



The League of Women Voters Of Weston

October, 2010

No. 130

OPENING MESSAGE

Katty Chace

The Massachusetts League of Women Voters voted at their last board meeting to oppose all three of the ballot questions which will appear on the ballot on November 2. These include Question #1, which would remove the Mass sales tax on alcoholic beverages and alcohol; Question #2, which would abolish comprehensive permits for low- or moderate income housing (known as Chapter 40B); and Question #3, which would reduce the current Massachusetts sales tax from the current rate of 6.25% to a rate of 3%, starting on January 1, 2011. You can find a detailed rationale for voting No on Question #2 elsewhere in this Bulletin.

On Election Day, the League will be offering rides to the polls to any of our members and to other voters through the Council on Aging. We do request that anyone wanting this service give us 24 hours' notice. You can contact Sally Currier at swcurrier@comcast.net. We will also be flying our banner over Boston Post Road as a reminder to all to vote.

We held a Candidates' forum last Wednesday for current State Representative Alice Peisch of Wellesley and her challenger Royall Switzler, former State Representative, also of Wellesley. The discussion covered many topics and will be reported in the Town Crier and on Weston Cable TV. You can find fuller coverage in the article by Barbara Flannery elsewhere in this Bulletin.

The following night the Wayland, Weston and Sudbury Leagues co-sponsored a forum on Question #2 in Wayland. Speakers Clark Zeigler, Executive Director of Massachusetts Housing Partnership since 1990; Tripp Jones, Weston native and Chairman of the Committee Against Repealing the Housing Law; and Rachel Bratt, member of the Wayland Housing Partnership presented a passionate defense of Chapter 40B and the important role

League of Women Voters of Weston

President..... Katty Chace
781-891-1087

Treasurer..... Kathie Strehle
508-358-8937

Voter Service.....Sally Currier
781-235-9506

Membership..... Rochelle Nemrow
781-790-1138

Bulletin..... Katherine Wolfthal
Editor 781-891-9549

This LWV/Weston Newsletter is published monthly except July and August. The LWV is a nonpartisan political organization open to all citizens of voting age.

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15 Conant Road, Weston MA 02493

VOTER INFORMATION

1-800-882-1649

League of Women Voters
of Massachusetts
133 Portland Street
Boston MA 02114
(617)523-2999

Submit articles to Katherine Wolfthal in
typewritten hard copy or by e-mail to

kate@weichi.com

it has played over the last 40 years in building 58,000 units of affordable housing for Massachusetts residents.

A Special Town Meeting has been scheduled for Monday, November 29. Among the issues to be determined on the warrant are the renovation or rebuilding of Field School, and approval of funds for completing the construction of science labs at the High School. We are planning a

Coffee Hour at the library Community Room on Saturday, November 20 to discuss articles of interest on the warrant.

If you have not yet paid your dues to rejoin the League this year, please do so right now. Our numbers have dwindled in the last few years, so it is especially important to us to keep all of you on board, while we seek to enroll new supporters.



League of Women Voters of Weston

wishes to extend sincere thanks to the following Friends and Sponsors who have generously given their support to our work.

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage
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478 Boston Post Road, Weston, MA

The Gift Gallery
781 894 1633
464 Boston Post Road, Weston, MA

Ogilvie's
781 894 1265
39 Warren Avenue, Weston, MA

Omni Foods Supermarkets
781 894 0675
21 Center Street, Weston, MA

Weston Travel Service
781 891 9110
483 Boston Post Road, Weston, MA

SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER 2010

- November 2, Tuesday..... Mass. State Election**
7:00 A.M. – 8:00 P.M.
Methodist Church; St. Peter’s; St. Demetrios
- November 9, Tuesday..... LWVW Board Meeting**
9:15 A.M., 61 Beaver Rd. (All members welcome)
(Rochelle Nemrow, 781-790-1138)
- November 20, Saturday..... LWVW Coffee Hour**
11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. to discuss Warrant Issues
Community Room, Weston Public Library
- November 29, Monday..... Special Town Meeting**
7:30 P.M., Weston High School Auditorium

URGENT REMINDER!!

It’s time again to renew your membership to the Weston League of Women voters. We are fortunate to have a group of dedicated individuals who have kept the Weston chapter active and vibrant, but it is only through your continued support that our League can survive and flourish.

As a member, you'll receive our informative monthly bulletin about local issues. You'll also be a member of the state and national chapters, and will receive their newsletters and other educational materials. You can stay informed, know the issues and support the power of women's influence in politics.

