



Longmeadow
MASSACHUSETTS

September 19, 2016

2016 DPW Task Force Committee

Chairman: Christopher Cove

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New Longmeadow Department of Public Works Site Recommendation

September 2016

This report is a summary of the DPW Task Force Committee's efforts since March 2016 to recommend a suitable site for the construction of a new DPW for the Town of Longmeadow.



Executive Summary

The DPW Task Force Committee was formed by the Select Board on February 16, 2016 to recommend an appropriate site for construction of a new DPW facility and oversee its design and construction. Since then the Committee has conducted 15 meetings with the vast majority of discussions focused on site recommendation.

The Committee investigated the existing Pondsides Road location as well as other sites west of I-91. These sites were deemed unsuitable because most of this area is within the 100-Year Floodplain. Although building within the Floodplain is “possible”, the Committee concluded that the costs would not be warranted because of high construction costs for a building within a flood plain and insurance concerns (both the cost and availability of insurance).

The Committee determined that the Wolf Swamp Fields site is Article 97 land and learned what steps would be required to allow for construction at that site. A non-binding vote at the Town Meeting of May 10th indicated a very low likelihood of getting 2/3 town approval to construct at Wolf Swamp Fields (just 1 of several approvals needed for construction on Article 97 lands).

Using the Town’s interactive Geographic Information System (GIS) the Committee identified privately (29) and publically (7) owned sites that the committee was made aware of and were large enough to support the DPW facility. Each of these sites was reviewed and the list was reduced to 9 potential sites (2 privately owned and 7 Town owned).

A working group of committee members developed a site selection matrix to compare the 9 potential sites. The matrix was modified over several meetings and ultimately yielded 4 sites. Each of these sites was visited by the Committee on July 20th. After walking the sites the number of potential sites was reduced to 3: Grande Meadows, Laurel Park West and Water Tower Site.

The final recommendation of the DPW Committee is to locate the new Longmeadow Department of Public Works facility on the current Grande Meadows site.

DPW Committee Mission Statement & Committee Members

The Committee developed the following Mission Statement:

- **To recommend to the Longmeadow Select Board the preferred site, or sites, to construct a new DPW facility after all readily available information has been considered;**
- **To provide oversight for the design, permitting, bidding, construction and commissioning phases for the new DPW facility after the Longmeadow Select Board secures a suitable construction site.**

The DPW Committee is comprised of the following people:

Christopher Cove – Chairman

Mary Beth Morris

Mary Pat O’Connor

Arlene Miller - Vice Chair

Dave Horowitz

Doug Jangraw

Dave Appleman - Clerk

Peter Greenberg

Ryan Shanks



Site Criteria

The basic criteria, as provided by the Town's project engineers, Weston & Sampson, for the new DPW site are as follows:

- 42,000 SF Single Story Facility
- 4.5 Acres Minimum site size (allows for minimal buffering from neighbors). Preferred site is 5+ acres.
- Sufficient Salt Storage (1000 tons)
- Indoor Vehicle Storage (which significantly extends life of vehicles)
- Indoor Wash Bays
- Ability to Lift Vehicles for Maintenance
- Efficient Site Layout
- More Customer Friendly Atmosphere
- Onsite, aboveground fleet fueling facilities

Pondside Road Site /100-Year Floodplain

The Committee invested several meetings into finding a suitable site for the DPW west of I-91. The current DPW site (31 Pondside Road) is mostly within the 100-Year Floodplain, has major utility lines passing through it, and was constructed on a former burn-ash landfill now considered unsuitable for construction. The site is also a DEP regulated landfill.

