

# Another Kennedy Memorial?

Bitter experience taught the Trojans to beware of Greeks bearing gifts. Barnstable residents apparently have shorter memories than the Trojans whose wariness is now legendary.

Back in the early 1960s, prior to the election that put JFK in the White House, the Kennedy family made the Town of Barnstable a present- they gave us an ice skating rink. As intended, the gesture won many Cape Cod votes for JFK. Not until some years later did townspeople fully appreciate that what they had been given was a facility that proved enormously expensive to maintain. No funds for maintenance of the Kennedy Rink were provided at the time the gift was made; none have ever been forthcoming from the Kennedys since. Had Barnstable looked that gift-horse in the mouth, the town might have opted to decline the Kennedy's generosity.

Once again it is proposed that the Kennedys make a gift to the Town of Barnstable. This time, though, the impetus comes from the public sector rather than from the Kennedy family. A citizen has been presumptuous enough to suggest it would be notably altruistic of the Kennedy family to give the large acreage at Joshua and Micah's Ponds in Osterville to the town for conservation purposes, rather than to subdivide this property and create 204 houselots.

That is a LOT of lots. Each may house a family of four, presuming families living there will be representative of the average American family unit. If that eventually happens, Osterville's year-round population will increase by more than 800 souls, its school population by approximately 400. Put 400 new students into Osterville Elementary School and we must build 16 more classrooms and probably double the present number of school personnel.

More police protection for Osterville will be necessary. Costs to provide fire protection will rise. Expenses to maintain roads in this newly-developed area will increase.

Do not deceive yourself that property taxes imposed upon those 204 houses will generate adequate funds to pay for services. That is not the way it works. Inevitably, taxes on larger properties will go up because the values of small houses on lots of less than half-an-acre will be relatively low. (Taxes are based on values, not on expenses generated by individual households.)

Topping the list of concerns, however, is water. Water mains must be laid to supply the properties with potable water. Most of the water used will go into septic tanks and cesspools, then filter back into the groundwater, our only source of pure drinking water. Can the land support 204 more households without jeopardizing purity of everyone's water? Nobody knows, for certain. Should the answer turn out to be negative, then we can foresee a sewage plant being constructed (at taxpayers' expense, of course) in this part of town.

Donald F. Rugg, water superintendent for Centerville-Osterville Water Department, is concerned not only about environmental effects of developing the land around Joshua and Micah's Ponds but, he says, "Once they build 200 or more houses there, they'll come knocking at this door looking for water. I couldn't give it to them. An adequate water supply today, for a subdivision of that magnitude, is simply not available."

Rugg pointed out that a good portion of the land in question lies within the zone-of-contribution to the public water supply. Both ponds lie within 3,000 feet of the two wellfields

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located on the east side of Main Street. One well is immediately north of the Water Department building; the other is a bit further north, behind the next building on the right that once was Fraser's Garage.

"There is definitely going to be some contamination if all those houses go up. A good portion of the Kennedy land is within the wellfield recharge area," Rugg said.

"The problem is density. One or two-acre lots wouldn't be quite so bad," he said, "but the best thing would be to leave that property undisturbed or use it for recreation, perhaps."

"Legally, according to Rugg, "there is no way to stop it. Those people who spoke against it at the hearing hope the subdivision will be disapproved, but there is no law that I know of to save the area."

Asked if he thought the Town of Barnstable might buy the land, Rugg said that might happen, but he hoped some other solution could be found. "Perhaps," he agreed, "the Barnstable Conservation Foundation could acquire the property."

Donald Coombs, a cranberry grower living and working his six-and-a-half acres of bogs located between Bumps River Road and Old Mill Road near the Centerville-Osterville boundary, is an abutter of the property in question. Spring-fed Micah's Pond irrigates Don's bogs. Its waters flow through the ditches, then via a culvert go under the pavement near the corner of the two roads, and finally drain into Scudder Bay in Centerville. Anything that adversely affects water-quality of Micah's Pond will also affect cranberry production on Don's bogs.

"Everything that goes on or into the ground around the ponds ultimately comes through my bogs," Coombs said. "There is a 60-foot drop between the highest point around Joshua's and the water level in Micah's. It all drains this way. If they put in roads, rains will carry silt into Micah's and that could clog some of the natural springs that feed the pond. Those roads will be salted and sanded in winter. All that salt won't do the vines any good."

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## Handicapped parking law enforcement extended to private sector

by Ann Lloyd

The Town of Barnstable will soon extend its new stiffer enforcement of handicapped parking space laws into private lots such as the Cape Cod Mall, according to selectmen.

The measure, passed at Town Meeting in May, awaits the approval of the state attorney general, expected within the next few weeks, Selectmen Jeff Wilson said at a July 13 press conference. When approved, anyone parking in the handicapped spaces without a special license plate will be subject to a \$25 fine and possibly have their vehicle towed. The town has already been enforcing the higher fines on public lots and streets.

Because of the stiffer, expanded enforcement, public officials said they want to make it clear just who can use handicapped-only spaces.

"It's going to become more and more important that people

