Parcel?

- New public beach on Long Pond (residents only?)
- Recreation activities, e.g., swimming lessons, boating, sailing
- Conservation/open space, habitat & watershed protection
- Public watercraft storage (kayak, canoe, stand-up paddleboard)
- Partnership with Brewster Conservation Trust to develop extensive hiking/trail system of 100+ acres when combined with adjacent Robinson property
- Partnership with Massachusetts Audubon Society to develop on-site programs
- Appropriately-scaled community housing near Route 137 (partnering with Brewster Affordable Housing Trust)



Credit: Town of Brewster



Credit: Cape Cod Sea Camps Facebook

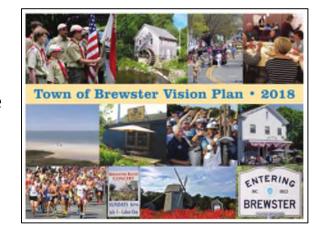


Would Acquiring the Sea Camps Achieve Vision Plan Goals? Yes.

The Brewster Vision Plan "expresses the community's preferences for how it intends to evolve socially, physically, and economically." (2018)

Vision Plan Goals that Support Acquisition:

- ✓ "We preserve our historical setting..."
- ✓ "We protect our bayside coastline which defines our sense
 of place and provides special recreational and economic
 opportunities."
- ✓ "We seek to offer housing that is affordable to residents of all ages and economic standing."



- ✓ "We strive to provide the infrastructure necessary to ensure that all citizens particularly elders and families with children are safe, healthy and supported, so they can work, learn, participate, and give back to the community."
- ✓ "We are committed...to improve our community and protect what we value about Brewster."



Would Acquiring the Sea Camps Achieve Vision Plan Goals? Yes.

More Vision Plan Goals That Support Acquiring the Camps:

- ✓ "Provide a Community Center for all ages"
- ✓ "Provide services and infrastructure for an age friendly community..."
- "Maintain and expand open space assets to provide public recreation, protect fragile natural habitat, and protect water resources."
- "Improve public access to and expand use of recreational areas."
- "Pursue land acquisition opportunities for additional recreational areas."
- ✓ "Expand beach access to new areas..."
- ✓ "Identify techniques such as...land acquisition for retreat locations to
 adapt to coastal change."
- ✓ "...identify potential locations for new facilities such as a community
 pool, pickleball, volleyball and basketball courts."



Credit: Cape Cod Sea Camps Facebook



www.Catalystarchitects.com



Credit: Town of Brewster



Would Acquiring the Sea Camps Achieve Open Space Plan Goals? Yes.

Brewster Open Space & Recreation Plan provides a framework and guide for continued conservation & recreation planning. (2020)

- Open Space & Recreation Plan Goals Aligned with Acquisition:
 - ✓ "Acquire & preserve lands with significant scenic, historical, cultural and/or archeological value.
 - ✓ "Acquire & protect upland wooded, open field, coastal, and wetland parcels that preserve
 and enhance community character."
 - ✓ "Identify opportunities to connect existing open space resources with new resources created from....open space acquisitions."
 - ✓ "Protect the Town's recreational and outdoor educational amenities that support the local tourism economy by acquiring and preserving lands which: Abut Town beaches/landings, provide additional public places, protect or expand...haul-out locations, and provide for expanded or new recreational/open space facilities in areas of town that are underserved."
 - ✓ "Increase public access to marine and freshwater resources."
 - ✓ "Provide multi-use open space and recreation areas that can be used for a variety of uses by people of different ages and abilities."



Would Acquiring the Sea Camps Achieve Coastal Resource Management Plan Goals? Yes.

Brewster's Coastal Resource Management Plan offers vision & policy direction for future management of Brewster's coastal resources. (2019)

Coastal Resource Priorities Aligned with Acquisition Include:

- ✓ "Provide access for water dependent activities..."
- ✓ "Maintain or enhance peak-season access to public beaches and landings."
- ✓ "Protect...visual access and sense of place threatened by changing conditions...."



Credit: Town of Brewster



Would Acquiring the Sea Camps Align with Brewster Housing Production Plan Goals? Yes.

Brewster's Housing Production Plan is the town's strategy for planning and creating affordable housing. (2017)

Housing Goals Aligned with Acquisition Include:

- ✓ Build support for addressing housing needs through partnerships, including conservation groups.
- ✓ Increase the variety of mixed-income housing choices in Brewster, particularly in or near commercial areas.
- ✓ Provide at least 10% of Brewster's yearround housing units as affordable housing to meet local and regional needs.



