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November 28, 2009

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Real Value for the Future

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In these difficult economic times, will you vote "Yes" in the referendum on Jan. 26 to support the Town's purchase of the Griswold property? The answer may depend on how you see yourself in relation to the historic coastal community of Madison. The best communities exist in both time and space. They take a long while to build and to flourish, yet they may be quickly destroyed. Their values are not subject to monetary measure alone. Have you been inside our post office lately and noticed that beautiful WPA mural, painted during another period of economic distress? The mural illustrates that Madison's character has always been shaped by two things: its location at the meeting place of land and water and its communal ethic even when adverse winds blow.

The public acquisition plan for the Griswold property is true to this common heritage. A large private complex suddenly rising on our shores is not. Preserving the salt marsh and adjoining land for environmental and recreational purposes is the kind of public-spirited project which citizens of our New England town can and should accomplish together-even if it means some financial sacrifice on the part of each of us. Before we vote on Jan. 26, we should all take a bracing winter walk down by the water, our hair tossing and the waves scattering as in that mural, the better to think about where we live and who we are and what will hold real value in the future.

Glenn W. Falk
Madison

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