



Town of Brewster

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Brewster Voters to Consider Town Acquisition of the Cape Cod Sea Camps for Public Use

Town of Brewster, Massachusetts – Brewster voters will consider a public acquisition of the Cape Cod Sea Camps properties. The announcement was made by the Brewster Select Board and Town Administrator Peter Lombardi at the July 26 Select Board meeting.

The Sea Camps' owners have offered two properties for sale:

- The Bay Parcel: A 55-acre parcel at 3057 Main Street (Route 6A) that stretches from Main Street north to Cape Cod Bay.
- The Pond Parcel: A 66-acre parcel at 500 W. H. Besse Cartway that extends from Route 137 (Long Pond Road) west to Long Pond.

The Select Board believes that Brewster voters deserve the chance to decide if the Town should acquire the Sea Camps and determine the future of these properties. The properties offer opportunities for significant public benefits including conservation of land, coastal dunes, and wetlands; habitat and drinking water protection; beach access; a home for a community center; extensive recreational amenities; and housing.

In an effort to keep acquisition costs as low as possible, the Select Board followed the disposition process put in place by the current owners and their representatives, and the Town submitted bids for both parcels on June 23, 2021. The bids are contingent on authorization by Town Meeting vote and a special election ballot question. The bids were based on property appraisals, title research, discussion with Town counsel, and consultation with local land use professionals including an engineer and a conservation land acquisition expert.

The Town is concerned these properties may be privately developed. Both parcels are zoned for development and the Town is aware that at least two major developers have submitted bids to purchase the Sea Camps. The Town continues to seek a negotiated sale. However, if that is not successful, Brewster voters may consider acquiring the Sea Camps through eminent domain.

A Special Town Meeting will be called in late September to consider this matter. Acquisition of one or both parcels requires approval by both Town Meeting and at the ballot. Accordingly, a special election will be held shortly after Town Meeting.

A virtual public forum will be held on Tuesday, August 17 at 6pm to provide voters with detailed information about the potential acquisition, and the plans for Special Town Meeting and a special election. In addition to the public forum, updates and additional information about the potential acquisition of the Sea Camps will be posted on the Town website and distributed on the Town's social media. Print information will be available at Town Hall.

The Sea Camps ceased operations in 2020, and since then the Select Board and Town Administration analyzed possible acquisition of the two parcels. Acquisition for public use appears to be aligned with community priorities identified in the Brewster Vision Plan and resident feedback from other recent strategic planning initiatives. If Brewster voters decide to acquire the Cape Cod Sea Camps, the Town will facilitate a public engagement process inviting input from residents about potential future uses.