While the utility lines and unsuitable fill can be addressed with added site development costs, the Floodplain issue seems to be insurmountable. This is due to the following:

- Any facility built in the 100-Year Floodplain may face insurance risk. The committee concluded that we cannot risk a multi-million dollar Town investment without proper insurance.
- If a site was developed in the 100-Year Floodplain, any volume of the Floodplain displaced by the construction must be replaced by conversion of non-Floodplain land to Floodplain and that conversion land must be contiguous to the Floodplain land in question. No contiguous land was identified in proximity to the existing Floodplain that can be converted to Floodplain to allow for construction of a DPW site.
- If the Town was faced with a 100-Year Flood event and the DPW was located in the 100-Year Floodplain, the one department most needed to respond during the event would become potentially inaccessible.
- Previous studies and committees have also come to a similar conclusion.

Any of the above bullet points could be considered enough reason to eliminate Floodplain sites from consideration and, with the combination of all 4, the Committee decided to remove any sites west of I-91 from being recommended to the Select Board.



Sites in Neighboring Towns

The Committee inquired about the possibility of locating the DPW site outside the Town of Longmeadow. The concept was investigated by Town Counsel and concluded that approval was complicated and, for all practical purposes, not feasible.

Wolf Swamp Fields Site / Article 97

The DPW Task Force Committee was formed shortly after a Town Manager Task Force concluded that the Wolf Swamp Fields site was the preferred site for the new DPW. Due to incomplete information found on state geographic information sites, the prior task force was under the assumption that the Wolf Swamp Fields site was Town owned and not Article 97 land. That task force was also led to believe that replication of fields was possible on an adjacent site. This was later found infeasible due to the presence of wetlands.

After input from Town residents and investigation of the deed by Town Counsel, the Wolf Swamp Fields site was determined to be Article 97 land. In order to construct on Article 97 land many criteria must be met. Following are four major hurdles:

- The board that controls the land (the Park Board in this case) would need to vote unanimously to repurpose the land
- 2/3 vote at Town Meeting to repurpose the land
- 2/3 vote in both Massachusetts Legislative Houses to repurpose the land
- Replacement land in equal or greater size and utility must be provided

While being Article 97 land did not remove Wolf Swap Fields entirely from consideration, it did greatly drop in ranking in the committee's site selection matrix.

It should be noted that at the Town Meeting of May 10, 2016 the town voted to eliminate Wolf Swamp Fields from consideration by a very wide margin. While the vote was not binding, it did indicate that obtaining 2/3 town approval would be unlikely.

The Town could, in theory, disregard the Article 97 Policy, but would risk forfeiture of future EOEEA grant money. Town Counsel advised at one of our meetings that the Town comply with the Article 97 Policy and not take this risk.



Appropriate Size Sites

The DPW Committee used the Town's GIS to identify all known sites within the Town with the following criteria:

- 4.5 Acres or greater
- Not a school property
- Not Senior Housing
- Not in the 100-Year Floodplain

The result of this was 29 private and 7 Town owned sites. After review of each of these sites and elimination of residential sites, Springfield owned sites, and sites with severe grade changes, the list of potential sites was reduced to the following 9 sites:

1. Synagogue/Temple Site (Private)
2. Grande Meadows (Private)
3. Pomeroy Plot (Town)
4. Wolf Swamp Fields (Town)
5. Water Tower Site (Town)
6. Library/Cordis (Private)
7. Turner Park South (Town)
8. Laurel Park West (Town)
9. Laurel Park East/Bliss Park (Town)

Development of Site Selection Matrix for 9 Sites

The DPW Committee spent the majority of several meetings developing the 2016 Longmeadow Site Selection Matrix. The matrix is broken into 3 major categories with many of the criteria gleaned from previous task forces' matrices and input from the Town's project engineering firm Weston & Sampson. The matrix attempts to give permitting and social factors greater influence on scoring than past matrices.

