

Eastham Water Articles

The Town Meeting will have two water articles before them at Town Meeting. The first is **Article 17**, submitted by the Selectmen and the Water Advisory Committee, the second is **Article 34**, submitted by Petition.

These articles are both about municipal water for the Town but are distinctly different both in their scope and approach.

Article 17

Comprehensive Plan to Provide Municipal Water for the Town of Eastham

Phase 1 – Availability of Water Supply

Article 17 proposes appropriating \$3.1 Million for a complete water study that includes the costly expenses of actual water and pumping tests at our identified well source sites in order to determine pumping capacities and appropriateness. This article will also expand the pumping tests at the Nauset High School to determine its maximum capacity and availability as a supplemental source.

The purpose **Article 17** is to evaluate all public water supply options available to the Town so that the Town can make an informed decision for source and development directions. The two most promising sites are the “Ocean Beach” parcel, nestled between Nauset Road and the Ocean, shown as Area “H”, and the Town owned former “wood lots”, a triangular piece of land at the northern end of Town, shown on a plan provided by Ms. Bayne as Area “G”. Another option would be to obtain permits to increase the pumping at the Nauset Regional High School well from approximately 500,000 gal per day to 1,000,000 gal per day.

Relating to potential Eastham Sites:

- Field Studies/Evaluation
- DEP Site Screening Examination
- Pumping Tests
- Source Data Analysis/Final Report
- DEP/MEPA/CCC Reviews and Permitting

Relating to Utilizing Orleans Supply:

- Supply Line Configuration
- Maximum Volume Determination
- Infrastructure Requirements

Article 17 also includes feasibility study of obtaining 500,000 or more gallons per day of water from the Town of Orleans.

Article 17 also establishes the Board of Selectmen to act as Water Commissioners, establishing development and fee structures, etc.

Article 34

Purchase Water from the Town of Orleans

Article 34 proposes appropriating **\$4.0 Million** to:

- Immediately enter negotiations with the Town of Orleans
- Have the Town of Orleans Water Department Resources to lay out and run water mains from the Rotary to the Wellfleet Line
- Install some fire hydrants along the main
- Install a water tower for pressure regulation and water availability during times of pump shut down
- Buy unspecified equipment

General Discussion on the Two Articles

Scope of the Articles

Article 17 proposes to conduct a study and complete assessment of all the Town's water options, and to perform necessary pump tests at potential well sites and to obtain permits for utilizing those sites, as well as investigate the option of buying Water from the Town of Orleans.

Article 34 does not propose a study; it considers no option other than buying water from the Town of Orleans.

What will the Article Get Us with Their Appropriation?

Article 17 proposes to bring the Town to a point where the Town has permits in hand to implement a Municipal Water Installation Program.

Article 34 proposes to run a water main thru Eastham, but does not include the connection of any dwelling, business or otherwise, nor does it include any evaluations for running branch mains. The Article also does not include any evaluation of the proposed capacity of water available from the Town of Orleans, nor address supplemental water that may be necessary.

What is the Time Frame for Obtaining Water to any Homes, Businesses or "Hot Spots?"

Article 17 would most likely take a couple to few years to be at the implementation stage

Article 34 proposes to be ready to install in "short order" as soon as negotiations with the Orleans Water Department are made, approval of Selectmen, and possible Town Meeting Vote.

How Realistic are the Two Articles in Obtaining Their Goals

Article 17 is taking the realistic approach, as the Selectmen and Water Resource Committee understands the full extent of permitting requirements, and proposes to tackle those issues in pursuit of establishing a Municipal Water Program

Article 34 is somewhat scant on the reality of required permitting that would be required for expansion of existing water mains and capacities. **Article 34** proponents emphasize that no additional State Permitting would be required, however, the following excerpt from the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act review thresholds indicate otherwise:

301 CRM 11.03 Review Thresholds

(4) Water.

(a) ENF and Mandatory EIR.

1. New withdrawal or Expansion in withdrawal of:

a. 2,500,000 or more gpd from a surface water source; or

*b. **1,500,000 or more gpd from a groundwater source.***

2. New interbasin transfer of water of 1,000,000 or more gpd or any amount determined significant by the Water Resources Commission.

3. Construction of one or more New water mains ten or more miles in length.

*4. Provided that the Project is undertaken by an Agency, **New water service to a municipality or water district across a municipal boundary through New or existing pipelines**, unless a disruption of service emergency is declared in accordance with applicable statutes and regulations.*

Article 34 would most likely trigger No. 1 and No. 4, threshold limits listed above. This would mean that not only would the Article require an Environmental Notification Form, but an Environmental Impact Report. These reviews would need to include a complete Alternative Analysis, which is not anticipated by the proponents of **Article 34**, but included in **Article 17**.

So What Does This Mean For Obtaining the Immediacy for Clean Water at the Town's Hot Spots?

Both **Article 17** and **Article 34** have their benefits and drawbacks.

Article 17 does not address the immediacy of the necessity to bring clean water to the Town's "Hot Spots", but it does provide for the studies, analysis and permits.

Article 34 proposes to bring water mains towards the "Hot Spots", however disregards the permitting levels necessary to accomplish that, and will most likely not obtain the desired results in as hasty a manner as presented.

Eastham Forum Opinion

The benefit of both Articles, in theory, addresses the concerns of the Citizens of Eastham. The Eastham Forum Directors believe that the Town of Eastham **must** move forward to address the urgent water needs of the Town..

It is the hopes of the Forum that the proponent parties listen to both the community's call for urgency and also present fully realistic and researched Articles that would not conflict and/or confuse the Town Meeting participants.

It is the hope of the Forum that the Citizens of Eastham fully understand the scope of each Article and their limitations prior to rendering a decision.