Credit: Keen-Summit; Phoenix Management



Would Acquiring the Sea Camps Align with the State Heritage Landscape Inventory? Yes.

The Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory identifies threats to heritage landscapes. (2009)

- Heritage Landscapes are:
 - "Special places created by human interaction with the natural environment that help define the character of a community and reflect its past."
- The Inventory Classified the Cape Cod Sea Camps Bay Parcel as Threatened
 - "Subdivision of this land would greatly impact the scenic view along Main Street as well as the view from Cape Cod Bay."



Credit: Keen-Summit; Phoenix Management



Select Board's Due Diligence: November 2020 – June 2021

Recognizing a rare opportunity for the Town, the Select Board conducted a 7-month analysis of the Sea Camps parcels.

The Select Board:

- Met 26 times in Executive Session through June 23 (when bids were due) to evaluate if acquisition of the Sea Camps should be pursued and what the lowest cost and most expeditious strategy would be; meetings have continued since then.
- Consulted with Town Counsel on legal options and requirements.
- Hired an appraiser who worked with local expert consultants.
- Authorized Town Administrator to conduct confidential meetings to gather information.
- Acquired title research and found no impediments.
- Conducted site visits to both parcels.



Sea Camps Property Appraisals

- The Sea Camps were appraised for the Town of Brewster by a certified general real estate appraiser.
- Local land use experts consulted with the appraiser.

Bay Parcel Appraisal: \$15,215,000



Pond Parcel Appraisal: \$4,200,000



Credits: Keen-Summit; Phoenix Management



Assessed Versus Appraised Value

Real estate assessed values are different from appraised values:

- Assessed value: A value assigned only for property tax purposes based on current uses and recent market history; it does not reflect what a property would be likely to sell for.
- Appraised value: What a buyer might expect to pay for a property based on its highest and best use; reflects analysis of many factors including regulations affecting how property uses could be maximized.

Camp Parcel	Assessed Value	Appraised Value
Bay Parcel	\$8,760,000	\$15,215,000
Pond Parcel	\$1,150,000	\$4,200,000



Town Bids on the Sea Camps Properties

At the Select Board's direction, the Town submitted bids on both Sea Camps parcels.

The sellers:

- Invited bids on both parcels to be submitted by June 23, 2021.
- No listing price was offered.
- The Town followed the prescribed process & submitted these bids:

■ Long Pond Parcel: \$4,200,000

■ Bay Parcel: \$15,215,000

The Town's bids were:

- Contingent on Town Meeting authorizations & a local ballot vote.
- Based on our appraisals and other information.
- An effort to acquire the Sea Camps at the lowest cost through a negotiated agreement.



Long Pond Parcel Acquisition: Town Financing Plan

Financing Plan

Proposed Financing Plan for \$4.2 Million Long Pond Acquisition

Brewster Water Commissioners: \$250,000

Free Cash and/or CPA funding Up to \$1.5 million

Measures to Reduce Town Costs

Conceptual Partnerships

Brewster Conservation Trust: \$1.5 million

Massachusetts Audubon Society: \$1 million

Potential Grant Funding

State LAND grant (up to \$400,000) and/or Federal Land/Water grant (up to \$750,000)





Credits: Town of Brewster



Long Pond Parcel Acquisition: Impact on Brewster's Tax Rate

- The Town would issue debt only for financing purposes for the Long Pond Parcel (likely for a 5-year term).
 - This would cover the period the Town would be receiving contributions from potential partners.
- Projected impact on a property tax bill: \$0



Credit: Keen-Summit; Phoenix Management



Bay Parcel Acquisition: Town Financing Plan

Financing Plan

Proposed Financing Plan for \$15,215,000 Million Acquisition

Debt exclusion: \$15,215,000

Measures to Reduce Town Costs

Private Donation(s)

\$750,000+

Potential Partnerships

Massachusetts Audubon Society: \$1 million







Credits: Keen-Summit; Phoenix Management



Bay Parcel Acquisition: Impact on Brewster's Tax Rate

Tax Rate Implications of Acquisition

- Projected impact on tax rate: \$.20 per \$1,000 assessed property value
- Brewster median home value: \$461,500
- Projected impact on median home tax bill: \$90/year*







Credits: Town of Brewster

^{*} Based on 25-year, level debt term & \$461,500 current median single family residential home value



Potential Actions That Could Reduce Town Costs or Generate Revenue

Potential Partnerships

- Brewster Conservation Trust
- Massachusetts Audubon Society
- Trustees of Reservations
- YMCA
- Others
- Private Donors
- Potential Revenue Generation
- Conservation Grants



Credit: Town of Brewster



If the Town Is Unable to Negotiate a Sale

The Town's primary focus has been to negotiate a sale with the sellers – this would likely be the least expensive path to acquisition.

