

Shoreline Times (Shorelinetimes.com)

Opinion

Letter: Griswold vote - what does conservation mean to you?

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To the Editor:

The decision on whether to purchase the Griswold property is one that will have to be made by each citizen based on his or her own criteria for how tax money is to be spent. The issue is, however, a great opportunity to reflect on what conservation means to each of us, how much we value Madison's present landscape, and how much we are willing to spend in order to manage development in a way that will keep the best things about our town unchanged for our children.

I grew up in a town on Long Island with one or two muddy ponds and a brackish creek available for fishing. I did go fishing there a few times as a kid, but I never caught anything and I don't know what I would have done if I had. It was essentially an urban landscape, heavily developed, with almost no open space. By contrast, my son regularly goes fishing here - in the Sound, in the Hammonasset River, at Chatfield Hollow, and many other places in the region. What's more, he catches fish and brings them home for supper. "Trout's on the menu tonight, Dad" he told me confidently one day last week. And, sure enough, he brought home a nice rainbow for the grill. What an incalculable benefit that is, and what great memories he will have - of growing up in a town that still values conservation and quality of life more than it does development.

It has been said many times already that the Griswold piece of land is unique, that it is one of the few diverse coastal parcels available on the shoreline, maybe even in southern New England. That alone is enough for me to want to see it preserved. But it is the larger issue of what we value most in Madison that makes me want to have it for all of us. The qualities of Madison we all love will be diminished just a bit by its development, but they will be enhanced greatly by its conservation.

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Madison

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