Please print, complete and return the attached membership form with your check made payable to the League of Women Voters of Weston.

WHEN IT'S TIME FOR ACTION

President

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20510
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

U.S. Senators

- The Honorable Scott Brown
2400 JFK Building
55 New Sudbury Street
Boston, MA 02203
(617)565-3170
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202)224-4543
No e-mail address currently available
- The Honorable John F. Kerry
One Bowdin Square, Tenth Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617)565-8519
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
(202)224-2742
E-mail: john_kerry@kerry.senate.gov

U.S. Representative 7th District

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
(781)396-2900
(202)225-2836
2108 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202)225-2836
<http://www.house.gov/markey>

Governor

Governor Deval Patrick
Office of the Governor
State House, Room 360
Boston MA 02133
(617)727-3600
E-mail: Goffice@state.ma.us

State Senator 5th Middlesex District

The Honorable Susan Fargo
(617)722-1572
State House, Room 505
Boston MA 02133-1054
E-mail: sfargo@senate.state.ma.us
Home: (781) 259-9623

State Representative 4th Norfolk District

The Honorable Alice Hanlon Peisch
(617)722-2320
(781)237-4719
State House, Room 26
Boston MA 02133-1054
E-mail: alice.peisch@mahouse.gov

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Robin Reisman

The on-again/off-again scenario with Candidates' Night was discussed, with the upshot that it is back on for participants Alice Peisch and Roy Switzler. Peisch had been running unopposed until Switzler entered the race late as a write-in candidate. Sandi Martinez was eager to participate in Candidates' Night but Susan Fargo refused to come, so the race for State senate cannot be included. Inge Uhlir will moderate and it will be held in upper Town Hall.

The League will drive voters to the polls on November 2. A signup sheet was passed around. Katty reported that the State League is extremely stressed financially and urged people to donate, come the fall phonathon.

Polly Dickson, Hugh Jones, and Sarah Rhatigan, all members of the Weston Housing Partnership, came to speak to the Board about the ballot initiative vote on the repeal of the 40B law. They strongly urged LWV Board members to oppose repeal of the law, and despite the misleading wording of the ballot question, opposing repeal is a NO vote. They acknowledge the law is not without flaws and said the Legislature was looking at making changes to it prior to the introduction of the ballot question.

A coffee hour will be scheduled for the second Saturday in November, although the Community Room at the library is not yet booked for the event. (Editor's note: See Calendar for date change). The Weston League is co-sponsoring with the Wayland League a 40B forum in Wayland on October 14.

There were a number of membership renewals in the past month, but our roster is still significantly lower than last year. Rochelle encouraged everyone to urge former members to re-up, and stated that she thought a membership pitch should be made before and after every League-sponsored event.

There was discussion about repairing or replacing the banner, as the grommets are ripping. It was felt that we cannot afford a new banner, so even though this one is heavy and cumbersome, we should try to repair it.

Barbara Hill reported on Community Preservation Committee activities and decisions and cited the requests for appropriation to expect at Special Town Meeting in November.



LIFE IN THE BALANCE
A PUBLIC FORUM SERIES

TROUBLED WATERS
Addressing issues and actions that affect the availability and quality of our water supply

PART 1 TAPPED the movie
FILM SCREENING and REFLECTION
Friday, October 22 at 7-9pm
Alcott School Auditorium
93 Laurel Street, Concord, MA
Free and open to all

TAPPED

Is access to clean drinking water a basic human right, or a commodity to be bought and sold? This award-winning movie is a behind-the-scenes look into the unregulated and unseen world of an industry that aims to privatize and sell back the one resource that ought never to become a commodity: our water. You won't want to miss this film!

PART 2 Protecting Our Taps
FORUM and ACTION GROUP SESSIONS
Friday, November 5 at 7-9pm
Alcott School Auditorium
93 Laurel Street, Concord, MA
Free and open to all

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

RUTH CAPLAN, National Campaign Coordinator for the Alliance for Democracy's Defending Water for Life Campaign and past chair of the National Sierra Club's Water Privatization Task Force. Ruth will provide a global perspective on water as an essential resource, outline threats to availability and adequacy of water supply, and provide perspective on commercial uses, like bottled water.

PANEL SPEAKERS

ALAN CATHCART, Water & Sewer Superintendent, Town of Concord. Alan will offer an overview of Concord's municipal water and sewer systems, focusing on key developments in public health, safety and environmental protection needs and interests. He will also provide insight on where the industry is heading with respect to more holistic integrated water resource management.