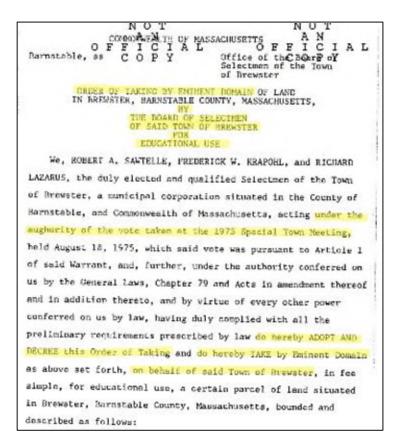
- The Town made carefully-considered offers.
- We have communicated our desire to continue negotiating.
- However, negotiations have stalled.

Because this potential acquisition is so significant to the future of the Town, the Select Board is offering Brewster voters the option to acquire the Sea Camps by eminent domain.



What is Eminent Domain?

- A right given to Massachusetts municipalities, and other governments, to acquire property for a public purpose.
 - Voters must authorize the Select Board to carry out an eminent domain action.
 - Property owners receive fair market value compensation.



1975 Brewster Eminent Domain Order



Eminent Domain Has Shaped Brewster As We Know It Today

Brewster has used eminent domain at least 31 times from 1918 to 2007 to acquire significant properties for public use including:

- Public landings/beaches
- Land for golf courses
- Land to establish a public water supply off Freeman's Way
- Land to construct schools and housing
- Conservation areas including Quivet Creek parcel
- "The Egg" park (next to Brewster Store)
- A recreational camp on Walker's Pond

Brewster has also used eminent domain hundreds of times for smaller road & drainage projects.



Brewster acquired at least 6 beaches by eminent domain.



Saints Landing (Selectmen vote, Jan. 1918)



Paines Creek (Annual Town Meeting, Mar. 1949)



Fisherman's Landing (Annual Town Meeting, Mar. 1957)



Linnell Landing
(Annual Town Meeting, Mar. 1958)



Ellis Landing (Annual Town Meeting, Mar. 1960)



Crosby Landing (Annual Town Meeting, Mar. 1960)



Brewster acquired Wing's Island by eminent domain.

- Brewster Special Town Meeting (Apr. 1961) approved using eminent domain to acquire Wing's Island
- Purpose: "a public beach and recreational area for public use."
- 123 acres was acquired.



Credit: Cape Cod Museum of Natural History



Brewster acquired land for Captains Golf Courses by eminent domain.

- Brewster Annual Town Meeting (May 1983) approved the use of eminent domain to acquire land for a town golf course.
- Purpose of the acquisition: "Municipal recreational use including a municipal golf course".
- Voters approved a \$400,000 appropriation.



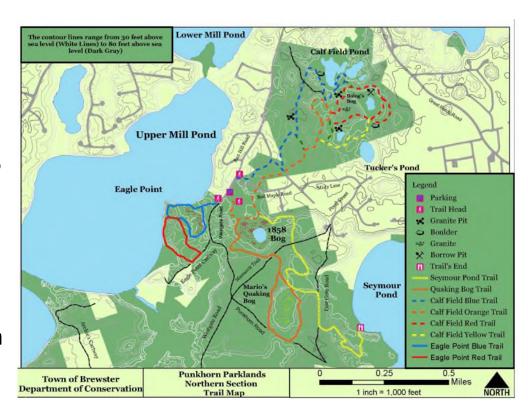
Credit: captainsgolfcourse.com



Brewster acquired much of the Punkhorn Parklands by eminent domain, including:

Brewster Special Town Meeting (May 1987):

- Voters approved 4 eminent domain warrant articles for 566 acres.
- Voters approved a total appropriation of \$5,512,215.
- Purpose of acquisition:
 "Conservation and preservation of natural resources"





Examples of Brewster's Use of Eminent Domain

Brewster acquired land by eminent domain to build the Eddy and Stony Brook Schools.

Brewster Special Town Meeting (Aug. 1975):

- Voters approved eminent domain to acquire 51 acres.
- Purpose of acquisition: "Educational use"





Credit: nausetschools.org.com



Requirements for Brewster to Acquire the Sea Camps by Eminent Domain

- ✓ Acquisition must be for a "public purpose."
- ✓ Property must be clearly identified.
- ✓ Title research is required.
- ☐ Town Meeting must authorize eminent domain & appropriate funds.
- Property inspection is required.
- ☐ Just compensation must be provided to the seller.