At the meeting of July 12th the committee agreed that the weighted values for each criteria were appropriate and data was substantially complete for all 9 sites. Following is the matrix midway through that meeting:



2016 Longmeadow DPW Site Selection Matrix - Early in Meeting of July 12, 2016, Prior to Site eliminations

Construction Site Factors		Available Points	Pomeroy Lot 4	Water Tower	Turner South	Wolf Swamp	Bliss Park	Laurel Park West	Temple Site Williams St	Library /Cordis	Grande Meadows
1. Location (10 points)	Site is centrally located in Town and near a major collector road	10					10	10	9	10	9
	Site is not centrally located but is near a major collector road	9									
	Located on or near a secondary collector road	4		4	4						
	Not easily accessible to any collector roads	0	0								
2. Physical Site Features (10 points)	No known significant topography changes (no major grading)	10	10	10		10	10	10	10		8
	Minor topography changes	8								6	
	Moderate topography changes	6			6						
3. Access to Utilities (10 points)	Utilities Existing	10					10	10	10		10
	Utilities available in frontage	8	8			8				8	
	Utilities available nearby	6		6	6						
	Utilities not nearby	4									
Subtotal - Construction Site Drivers		15	14	14	11	15	13	14	12	14	11
4. Construction Site Drivers (15 pts) Score Each 0, 1, 2, or 3	No wetland crossing	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Low probability of specialty foundations based on USGS mapping	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	No demolition of existing structures	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	0
	Ease of Site Clearing	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3
	Lack of Traffic Issues	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	1	3	2
Total Site Score:		45	32	34	27	42	43	44	41	38	38
Ranking			8	7	9	3	2	1	4	5	5
Acquisition Cost Factors											
1. Property Ownership		Available Points	Pomeroy Lot 4	Water Tower	Turner South	Wolf Swamp	Bliss Park	Laurel Park West	Temple Site Williams St	Library /Cordis	Grande Meadows
Acquire Property Cost											
Development will have negative tax impact Y/N											
Field Replacement Costs											
Additional Costs (e.g. demolition/site access/slope stabilization)											
Total Site Score:			5	10	5	5	10	10	0	0	0
Ranking			4	1	4	4	1	1	7	7	7
Scoring 10 = under \$1m 5 = \$1-\$2m 0 = greater than \$2m											
Permitting/Social Factors											
1. Social Impacts (30 points)		Available Points	Pomeroy Lot 4	Water Tower	Turner South	Wolf Swamp	Bliss Park	Laurel Park West	Temple Site Williams St	Library /Cordis	Grande Meadows
No residential abutters within 1,000 feet		15									
Residential abutters (1 side) with adequate area for screening		10				10					10
Residential abutters (multiple sides) with adequate area for screening		5	5	5	5			5		5	
Residential abutters (one or more sides) with limited area for screening		0					0		0		
No displacement of current active use (Open Space/Recreation)		15		15					15		15
Displacement/impact of current active use that does not require "replacement"		8			8		8	8		8	
Displacement of current use that requires "replacement"		0	0			0					
2. Permitting/Approvals (15 points)	No specialty permits required	15		15					15		15
	Some specialty permits required	8			8		8	8		8	
	Excessive specialty permits required (i.e. Article 97)	0	0			0					
Total Site Score:		45	5	35	21	10	16	21	30	21	40
Ranking			9	2	4	8	7	4	3	4	1
Construction Site Factors + Permitting/Social Factors		Available Points	Pomeroy Lot 4	Water Tower	Turner Fields	Wolf Swamp	Bliss Park	Laurel Park West	Temple Site Williams St	Library /Cordis	Grande Meadows
		90	37	69	48	52	59	65	71	59	78
			9	3	8	7	5	4	2	5	1
Grand Total - Including Cost Factors		Available Points	Pomeroy Lot 4	Water Tower	Turner Fields	Wolf Swamp	Bliss Park	Laurel Park West	Temple Site Williams St	Library /Cordis	Grande Meadows
		100	42	79	53	57	69	75	71	59	78
			9	1	8	7	5	3	4	6	2

At the same meeting it was noted that 4 of the sites ranked significantly higher than the other 5 sites. The committee voted to reduce the matrix to include only those 4 sites. Following is the matrix at the end of that meeting:



