



## Hopkinton Chamber Urges “NO” vote on Articles # 41 and # 42

Hopkinton has not happened by accident. The town that all of us value is the direct result of many years of collaborative efforts to plan and create zoning that has resulted in the neighborhoods and open spaces that keep long-time residents here and attract new friends and neighbors to this special town. Here are just some of the high lights of this history:

- Initially enacting zoning in the 1950's
- Initiating industrial zoning on South Street after construction of 495 in the late '60's and early '70's when it was undeveloped raw land
- Adopting the garden apartment by-law in the '70's in direct response to the Chapter 40B comprehensive permitting statute enacted by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1969
- Adopting open space and landscape preservation cluster zoning in the late '80's
- Creating an open space preservation plan in the '90's
- Establishing the downtown and Woodville historic districts
- Accepting the Community Preservation Act in the early '00's and using the resulting revenues to purchase large quantities of open space in town (combined with CPA purchases well in excess of a square mile has been permanently protected)
- A capital planning initiative working with the Cecil Group in the late '90's when Hopkinton was looking at a new police station, senior center, Library, DPW facility, and elementary school
- Zoning Advisory Committee established as the “planning” arm of the Planning Board
- A multi-year effort to ensure best outcomes and practices with respect to the Weston Nurseries land sale involving independent studies undertaken by the MAPC, the MIT graduate Department of Planning and Architecture, and a Sasaki and Associates study commissioned by the town – all of which agreed on the desirability of the open space mixed use development we see evolving at Legacy Farms today.
- Most recently the studies leading to the new Marathon Elementary School

The growth in town -- its current and projected population -- is actually in line with what was predicted in the late 1990's. Previous studies have been remarkably on target with land use predictions.

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Though the significant concern with school population growth must be acknowledged, it is not simply a function of new development. The market suggests that empty nest couples sell to families with school children. Predictions are not easy to make, but this is one place where our town officials arguably need to do a better and more coordinated job. Now more than ever, cooperation between the school system, town departments and the private sector is vital to ensure that we continue to provide the best estimates of school population to ensure the best education possible for our students.

Almost 70 years of continuous planning has been done by generations of devoted citizen committees and boards. All of it has been done with an eye to the future. All of it has been done through an established procedure of proposal, consideration, public hearings, and, when ready, town meeting vote. It is a deliberative process which moves ideas through your Zoning Advisory Board and onto the Planning Board ensuring all stakeholders are heard, and all the intended and unintended consequences of proposed changes are evaluated and voted on. Articles 41 and 42 before us at this town meeting reject all that. In fact, they seek to circumvent that process, and for that reason failed approval by both Zoning Advisory Committee and Planning Board.

As Chamber members who are also residents and school parents we are as concerned as any group about the continued need to plan our future -- our schools, our open space, our public safety, and our recreation programs. But we cannot endorse a private citizens' petition which circumvents a process and a legacy planned and developed by generations of thoughtful Hopkintonians.

Please attend the Hopkinton Annual Town Meeting

Time: 7:00 pm,

Date: Monday, May 6

Where: Middle School Auditorium

The Hopkinton Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors encourages your participation and urges you to vote no on Article 41 and Article 42.

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[www.hopchamber.com](http://www.hopchamber.com)