VALERIE LANE, President, ValiantLane LLC, environmental and management consultant and hydrogeologist. Valerie will explore sources of water supply contamination, including emerging contaminants, health risks and actions individuals can take to protect water quality.

CONTACT: TroubledWaters@lwwcc.org • 978-254-1598 • <http://lwwcc.org/lifeinthebalance.html>
or ConcordCAN: Concordclimate@yahoo.com • 978-369-6305

CO-SPONSORED BY: Alliance for Democracy, North Bridge chapter • Carlisle Climate Action • ConcordCAN
and The League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle

The background of the advertisement features a stylized American flag. The top portion consists of a dark, textured band with numerous small, white, five-pointed stars scattered across it. Below this band is a large white area, also filled with many white stars of varying sizes, some appearing to have a slight glow or shadow. The overall effect is reminiscent of the star field in the flag's canton.

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COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

Barbara Hill

The Community Preservation Committee met twice this month, and held a Public Hearing in advance of CPC votes, with supported proposals to be considered at the Special Town Meeting scheduled for November 29th.

After presentation by the sponsoring organization at the CPC's Public Hearing on Monday October 18, 2010, the CPC considered the following proposals:

1. Ed Coburn, President of Weston Affordable Housing Foundation, Inc. (WAHFI) requested \$9,000 of CPA funds to be used in reroofing the house and shed at the affordable housing unit at 15 Jones Road. This house has received CPA funding in the past, and after some leaking problems last winter, it was determined that the roof should be replaced. The garage roof will be replaced as well. CPC voted to support the replacement of the roofs up to \$9,000.
2. Michelle Grzenda, the Conservation Commission Agent, presented a request for additional CPA funding for the ongoing restoration of the Historic Preservation home at 27 Crescent Street (Melone House). The current request is for CPA funds to cover both the replacement of the 1250 linear foot driveway and the replacement of a failed well. The Conservation Commission had considered the well last Spring, but it was thought that the well could be left. Unfortunately, the well failed during the summer. Dan Santillo, a resident in attendance, suggested consideration of piping water in from Crescent Street might be cost effective, and a better choice, particularly since the driveway was going to be dug up anyway. The CPC voted to support these requests, provided that the Conservation Commission shall consider whether it is a better choice to pipe the water in for the Melone House, but retain the current well for the irrigation needs on the property.
3. Alicia Primer of the Weston Historical Society presented a request for \$80,000 of CPA funds to purchase an historic preservation restriction for a small, house, circa 1707, on North Avenue. Discussion of the request included a need to ensure that the deed would be "ahead" of other items recorded on the property and that Town Counsel should ensure that any restriction would be recorded properly. The CPC voted to support this request.
4. Michael Harrity, member of the Board of Selectmen, proposed a potential request for \$835,000 of CPA funds for the restoration of the exterior of the Old Library (similar to the restoration of the Josiah Smith Tavern which was undertaken four years ago, with CPA funds). There was a significant amount of discussion by interested Town residents, and among the CPC members. The concern is whether using Town maintenance funds for emergency repairs (approximately \$100,000) or whether doing a fuller restoration using CPA funds (of approximately \$835,000) would be a better value. The CPC put off a vote on this issue until the Selectmen reach its own decision about whether to move forward and come back to the CPC with more information.

Steve Ober, Chair of the CPC, then presented a review of the CPA Fund Status and Proposed allocation for Fiscal Year 2011 (in which we are currently in the middle).

If the Selectmen decide to move forward with a request for CPA funds to restore the exterior of the Old Library, then the CPC will hold one or more additional meetings before Special Town Meeting at the end of November.

The Committee Against Repealing the Housing Law 40B Fact Sheet

Chapter 40B: How it works and why it was created

Chapter 40B, the state's affordable housing law, was enacted in 1969 to address local zoning and land use restrictions that make it impossible or economically infeasible to build affordable housing under existing local zoning. These restrictions (large-lot zoning and the prohibition of multi-family housing) are largely responsible for high housing costs, low levels of housing production, and increased sprawl. Today, less than 1.5% of land in eastern Massachusetts is zoned for multi-family housing.

Chapter 40B enables local Zoning Boards of Appeals (ZBAs) to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules if at least 20-25% of the units have long-term affordability restrictions. This encourages the production of affordable housing throughout Massachusetts and helps communities meet the standard of providing a minimum of 10% of their housing inventory as affordable.

