

Land Acquisition for Water Resource

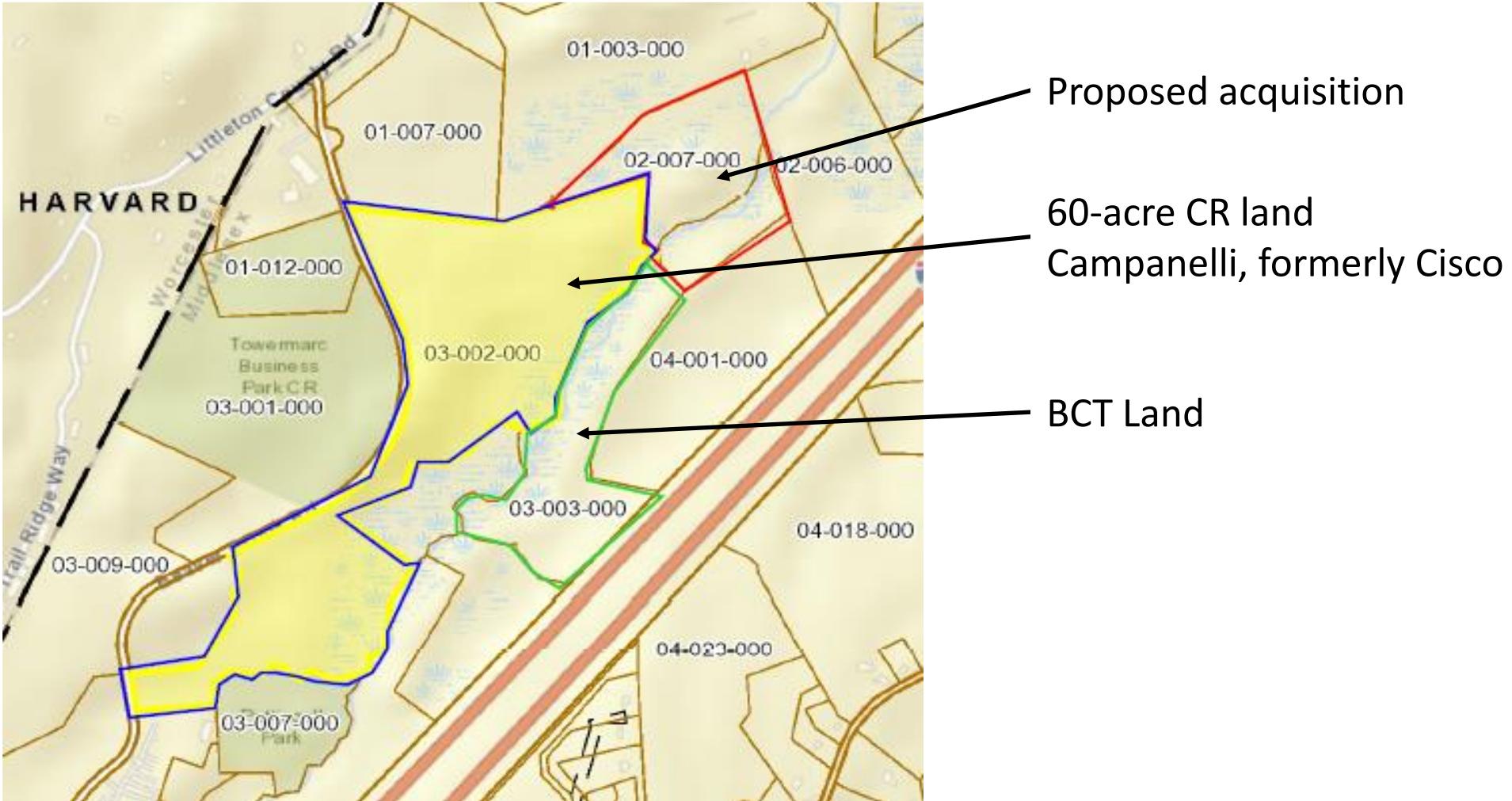
Water Resources Committee

December 2, 2021

What: Acquire land for water resource

- Two parcels of Harvard Sportsmen's Club land ~ 18 Acres
- Located in Beaver Brook Aquifer.
- Identified as priority on OSRP for both water and open space value.
- Unique water resource value proven in 2006/8 study.
- Currently in Ch 61 (Forestry).
- Assessed value \$35,000. Tax revenue loss ~ \$600/year.
- Would remain protected and available for passive recreation.

HSC Parcels - locus



Is water there?

