

**RE: Foster Property  
Proposed Town Meeting Warrant Article 16 - Foster Property**

Dear Marianne and Select Board Members,

I am concerned that the current proposal for the Foster Property does not conform to our well-established, long-standing, and written procedures with regard to re-zoning traditions in Needham.

The current proposal is both unprecedented and arbitrary, and it requests Town meeting members to vote on a complex real-estate transaction that entails possible circumvention of rezoning bylaws, 1) which is prospective and unexecuted, and 2) has not adhered to established, written application protocols. For all these reasons, I urge you to pause, re-evaluate, and require that this proposal follow the same process that any other development project has and should continue to follow in our town.

These are important issues facing the town and decisions of this magnitude require much more analysis than has been currently allocated. In short, this project is too premature and speculative to raise before town meeting at this time. This is the very reason why we have a zoning board, with its long-established process in place to thoroughly gather all the relevant information surrounding the project and then perform the comprehensive research and analysis necessary to come up with a rational finding that will serve the long-standing best interests of our community. It is the same process that dozens of past projects have successfully undergone over many years, and should be followed here, too.

It is not reasonable to ask well-meaning and devoted Town Meeting Members -- who are volunteer citizens -- to vote at this time on these complex real estate, environmental, and financial issues. They need more data, facts, and expert analysis to help them make an informed judgment than what is currently on the table, which appears, in fact, to be bypassing our established processes. As stewards of the town, we need to approach this proposal with great care and thought, and in the same spirit of those who came before us, and those who will follow in our footsteps, to preserve the best interests of Needham.

I am not suggesting that the proposal be shelved. Rather, I urge that this body consider the proposal 1) in the same way, 2) with the same rules, 3) with the same transparency, and 4) with the same level of scrutiny that any other project would need to follow for rezoning. That process can only start once a complete and written application is placed in front of the planning board by the seller or the buyer of a parcel of property. This has not been done here, and we cannot allow this project to establish a new, arbitrary "standard" that would only create chaos and uncertain precedence for future projects.

Finally, a vote from the Members without having all the data could jeopardize the essential character of this specific neighborhood and our community, in general, which is currently zoned as "Rural Residence Conservation." If and when this area is rezoned, we can never get it back. It will be gone. We are stewards of this wonderful town, after all, and cannot walk into this kind of proposal blindly; we must have more information first, and only then can make a more educated and well-reasoned decision.

I ask the Town to follow its own, well-established, long-standing, and written rules surrounding these kinds of projects that are already in place.

Thanks, and I value your leadership,

Gary Ajamian, 60+ year resident, TMM, Precinct F