Who it helps

Housing is expensive in Massachusetts for many reasons, including the fact that the housing supply has not kept pace with housing demand—particularly for working families and seniors. 40B serves a broad range of households, including the elderly, people with disabilities, municipal employees, veterans, and households with and without children.

Most of the residents in the affordable apartments and homes earn less than \$50,000 per year. Typical occupations include: health care (nurses, medical assistants, and therapists); educators (teachers, counselors); retail employees; construction trades (carpenters, plumbers, electricians); office staff; financial services (bookkeepers, payroll managers, accounting); human services; and other occupations critical to our state's workforce. Additionally, a significant portion of the homeowners are retirees.

Why we need to keep 40B

- Approximately 56,000 homes have been produced under 40B and another 10,900 homes have been approved locally, but are not under construction yet. Of these, 29,000 homes are reserved for households below 80% of area median income. Over 39,000 are apartments and almost 17,000 are homeownership units.
- 40B produces more units of affordable housing than any other housing program in the Commonwealth.
- From 2002-2006, 40B led to the creation of nearly 80% of all new affordable rental units in Greater Boston (outside the City of Boston).
- Chapter 40B has prompted over 89 communities to develop affordable housing plans under the 2003 "planned production" regulation.

Progress towards the 10% standard

- 51 cities and towns have met the 10% affordable housing threshold, more than double the number in 1997 (24).
- 40 communities are at the 8% or 9% threshold.
- 82 municipalities need 100-200 units to reach 10%.
- 117 municipalities need less than 100 units to reach 10%.

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CANDIDATES' NIGHT

Barbara Flannery

Candidates' Night at the Town Hall in Weston, on October 13, was opened by Katty Chace, President of the League of Women Voters of Weston. In welcoming the audience, Katty introduced the candidates, along with Inge Uhler as moderator for the debate, and set out the format for the event. The debate was co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Weston and Wellesley. The participating candidates on the ballot for the Nov. 2 election, for State Representative from the District, which includes the towns of Weston, Wellesley and South Natick, were incumbent, Alice Peisch, Democrat, of Wellesley, and Roy Switzler, Republican, of Wellesley, and former State Rep. for this seat, from the mid 1970s to 1986.

The candidates responded to their positions on the three ballot questions for the Nov 2 election, and to other issues of interest.

On ballot question #1, to REPEAL the sales tax on alcohol, the incumbent, Alice Peisch, favors a NO vote to any repeal, and Roy Switzler, favors a YES, to repeal that sales tax.

On question #2, to REPEAL the state law allowing the issuance of a single permit to build housing that includes low or moderate income units the incumbent, Alice Peisch, supports a NO vote on repeal, since building brings jobs to the area, supports a declining housing market and brings growth to the economy. Roy Switzler supports a YES vote for repeal on this question, which he states supports developers and does not target low or moderate income units, the purpose and focus of the legislation.

On question #3, on reducing the State sales and use tax from 6.25% to 3% as of January 1, 2011, Alice Peisch asks for a NO vote of this question as a reduction in the tax would bring a significant curb in services already in place in towns and municipalities in the state. Roy Switzler supports a YES vote on this question, a decrease in all sales taxes.

In addition to the ballot questions for the Nov 2 election, candidates had an opportunity to discuss their positions on other issues and respond to written questions from the audience.

on TAXES:

Alice Peisch prefers an increase in the gas tax over (1) cutting services and increasing fares on the MTA to pay for the Big Dig, and (2) noted her vote in the legislature which prevented an increase in tolls at the Weston Tolls on the Mass Pike.

Roy Switzler supports a decrease in all taxes.

on CASINOS:

Alice Peisch supports casinos in MA, and would vote YES, stating that all funds and people should not go to Connecticut, and they will bring employment opportunities in the state.

Roy Switzler would vote NO on casinos in MA, stating that while we need to cut expenses, this should be done in a way that does not introduce casinos and gambling in the state.

on EDUCATION:

Alice Peisch recommends looking into transportation in the school systems, as a basis for improving the economic situation; supports a tuition freeze in higher education and an increase in fees for other areas. She has supported school construction for Wellesley and Natick and now Weston has a proposal for the Field School.

