

A Note from Proponents of Warrant Article 5 RE: Muddy River Restoration Project

Last night both the Advisory Committee and the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to support a warrant article that will appropriate \$1.4 million to restore the Carlton Street Footbridge and to affirm Brookline's commitment to the Muddy River Restoration Project. The version of the article that was passed was not our original version but it contains all of our key points and we fully expect it to achieve our original goals.

It provides the "enforceable commitment" and schedules for the restoration of the bridge that the Commonwealth has requested so that the \$24 million that the State has set aside for the project can be released, a Project Participation Agreement with the U.S Army Corps of Engineers can be signed, and the Muddy River project can proceed without delay. As in our original version of the article, if a grant is received, the restoration the bridge will be completed by 2013 as provided by the schedule attached to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the Selectmen last July. Furthermore, even if that grant is for as little as 60% of the cost (although 90% is expected), the restoration would proceed on the same schedule. It also includes assurances that the bridge will be restored with any necessary ADA compliance.

The new version of Article 5 also now specifically requires that any money we spend for the bridge not obtained from grants will come from bonding, the form of funding that everyone supports, as opposed to drawing tax money away from our current budget.

The Town is optimistic that grants will be available for 90% funding and the Commonwealth has recently repeated their promise of their full support in our efforts. However, in the event that Brookline does not get a grant equal to at least 60% of the restoration cost, and in order to ensure the highest level of support and get the 2/3 vote required at Town Meeting, we accepted language that the final completion of the bridge would be tied to the completion of Phase II of the overall Muddy River Project, including work to be done at Leverett and Willow Ponds which would otherwise cost the Town approximately \$8 million to resolve.

This new version of the warrant article has achieved what just a few days ago was thought to be close to impossible-- unanimous support that includes some of our harshest opponents. It will help restore trust that Brookline will uphold its commitments and it will pave the way for the very important flood control, improved water quality and historic restoration of a major portion of Olmsted's Emerald Necklace.

The Emerald Necklace Conservancy supports Warrant Article 5.

Rob Daves
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Proponents of Warrant Article 5