



# **Community Preservation Committee**

## **Littleton, Massachusetts**

The CPC was established by Town Meeting in 2007. The CPC has the powers and responsibilities specified by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44B, section 5(b), the Community Preservation Act.

# Community Preservation Application for Funding

Date: 03.15.24

**Project Title:** Removal of 3 Floating Islands in Long Lake

**Name of Applicant:** Jonathan Folsom, CLC Chair

**Name of Organization:** Clean Lakes Committee (CLC)

**Address:** c/o Littleton Water Department, 39 Ayer Rd, Littleton MA 10460

**Telephone:** (978)501-6173      **Email:** [ifolsom56@gmail.com](mailto:ifolsom56@gmail.com)

**CPA Category (circle all that apply):**

## Open Space

## Historic Preservation

## Recreation

## Community Housing

**CPA Funding Requested: \$50,000**

**Total Project Cost:** \$50,000

**Please attach answers to the following questions. Include supporting materials as necessary.**

1. **Project Description:** Please give a detailed project description, including specific objectives.
2. **Goals:** How does this project accomplish the goals of the Community Preservation Plan for Littleton? (See Guidelines for Project Submission for general criteria)
3. **Timeline:** What is the schedule for project implementation, including a timeline for all critical milestones? Will this be a multi-year project?
4. **Budget:** Please provide a full budget including the following information, as applicable. (NOTE: CPA funds may not be used for maintenance):
  - a. Total amount of the project cost, with itemization of major components.
  - b. Additional funding sources. Please include those that are available, committed, or under consideration.
  - c. Describe the basis for your budget and the sources of information you used.



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5. **Support:** Have the appropriate Town Boards and Commissions expressed support and/or approved the project? What is the nature and level of community support for this project?

Submit this form and accompanying materials to:

Community Preservation Committee  
c/o Town Clerk Office  
Town Offices  
37 Shattuck Street  
P.O. Box 1305  
Littleton, MA 01460  
978-540-2401  
[townclerk@littletonma.org](mailto:townclerk@littletonma.org)

Please provide one paper copy as well as an electronic (pdf) file.

The Clean Lakes Committee (CLC) thanks you, the members of the Community Preservation Committee, for considering our request to fund efforts to improve Littleton's important water resources. Without continued stewardship and attention we risk losing these irreplaceable community assets.

Jonathan Folsom CLC Chair

### **Floating Islands in Long Lake**

Long Lake is Littleton's premier natural asset. Its amenities include the Town Beach, boat launch, docks, sailboat rental and playground, Long Lake Park Conservation Land and Prouty Woods Community Forest. The lake itself is a 113 acre Great Pond with an average depth of 8' and a maximum depth of 22'.

As important as it is to Littleton, Long Lake is rated as impaired by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. And rightly so. Long Lake suffers from an accumulation of nutrient-rich sediment. It throws the aquatic ecology out of balance, robbing fish of dissolved oxygen. It makes for a mucky bottom and tea-colored water. It promotes excessive in-lake plant growth – from algae to invasives – which makes the problem even worse.

Periodically this biological imbalance creates masses of decaying matter that rise to the surface of Long Lake as floating islands. Usually no longer than 3' to 6' they can be an eyesore, but little more. Last year 3 floating islands appeared 25' off the northern shore between Dogwood and Elm Roads and became anchored among the lily pads. The largest of the three is 40' long and 15' wide in the middle. The islands' entangled mass of decaying plant matter and soil is dense and weighty making them impossible to manage without heavy equipment. CPA funding would provide \$50,000 for permitting and removal of the floating islands. The work would be done by a licensed environmental firm under contract with the Littleton Water Department.

## PROJECT: REMOVAL OF 3 FLOATING ISLANDS IN LONG LAKE

**TARGET:** There are three masses of floating vegetation that arose from beneath the lily pads 25' off Long Lake's northern shore, situated between Dogwood and Elm Roads. The eastern- and western-most floating islands are 8' to 10' long, the center island is 40' long and 15' wide at the middle. (See Fig. 1)