2016 Longmeadow DPW Site Selection Matrix - end of July 12, 2016 DPW Meeting

Construction Site Factors						
Criteria	Factors	Available Points	Water Tower	Laurel Park West	Temple Site Williams St	Grande Meadows
1. Location (10 points)	Site is centrally located in Town and near a major collector road	10		10		
	Site is not centrally located but is near a major collector road	9			9	9
	Located on or near a secondary collector road	4	4			
	Not easily accessible to any collector roads	0				
2. Physical Site Features (10 points)	No known significant topography changes (no major grading)	10	10	10	10	
	Minor topography changes	8				8
	Moderate topography changes	6				
3. Access to Utilities (10 points)	Utilities Existing	10		10	10	10
	Utilities available in frontage	8				
	Utilities available nearby	6	6			
	Utilities not nearby	4				
Subtotal - Construction Site Drivers		15	14	14	12	11
4. Construction Site Drivers (15 pts) Score Each 0, 1, 2, or 3	No wetland crossing	3	3	3	3	3
	Low probability of specialty foundations based on USGS mapping	3	3	3	3	3
	No demolition of existing structures	3	3	3	2	0
	Ease of Site Clearing	3	2	2	3	3
	Lack of Traffic Issues	3	3	3	1	2
Total Site Score:		45	34	44	41	38
Ranking			4	1	2	3
Acquisition Cost Factors						
Criteria	Factors	Available Points	Water Tower	Laurel Park West	Temple Site Williams St	Grande Meadows
1. Property Ownership	Acquire Property Cost					
	Development will have negative tax impact Y/N					
	Field Replacement Costs					
	Additional Costs (e.g. demolition/site access/slope stabilization)					
Total Site Score			10	10	0	0
Ranking			1	1	3	3
<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Scoring</i> 10 = under \$1m 5 = \$1-\$2m 0 = greater than \$2m</p>						
Permitting/Social Factors						
Criteria	Factors	Available Points	Water Tower	Laurel Park West	Temple Site Williams St	Grande Meadows
1. Social Impacts (30 points)	No residential abutters within 1,000 feet	15				
	Residential abutters (1 side) with adequate area for screening	10				10
	Residential abutters (multiple sides) with adequate area for screening	5	5	5		
	Residential abutters (one or more sides) with limited area for screening	0			0	
	No displacement of current active use (Open Space/Recreation)	15	15		15	15
	Displacement/impact of current active use that does not require "replacement"	8		8		
2. Permitting/Approvals (15 points)	Displacement of current use that requires "replacement"	0				
	No specialty permits required	15	15		15	15
	Some specialty permits required	8		8		
	Excessive specialty permits required (i.e. Article 97)	0				
Total Site Score:		45	35	21	30	40
Ranking			2	4	3	1
		Available Points	Water Tower	Laurel Park West	Temple Site Williams St	Grande Meadows
Construction Site Factors + Permitting/Social Factors		90	69	65	71	78
			3	4	2	1
Grand Total - Including Cost Factors		100	79	75	71	78
			1	3	4	2



Tour of Final Four Sites

On July 20th the Committee toured the final four sites.

Laurel Park West and the Water Tower sites appeared to have relatively flat sites with adequate room for buffering and screening though both sites were surrounded by residential properties.

The Demolished Temple site was eliminated from consideration because site has minor elevation changes, yields only about 4 acres of useable space due to non-rectangular lot lines, offers no buffering between residential abutters, and does not offer an efficient DPW work flow. This was confirmed by a layout developed by Weston & Sampson for this site.

The Grande Meadows site appears to be suitable for light industrial facilities. There is significant erosion on the north and west ends of the site but the 10-acre lot is large enough that a DPW facility could be placed away from those areas. The existing structures seem to be in poor condition and there may be unforeseen issues that will need to be addressed during the demolition phase of the project.

After the tour the matrix was updated to remove the Temple site and to update a few values based on our observations. This is the latest version of the matrix. Please note that the values highlighted in pink are pending input from Town Counsel.



