

November 3, 2004

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING AN OPEN SPACE LAND ACQUISITION FUND

WHEREAS, the 24th Town Council recognizes that the Town of Groton is a desirable place to live, work and visit in part because of the existence of natural, scenic coastal, historic and other open space areas within the Town; and

WHEREAS, pressures of development are diminishing open space lands and threatening the character of the town in its natural diversity of wildlife, open spaces, historic sites, and coastal resources; and

WHEREAS, the preservation of open space lands will benefit the public by protecting and preserving fragile and environmentally threatened lands, historic resources, scenic areas, farm, forest, and riverfront lands, coastal areas, wetlands and beaches, reservoirs and aquifers; and

WHEREAS, the goals of the 23rd and 24th Town Councils address the importance of preserving open space lands and water resources as a high priority to ensure that the quality of life is preserved for future generations; and

WHEREAS, the Conservation Commission has recommended the establishment of an open space acquisition policy to facilitate the identification, acquisition and protection of key parcels of land; and

WHEREAS, the Plan of Conservation and Development recommends the establishment and implementation of an open space plan including the creation of an open space land acquisition fund; and

WHEREAS, the 24th Groton Town Council recognizes the importance of preserving open space land and the need to designate funds for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the Town to take advantage of the state's Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program which provides up to 65 percent of the cost of purchasing approved open space and watershed lands; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that an open Space Land Acquisition Fund in the Town of Groton is hereby established pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-131r, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Council and RTM shall determine annually the amount, if any, to be appropriated for the fund. By statute, in no case can the annual deposit exceed two mills, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that by statute, the fund shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year. Funds deposited in the account shall be used solely for the identification, determination of suitability, appraisal and purchase of parcels of land to be designated open space.*

*For purposes of this Land Acquisition Fund, open space land means any land which if preserved would conserve natural or historic, or scenic resources, including the promotion of conservation of soils, wetlands and beaches, historic sites, farmland and forest land, and other designated areas deemed necessary or desirable for the preservation of the town's natural resources. Such areas shall emphasize passive recreation sites, natural resource protection sites or areas related to public health and safety

including flood plain, wetlands, and watercourses, public drinking water reservoirs and their tributaries, and areas that shape community design such as green belts, stream belts, and buffer strips.