Roy Switzler supports an increase in fees for higher education, merit pay for teachers, and supports funding for teachers, but not school construction. He finds the construction for Wellesley High too elaborate and expensive.

on a VARIETY OF ISSUES, different for the candidates:

Alice Peisch:

- in the Legislature, supports general transparency and an open meeting law;
- in the Legislature, has closed loopholes in state pensions and attacked abuses to eliminate special deals for elected officials;
- supports a reduction in the capital gains tax from 5.3% to 3% for investors in MA start-ups;
- has created cooperatives to reduce small business health insurance costs;
- has fought for jobs in the life sciences and in renewable energy in the state;

- would support a safety net for those who can't help themselves

Roy Switzler:

- against tax increases in the state, noting there have been 8 tax increases
 - sees that health-care costs are a runaway;
- sees the infrastructure is deteriorating
- sees the system is out of balance, with only 10% of Republican representation in the state legislature;
- in the 1980s, when a State Rep, gave community support for the over-ride process, and in
- Prop 2 1/2, fiscal autonomy by the state was eliminated.
- supported a real estate abatement for senior citizens, when he was in the legislature;
- is concerned with the loss of jobs, the economy and taxes, along with health care, and the deteriorating infrastructure.

Katty Chace brought the event to a close, after assuring that questions were heard from the audience.

About 50 people, both young and old, attended the debate, and questions were submitted from all age groups in the audience.





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OBSERVER CORPS
Jean Thurston

Weston Board Of Selectmen
Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2010

- I. Rob Morra, Building Inspector and Sealer of Weights and Measures presented a new fee schedule to take place Oct. 1, 2010. There about 40 devises in town such as pharmacy scales, gas pumps, scanners that are inspected each year. The new fees, approved by the Selectmen are comparable to those in other towns
- II. Draft Route 128 Corridor Plan
- III. Michael Harrity was delayed, so this item was skipped.
- IV. Preliminary List of Warrant articles – Special Town Meeting
There are 10 articles:
 1. Appropriate for Additional Design fees – High School Laboratories
When funds were appropriated last spring , it was not realized that with a project of this size the entire school would need to be sprinkled. \$70,000
 2. Appropriate for Engineering fees – Energy Audits of Town Buildings (borrowing)
The estimated cost is \$63,000 - \$70,000
 3. Appropriate CPA funds for Replacement of Well and Driveway at Melone Homestead
 4. Appropriate CPA funds for Old Library Exterior restoration
 5. Appropriate CPA funds for Lunder Barn
 - a. Offered to anyone who will move it.
 6. Appropriate CPA funds for 171 North Avenue
 7. Grant of permanent easement to MWRA
 8. Approve connection to MWRA sewer in Wellesley from property at 24 Dean Road
 9. Change reference to National Geodetic Vertical Datum in the Zoning By-law
 10. Rescind bond authorization - \$525,000 for landfill gas mitigation
- V. Intermunicipal Agreement for Advanced Life Support Services
 1. Thirteen towns are working on an agreement with Emerson Hospital. Two vehicles will rotate through the system. Concord is not yet ready.
- VI. Employment agreements
 1. Police Chief
 2. Fire Chief

The agreements will remove sick leave buyback and provide other compensation.

League of Women Voters of Weston

MEMBERSHIP FORM 2010-2011

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, political organization, which encourages informed and active participation in all levels of government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We serve the local community in many ways:

- Sponsor Candidates and Issues nights before elections
- Provide voter information and conduct voter-registration drives
- Encourage voter participation with banners and rides to the polls
- Study local, state and national issues and hold open meetings
- Act upon carefully considered positions by lobbying and circulating petitions
- Publish a "Know Your Town" booklet
- Train members to be active and involved citizens.

Our membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. As a Weston member, you also belong to and receive publications from the State and National Leagues.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Check one: Renewal New Member

I enclose a check made payable to **The League of Women Voters of Weston*** for:

\$60 Individual Membership (covers required local dues to the State and National Leagues)

\$75 Family Membership (two individuals in the same household)

Name of second household member: _____

\$50 Basic Membership

\$ _____ Additional Contribution (Any contributions above and beyond regular dues are greatly appreciated and assist our local league in providing more services and offsetting our operating expenses.)

\$ _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED

.....
 \$ _____ LWV Education Fund (Tax-deductible contribution made payable by separate check to the LWV Education Fund)

Return form to: Rochelle Nemrow, 61 Beaver Rd., Weston, MA 02493

Do you know a friend who might be interested in joining the League of Women Voters?
Name, address & phone _____

* It is the policy of the LWV of Weston that no resident shall be refused participation in the League because of inability to pay. If a hardship preventing payment of dues exists, please contact Katty Chace at 781-790-1087.