

GROTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION POLICY

Policy: It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Groton Conservation Commission that lands or easements taken or acquired for natural resource purposes, consistent with Article 97, are a vital and indispensable public natural and historic resource and, therefore, that there shall be no net loss of lands or easements taken or acquired for public natural resource purposes as a result of any disposition or change in use of these lands.

Definition – Replacement Land:

If, after an alternatives analysis, it is deemed that no alternative exists other than to convert Article 97 land to another purpose, then the Article 97 land must be replaced with land that is comparable in area, fair market value and habitat as compared with the Article 97 lands or easements being used for other purposes, and of comparable location and use. Article 97 land shall not qualify as replacement land.

Evaluation of land conversion requests:

- Taking a parcel out of conservation could undermine the confidence of donors, sellers, and abutters about the permanence of conservation land and make future acquisition difficult
- Land once developed loses its conservation value forever;
- As Groton grows, open space will become more valuable and more expensive to replace;
- The public benefits of open space are as important as any alternative use.

Adopted by the Groton Conservation Commission

11/13/07