2016 Longmeadow DPW Site Selection Matrix					
8/17/2016					
Construction Site Factors					
Criteria	Factors	Available Points	Water Tower	Laurel Park West	Grande Meadows
1. Location (10 points)	Site is centrally located in Town and near a major collector road	10		10	
	Site is not centrally located but is near a major collector road	9			9
	Located on or near a secondary collector road	4	4		
	Not easily accessible to any collector roads	0			
2. Physical Site Features (10 points)	No known significant topography changes (no major grading)	10	10		
	Minor topography changes	8		8	8
	Moderate topography changes	6			
3. Access to Utilities (10 points)	Utilities Existing	10		10	10
	Utilities available in frontage	8			
	Utilities available nearby	6	6		
	Utilities not nearby	4			
Subtotal - Construction Site Drivers		15	14	14	11
4. Construction Site Drivers (15 pts) Score Each 0, 1, 2, or 3	No wetland crossing	3	3	3	3
	Low probability of specialty foundations based on USGS mapping	3	3	3	3
	No demolition of existing structures	3	3	3	0
	Ease of Site Clearing	3	2	2	3
	Lack of Traffic Issues	3	3	3	2
Total Site Score:		45	34	42	38
Ranking			3	1	2
Acquisition Cost Factors					
Criteria	Factors	Available Points	Water Tower	Laurel Park West	Grande Meadows
1. Property Ownership	Acquire Property Cost				
	Development will have negative tax impact Y/N				
	Field Replacement Costs				
	Additional Costs (e.g. demolition/site access/slope stabilization)				
Total Site Score:			10	10	0
Ranking			1	1	3
Permitting/Social Factors					
Criteria	Factors	Available Points	Water Tower	Laurel Park West	Grande Meadows
1. Social Impacts (30 points)	No residential abutters within 1,000 feet	15			
	Residential abutters (1 side) with adequate area for screening	10			10
	Residential abutters (multiple sides) with adequate area for screening	5	5	5	
	Residential abutters (one or more sides) with limited area for screening	0			
	No displacement of current active use (Open Space/Recreation)	15	15		15
	Displacement/impact of current active use that does not require "replacement"	8		8	
2. Permitting/Approvals (15 points)	Displacement of current use that requires "replacement"	0			
	No specialty permits required	15			15
	Some specialty permits required	8	8		
	Excessive specialty permits required (i.e. Article 97)	0		0	
Total Site Score:		45	28	13	40
Ranking			2	3	1
		Available Points	Water Tower	Laurel Park West	Grande Meadows
Construction Site Factors + Permitting/Social Factors		90	62	55	78
			2	3	1
		Available Points	Water Tower	Laurel Park West	Grande Meadows
Grand Total - Including Cost Factors		100	72	65	78
			2	3	1



Steps Required to Pursue Final 3 Sites

The committee has asked for Town Counsel input on the steps required to obtain approval for construction at each of the final 3 sites in consideration. That information was not available when this report was written. From the information obtained by the committee to date our understanding of those steps are:

Laurel Park

The only record presented to the committee and on file for Laurel Park dates back to 1838 and is mostly illegible. Input from Town residents suggests that the land is intended to be park land, though that is not clear and it is difficult to determine if the land is classified as Article 97.

Residents both adjacent to the site and all around Town feel strongly that the land was intended to be park land and not appropriate for a DPW facility. Several residents, and the Town, identified the site to be historically significant due to the design work done by the Olmstead Brothers in the 1930's, which was not fully constructed.

If this land is classified as Article 97, the committee feels it has a small chance of ever becoming a DPW site due to the many legislative restrictions Article 97 imposes. Even if the land is not limited by said restrictions the committee feels it would not be approved by Town vote.

Water Tower Site

The Water Tower site was investigated in August of 2002 by David J. Martel, Town Counsel at that time. His findings summarize that the land was obtained by the Town by eminent domain on March 14, 1960. While the stated acquisition was "for the purposes of public playground and recreation center" it also goes on to say that the land is open to a wide variety of public activities provided that these activities are authorized by the board in control of the land. The parcel is under control of the Select Board and will require concurrence of the School Committee for a change in use.