Steps That Follow Town Meeting Authorization of Eminent Domain

- Select Board Adopts the Order of Taking: The Select Board, when authorized by Town Meeting, votes for and signs an "Order of Taking."
- Order of Taking is Recorded: The Order is recorded by the Barnstable County Registrar of Deeds
 - Once recorded the Town acquires title to the property.
 - Recording gives former owner the right to be compensated for the property.
- Notice of Taking: The Town must give written notice of the Order of Taking to the owner within 60 days and to any others with an interest in the property (like a bank holding a mortgage).



Fair Compensation for the Former Owner

The Town:

- Must provide fair compensation to the former owners.
- Will use its carefully prepared appraisals, local expert consultation, and other information to determine a fair compensation amount.

The Former Owner May Appeal

- The former owner has 3 years from the recording to appeal the (1) validity or (2) compensation amount paid by the Town.
- Appeals are filed in Superior Court and a jury would hear the case.
- The jury can confirm the amount paid by the Town or order a different amount.
- If a higher award were made, the additional funds would need to be approved by Brewster voters at another Town Meeting.



What if the Town Doesn't Buy the Bay Parcel?

The Bay parcel could be privately developed – with or without subdivision.

The Bay parcel is in the Residential-Medium (RM) Zoning District.

- Uses allowed with a special permit include:
 - Cluster, major residential or planned residential development
 - Subsidized elderly housing, cemetery, large scale ground-mounted solar, assisted living, bed & breakfast, lodging house
- Uses allowed without special permit include:
 - Church, educational use, non-profit recreation, Town building except equipment garage, children's camp, golf or other club



What if the Town Doesn't Buy the Long Pond Parcel?

The Long Pond parcel could be privately developed – with or without subdivision.

The parcel is in the Residential Rural (RR) & Residential Medium (RM) zoning district.

- RR rules apply to entire parcel unless Special Permit applies.
- Located in Zone II/Water Protection District; subject to Water Quality Protection District regulations.
- Uses allowed with a special permit include:
 - Cluster development, major residential residential development, educational use.
- Uses allowed without special permit include:
 - Church, non-profit recreational facility, Town building



Would a Future Residential Camp Be Viable?

- Recent trends indicate a future residential camp may not be viable here.
 - The Sea Camps failed after decades of success, wonderful locations & a huge alumni base.
 - The Sea Camps apparently experienced financial stress even before COVID.
 - Tuition for 7-week session in 2019 was \$11,995
 - Enrollment declined since about 2015 (according to former Sea Camps administrative staff)
- The sellers auctioned the camp's goods & equipment in 2021.
 - Restarting a residential camp would be more difficult & expensive.

Operating a residential camp on these properties would be difficult to sustain and would prevent public access to the properties during peak summer months.



Other Regulations Affecting Development

Cape Cod Commission Review

- Development of any parcel in Barnstable County larger than 30 acres triggers Cape Cod Commission "Development of Regional Impact (DRI) review."
- Both Sea Camps parcels would be subject to DRI review.
- These regulations would limit to some extent the scope of development but would not block it.
- The only way to fully control development on the Sea Camps is for the people of Brewster to acquire the parcels.



The Cape Cod Commission is the Cape's regional land use and planning agency.



Recent Example of Proposed Cape Cod Development

- A developer recently proposed a 312-unit apartment complex with 468 parking spaces on the 40-acre former Twin Brooks Golf Course in Hyannis.
- Though Cape Cod Commission & local regulations limit private development to some extent, these type of intensive uses may still be permitted on parcels of this size.





Credit: Steve Heaslip/Cape Cod Times

Credit: Savetwinbrooks.org



LaSalette Seminary: A Property Brewster Did Not Acquire

- LaSalette Seminary sold ~48 acres north of Route 6A in Brewster to a developer for \$1.5 million in 1975.
- Property had 2 historic structures, several outbuildings & ~1,100 feet of beach.
- The Town had the opportunity to acquire the property but declined.
- The property was developed into Ocean Edge Resort by 1982.



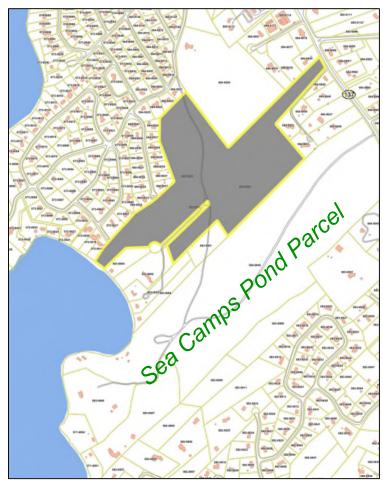


Cjhospitality.com



The Robinson Property: A Brewster Acquisition That Prevented Development

- In 2019, Brewster voters purchased the 42-acre Robinson property on Long Pond for \$1,750,000.
- Before the Town's acquisition, a plan for a 24-lot cluster subdivision demonstrated how the parcel could be developed.
- Brewster's purchase forever preserved the parcel for watershed protection, conservation & passive recreation.
- The Robinson property is adjacent to the northwest of the Sea Camps Pond parcel.