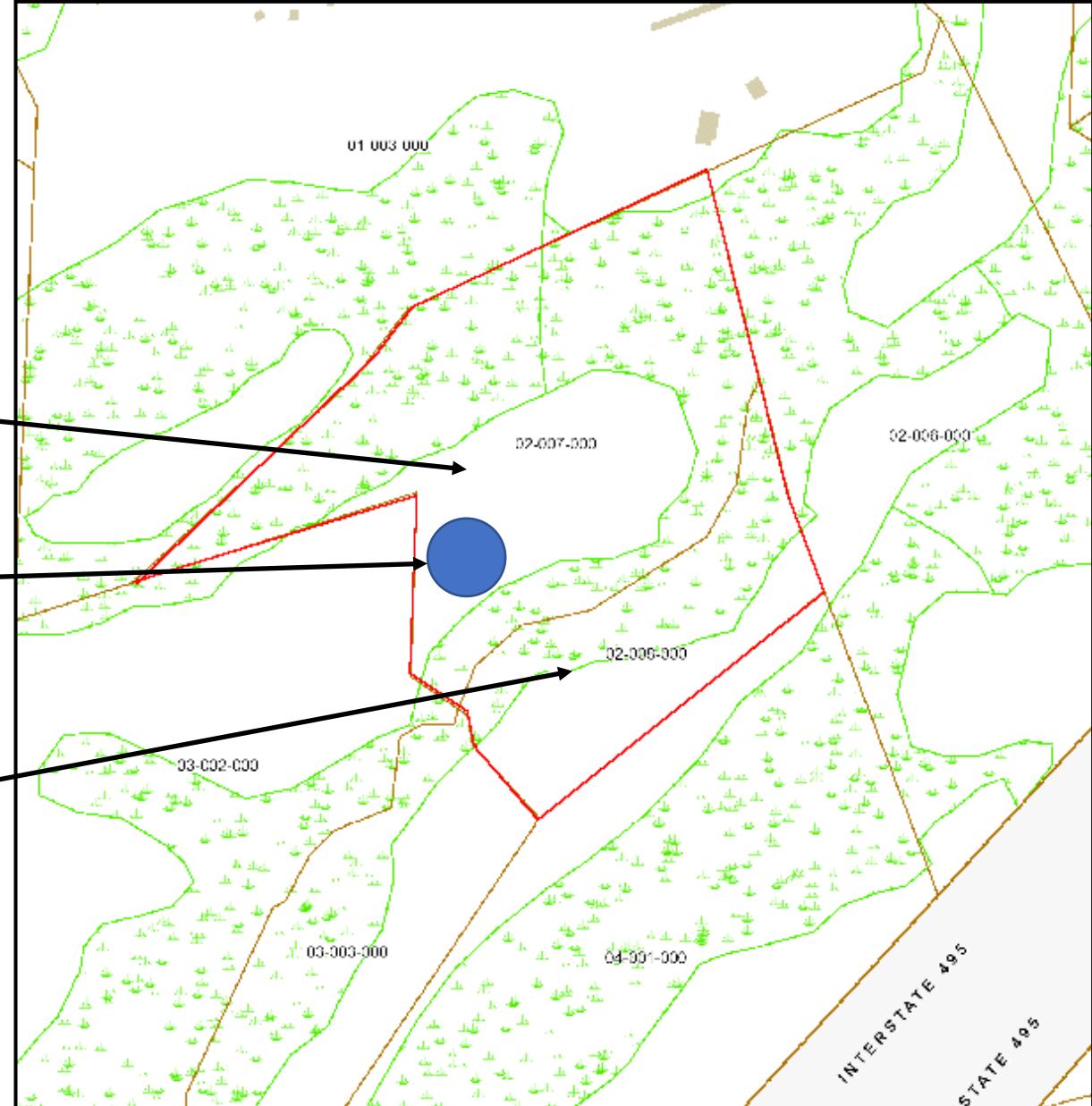
- Yes! Land is in Beaver Brook Aquifer.
- High yield source proven in 2006 (CDM study). High quality.
- Plan to confirm by re-testing yield of existing well before purchase.
- Conduct more extensive water quality tests.

HSC parcels

02-007 12 acres

Test well (2006)

02-008 6 acres



Funding requested

- Requesting \$275,000 to acquire two parcels
- Current “pro-forma” appraised value \$231,000
- Actual acquisition cost TBD. Need margin to negotiate. Requested amount may be revised prior to ATM2022
- WRC will pursue grant and matching grant opportunities.
 - MVP Action Grants and others
- Goal is to minimize use of CPA funds for acquisition. May need only for match.

Other funds

- WRC has \$20,000 for appraisals, appropriated at 2020 ATM.
- MADOT will fund re-testing of 2006/8 well.

Aligned to town goals and plans

- Supports several points of CPC General and Specific Selection Criteria.
- Community Preservation Act - Ch 44B
- Community Preservation Plan
- Open Space and Recreation Plan: Protect undeveloped areas with potential for municipal water supply.
- Proven significant water resource in 2006/8 CDM study
- Master Plan: priority area for municipal water
- MVP: Alternative drinking water sources

Municipal water system may be needed

- Water quality issues in western Boxborough are impacting multiple independent (private) public water supplies.
 - Salt levels
 - Wastewater discharges
- WRC investigating extension of Littleton Water System as solution
 - New source could contribute significantly
 - WRC has applied for ARPA grant for design study
 - Financed through betterments on consumers (rate payers)
- Intermunicipal agreement and special legislation needed
- Significant input from Town Counsel over past 2 years

Process

- Prefer to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement
- Eminent domain taking if necessary
- Record necessary covenants
 - Protect drinking water per DEP
 - Allow passive recreation

Summary

- Parcels should be acquired now to protect a unique and significant water resource.
- Essential first step in the best interests of the town, even if the journey takes years.