It is not clear if this land falls under Article 97 classification and the Town is taking steps to determine if it is.

Again, residents both adjacent to the site and around Town feel strongly that the land is not appropriate for a DPW facility. Aside from any potential legislative restrictions, the committee feels that the town would agree with the neighborhood opposition and not approve this site for a DPW facility.

Grande Meadows Site

The biggest obstacle to this site is the need to acquire the land, which most likely will be through eminent domain. The committee's understanding is that cost to acquire the property and construct the facility would be put to Town vote. The acquisition cost would be established prior to Town vote.

Based on input from Stephen Crane (Town Manager), the committee has estimated that the added cost to acquire the site, address relocation costs, and demolition costs is \$3MM.



Cost Implications

There are two major cost implications if the Grande Meadow site is pursued:

1. Lost tax revenue
2. Added capital cost

The Town receives approximately \$60,000 in taxes annually from the current Grande Meadows owner. Based on a tax base of \$1.965 billion, this equates to approximately \$0.03/1000 of assessed value or \$10.00 for a home assessed at \$340,000.

The added acquisition, relocation and demolition costs needed to develop the Grande Meadows site are estimated to be \$3,000,000. This roughly equates to \$41.00/year for a home assessed at \$340,000 (this rough estimate assumes a 20 year finance period with equal payments and was confirmed by Paul Pasterczyk).

The total added cost to an average Longmeadow home owner would be approximately \$51/year. This would be in addition to the cost to finance the base scope of the project, which is estimated to be \$15MM.

A potential cost implication at the Grande Meadows site relates to the erosion observed on the north and west ends of the site. Weston & Sampson has indicated that a DPW facility can be oriented on the site to minimize any immediate stabilization that may be required. However, because the magnitude of potential slope stabilization and the cost to address it could be significant, the Committee recommends the development of a stabilization plan with an opinion of probable construction cost prior to finalizing the acquisition of the site.

Over the course of our meetings the Committee noted that, no matter where the DPW facility is located, there will be a loss of potential tax revenue.



Final Recommendation

The site recommended by the 2016 DPW Task Force Committee is the Grande Meadows property for the following reasons:

- It ranked #1 in the 2016 Site Selection Matrix
- The immediate added annual cost to the average home (assessed at \$340,000) is \$51.00. Note that this does not include project costs that would be required at any site, only the added costs for constructing at Grande Meadows plus the lost tax revenue.
- The 2016 DPW Task Force Committee wants its recommendation to the Select Board to be pragmatic so that it will, unlike the recommendations of previous committees, move forward and be constructed. Town residents do not appear to have an appetite for a DPW within or close to residential neighborhoods are not likely to approve project funding if it is so proposed.
- The Grande Meadows site will accommodate a DPW facility that meets the needs of the community as well as the opportunity for future expansion or commercial development.

It is noted in this report that the 2016 Site selection Matrix is not 100% complete pending input on steps needed to pursue the final three sites, but input from Town Counsel will not change the recommendation of the committee.

Perhaps the most compelling statement made during the past 6 months is that the Department of Public Works serves the entire Town of Longmeadow and no one neighborhood should unnecessarily bear the burden of added traffic, added noise, and possible impact on home values. While the Committee believes the DPW is an essential part of the community and can be developed in a context-sensitive way, there is little doubt that the facility is incongruous with a residential neighborhood. The Committee agrees that minimizing or eliminating the impacts on residential neighborhoods will be necessary for the town to support funding for a new facility. Of the final sites considered, the Grande Meadows site best achieves this goal.

Name	Date	Name	Date
Christopher Cove		Arlene Miller	
Mary Beth Morris		Doug Jangraw	
Mary Pat O'Connor		Peter Greenberg	
Dave Horowitz		Ryan Shanks	
Dave Appleman			