Robinson parcel appears in grey.



Next Steps: Special Town Meeting & Special Town Election

Special Town Meeting – Saturday, September 25

 Brewster voters will determine if the Town will acquire one or both Sea Camps properties for public use.

Special Election/Ballot Questions – Tuesday, October 5

 A special election will be held shortly after Town Meeting, with ballot questions asking voters to authorize debt exclusion funding.



Credit: Keen-Summit; Phoenix Management



Credit: Town of Brewster



Overview: September 25 Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles

Warrant Article 1: 500 W. H. Besse Cartway (Pond Parcel) Acquisition 2/3 Majority Vote

- To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to acquire, by purchase, gift, and/or eminent domain, the parcel of land identified as the Cape Cod Sea Camps Long Pond parcel for public purposes including habitat protection, watershed protection, open space, conservation, recreation, community housing and or general municipal purposes.
- Authorize the Town to raise, appropriate or borrow the sum required.
- Authorize a debt exclusion from Proposition 2 ½ subject to local election vote.

Warrant Article 2: 3057 Main Street (Bay Parcel) Acquisition 2/3 Majority Vote

- To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to acquire, by purchase, gift, and/or eminent domain, the parcel of land identified as the Cape Cod Sea Camps Bay parcel for public purposes including habitat protection, watershed protection, open space, conservation, recreation, community housing, a community center, and or general municipal purposes.
- Authorize the Town to raise, appropriate or borrow the sum required.
- Authorize a debt exclusion from Proposition 2 ½ subject to local election vote.

Warrant Article 3: Operating Expenses Simple Majority Vote

■ To see if the Town will authorize the use of \$200,000 from free cash for operating expenses.



Special Election Ballot Questions

- Two debt exclusion questions will be presented to Brewster voters at a Special Election on October 5, 2021.
- To acquire each parcel, Brewster voters must approve both an appropriation and a debt exclusion.
- Proposition 2 1/2 limits the amount of increased debt a municipality can add in a certain year; a debt exclusion authorized by voters allows a municipality to take on more debt temporarily for a specific project.
- The ballot questions require simple majority votes to pass.



If We Acquire Them...What Happens Next?

If the Town acquires one or both Sea Camps parcels:

SHORT TERM, the Town will:

- Insure properties.
- Arrange property management and security to care for and protect the Town's investment.
- Determine public access to the properties while future uses are considered.

LONGER TERM, the Town will:

 Facilitate a public engagement process to inform how the properties will be used.



Credit: Town of Brewster



Possible Town Priorities for Cape Cod Sea Camps Uses

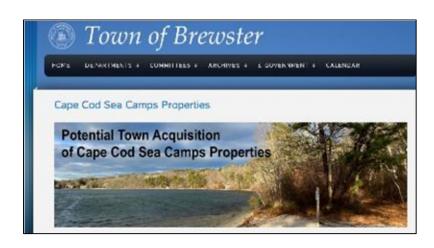
- New Beaches
 - The Bay parcel would add a large beach & offer parking well back from the water.
 - The Pond parcel beach is in a quiet corner of busy Long Pond.
- Creation of a Community Center: Bay parcel buildings might house activities in the short term while a plan to establish a multigenerational facility is developed.
- Expanded Active Recreation: E.g., tennis, pickleball, basketball, athletic fields & swimming pool.
- Expanded Passive Recreation: Interconnections with abutting Town-owned properties (Spruce Hill & Robinson parcel)
- Conservation/open space protection; habitat & watershed protection
- Housing: Appropriately-scaled community housing

A Master Plan for each parcel, informed by public engagement, would require Town Meeting approval to move forward.



Town Leadership Wants Brewster Voters to Be Fully Informed

- A Town webpage offers information about these potential acquisitions.
 - www.brewster-ma.gov/cape-cod-sea-camps-properties
- Print information is available at Town Hall & the Brewster Ladies Library.
- The Town Warrant will contain voter information.
- A video/drone tour of the properties will be available.
- FAQs will provide answers to common questions.
- Press releases will continue to be posted with updates & news.
- Reverse 911 calls will alert voters to critical information and dates.





Questions & Answers



Credit: Town of Brewster



