

**Brookline, MA, 2015 Annual Town Meeting, Article 18**  
*from Reports of Selectmen and Advisory Committee*

To see if the Town will adopt the following Resolution:

Whereas Precinct 16 lacks any publicly-accessible Open Space for active recreation within its boundaries, outside of the Baker School which is reserved for school use, and not publicly-accessible when in use by Baker School, and,

Whereas Residents of both Russett Road and Beverly Road were promised by the original owners of Hancock Village that these “buffer zones” zoned as S-7, would be perpetually “green” and undeveloped, and thus most purchased homes with that specific consideration, and,

Whereas, no other Open Space within the precinct can be used for publicly accessible recreational purposes and playground, including the Walnut Hill Cemetery (inappropriate use for recreation), conservation land Hoar Sanctuary, the small open land at Putterham Library (too small for varied typical recreational use) and the Putterham Circle rotary which is unsafe to access, although publicly accessible open space, are not deemed suitable for recreational purposes involving playgrounds or equipment, and,

Whereas, these open spaces are deemed by the Town for “passive” use only, rather than “active” and/or are otherwise restricted for conservation purposes, for example, and,

Whereas, The Open Space “walkability” as a valuable function of accessing active recreational space, the Town acknowledges that Precinct 16 appears to be the only precinct without walkability to such space within its boundaries, or even within any reasonable or safe walking distance, the nearest space being approximately 1-1/2 miles from the majority of its precinct residents, and regarded as dangerous to access by foot as it crosses major vehicular arteries in all directions, and,

Whereas no other property is available for this active use anywhere in Precinct 16, or will ever be again if this property is not preserved as publicly-accessible recreational Open Space, and thus Precinct 16 will never again have any opportunity to expect such recreational space without restriction, and,

Whereas it is historically used as publicly-accessible Open Space including cross-country skiing this winter, and,

Whereas, in the interests of equity and fairness, two principles highly valued by Brookline, to Precinct 16 residents who cannot enjoy reasonable, safe, walkable access to active recreational space as other precincts can and do, and,

Whereas there are indications that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts may assist in the costs of acquisition, if the Town supports the taking, and which possibility should be actively pursued through South Brookline’s State Representative, among others,

Now therefore Be It Resolved: That Town Meeting asks the Board of Selectmen to study, and consider in good faith the taking under the powers of Eminent Domain the two buffer zones presently zoned S-7 within the Hancock Village property, abutting Russett and Beverly Roads for a permanently publicly-accessible active recreational space, and report its findings and recommendations and any possible decision at least two weeks prior to the filing deadline for November 2015 Town Meeting, so as to allow time for a citizen Warrant Article to be filed. Be it further resolved, that the Selectmen will consult with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for possible funding sources.