

December 28, 2015

Dear Select Board Members:

Several of us had the opportunity to attend a DPW Task Force meeting held on December 9 regarding the selection of a proposed DPW facility. We are writing to make you aware that many of the Town's residents have concerns about the process used to date by the Task Force, the apparent consideration of future capital projects in isolation, and, most importantly, the proposed DPW site on Wolf Swamp Road. Our concerns primarily are as follows:

While we appreciate the work done by the Task Force and Stephen Crane, Town Manager and Chairman of the Task Force, we learned that there has been no public notice of its meetings, no public agenda and no minutes taken or reports made available for review by Town residents other than the power point presentation used at the November Town Meeting. While we were told that the Select Board recently voted to change the Task Force to a Committee, which would be subject to the Open Meeting law, we would have preferred a more transparent process which was open to the public from the beginning.

No one doubts the need for a new DPW facility. However, the proposed Wolf Swamp location which is the top site choice of the Task Force would involve the taking significant field space (20-25% as Crane has stated) used by hundreds of kids for soccer, baseball and lacrosse. Field space in Longmeadow is at a premium and the removal of almost one quarter of the Wolf Swamp field space undoubtedly would create hardships and scheduling issues.

We believe that the Wolf Swamp site would significantly detract from the aesthetics of the Town. Should this site be selected, a beautiful section of Town which is currently "green", with soccer/lacrosse/baseball fields, The Field Club, Twin Hills Country Club and nearby residential areas, would be home to a large "industrial" facility. Regardless of efforts made to make the building attractive, the proposed new facility would be home to 30 trucks and other equipment, salt shed, fuel island and multiple bulk storage buildings. The facility also will contain a large paved parking lot. There is no doubt that this clearly would be a commercial/industrial site incompatible with its surroundings.

In addition, we believe that this project should not be considered in isolation. The Select Board has endorsed a new senior center as a priority and funding for design work has been approved. In addition, the School Board may seek funding for a new combined middle school. Improvements in water and sewer lines are needed. We believe that these projects should be considered together and prioritized with input from town residents since, after all, the projects' combined costs will be substantial as will be the tax revenues needed to pay for them.

In closing, we respectfully suggest that the Select Board and the Task Force/Committee consider other available options, including the current DPW location, before a final decision is made and voted upon.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

David Appleman

Chris Orzulak

Mike Freedman

Gina Pantusco

John Glenn

Rick and Debra Purrington

Marsha Harbison

Ryan Shanks

Doug Jangraw

Caitlin Steiger

Laura and Mark Katz

Kim King

Carolyn Marchese

Moira Murphy

Tom O'Brien