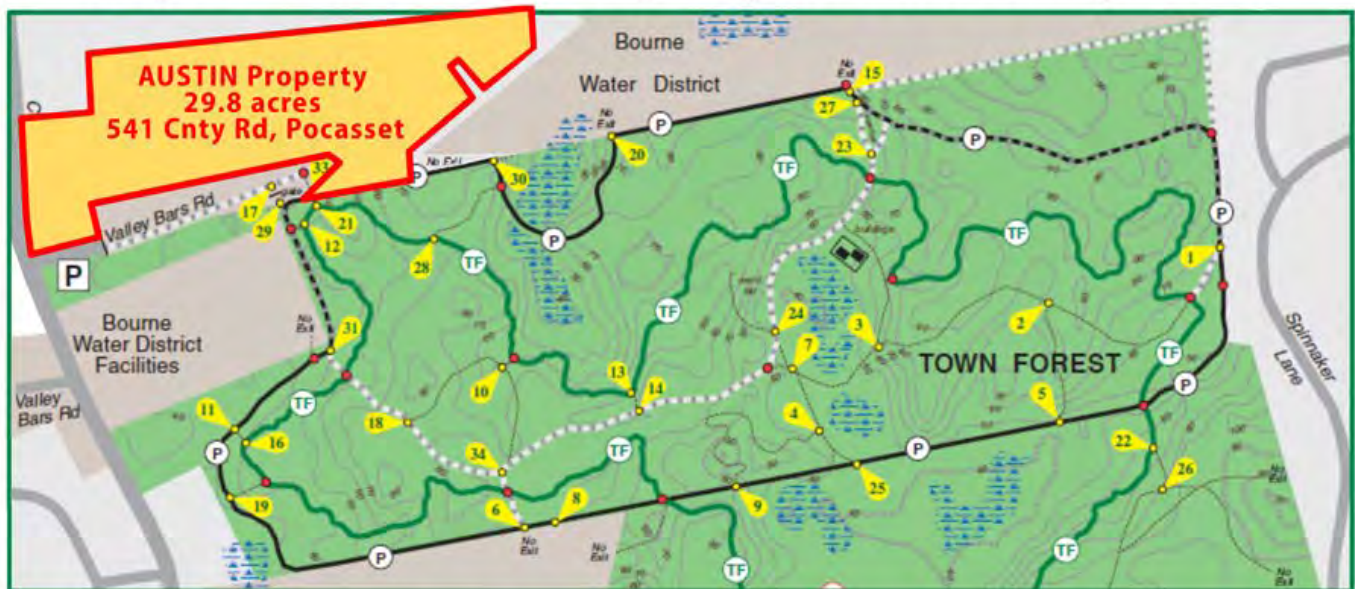


Critical Special Bourne Town Meeting Article to be presented October 21st at 7 p.m. at the Bourne High School Auditorium. The article will provide the funding for wellfield protection and preservation of 30-acres of woodlands in Pocasset.

**ATTENTION: Bourne residents! Special Town Meeting
October 21st @ 7pm; Bourne High School
Vote YES on Article 11
to preserve Austin Property at 541 County Road.**



TOWN FOREST & FOUR PONDS CONSERVATION AREA

Austin Property Purchase Project

In early August, the Bourne Conservation Trust (BCT) signed an agreement to purchase the Austin property in Pocasset, a scenic 30-acre woodland. This land features approximately 400 feet of frontage along County Road, providing direct access to 470 acres of the Town Forest and Bourne Water District land. The property is also located within a Zone II wellfield protection area and within 500 feet of critical wells, making it an essential environmental asset.

After being listed for sale in mid-July, the Austin property faced the imminent threat of subdivision and development. Acting swiftly, knowing the Town could not do so, BCT secured an agreement to purchase the land ensuring the preservation of this valuable natural resource. The closing is scheduled for November 12, 2024, under the terms of the purchase and sale agreement.

The parcel is surrounded on three sides by over 470 acres of protected, mature forest, designated under Article 97, and owned by the Town of Bourne (Town Forest) and the Bourne Water District (Main Wellfield). The fourth side borders County Road, a designated a Town Scenic Road since 1975.

Given the property's proximity to large tracts of town-owned land, BCT has partnered with the Town of Bourne to seek funding through the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to purchase a Conservation Restriction (CR) on the property. The Town will own the Conservation Restriction, overseen by the Bourne Conservation Commission, protecting the use of the land in perpetuity and the BCT will own the land and be responsible for maintenance. This partnership is pending the approval of CPA funding at the Special Town Meeting on October 21, 2024. The BCT is also applying for a state forestry grant to help fund the purchase..

Acquiring the Austin property aligns with the Bourne Local Comprehensive Plan for Open Space and Recreation, as well as the goals and policies outlined in the Regional Policy Plan of the Cape Cod Commission. Furthermore, preventing the development of this parcel will reduce pressure on town services and contribute to the community's fiscal stability. BCT has applied for \$2.1 million in Town CPA funding. No borrowing is necessary as these funds are available.

BCT has also enlisted the expertise of Mark Robinson and the Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts to guide this project through town procedures and identify available grants. According to a recent analysis by The Compact, this 500-acre assemblage of pine-oak forest in Pocasset would become one of the largest local conservation and wellfield protection areas on Cape Cod.

Much of the property features rugged ridge-and-hollow topography, and the public already enjoys its trails for hiking and mountain biking. These trails seamlessly connect to an extensive network of marked paths within the Town Forest and Watershed lands.

We strongly encourage Bourne residents to attend the Special Town Meeting on October 21 at 7 p.m. at the Bourne High School Auditorium and support the preservation of this land by approving this important article.

Updated: October 8, 2024

The property straddles Valley Bars Road for 1,100 feet.





Foot trails crisscross the property and connect to the Town trail system leading to the Four Ponds Conservation Area.



30" DBH White Pine grows in the NW corner of the property. About 100–150 years old.



Typical interior view with well-developed shrub layer and canopy of mixed hardwood-deciduous forest.