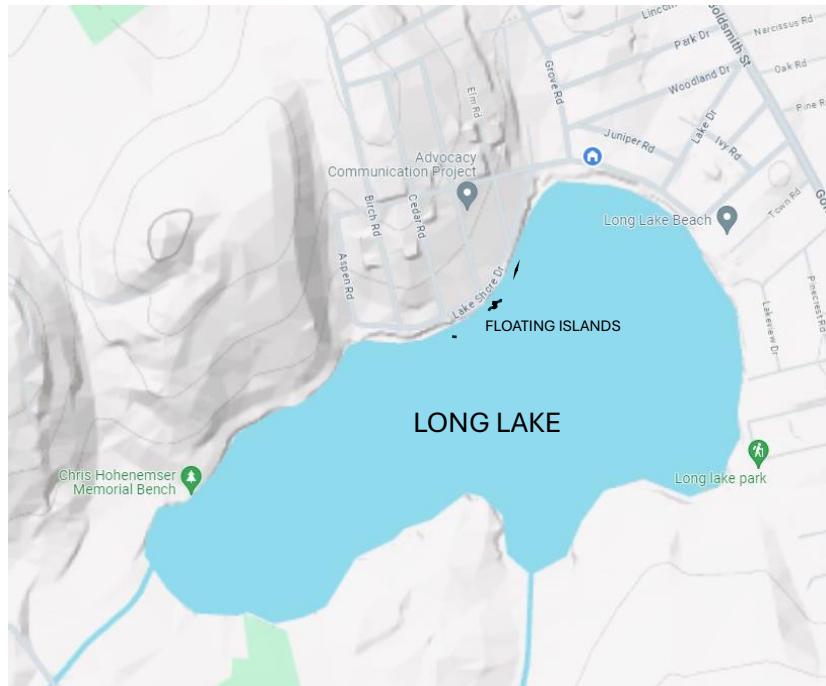


Figure 1 Long Lake Littleton MA

Google Maps

**HISTORY:** Seeing one or two floating masses of 3' to 6' long at some point in the year is not unheard of on Long Lake. It could be reedy vegetation dislodged from the marshes at the western end of the lake. It could be decomposing aquatic plant material from the outlet to Long Lake Brook that rises to the surface. Prevailing winds will drive these

floating masses (or islands) east-northeast across the lake where they sink or become part of the shoreline.

The 3 targeted masses that have come up among the lily pads on the north shore appear to be more permanent. They are anchored in the lily pads and are making a mess of them. They have reemerged even after the winter ice suppressed them for two months. At the urging of the Long Lake Neighborhood Association the CLC would like to see them removed. (See Figs. 2-3)

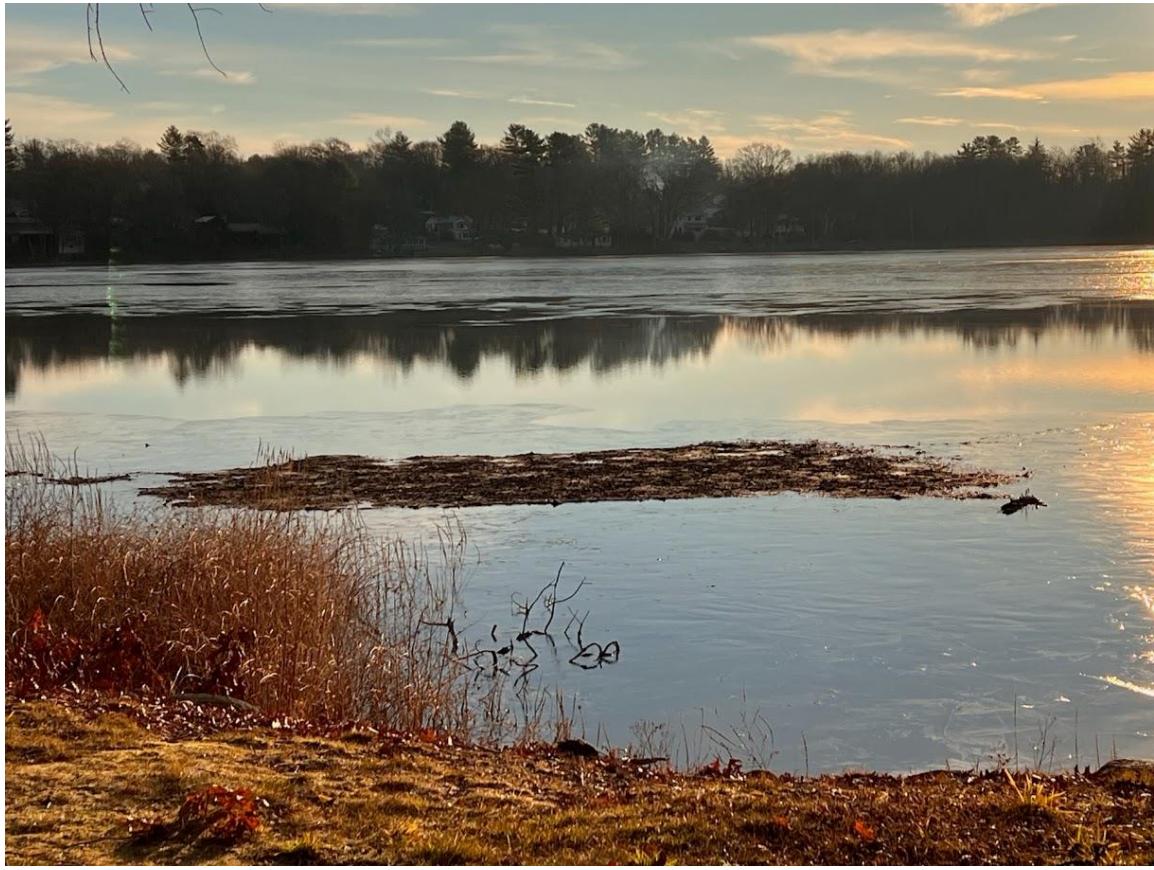


Figure 2 Floating Vegetation

Photo by Martha Folsom



Figure 3 Detail - Floating Mass Entangled in Lily Pads

Photo by Martha Folsom

**PROCESS:** After contemplating pulling the floating islands to the shore and removing them with a backhoe the CLC supports the idea of using a floating excavator. The work would be less disruptive and more thorough in situ. A barrier could easily be erected to limit the disruption. The spoils would be loaded into a hopper on a barge. Then the load would be transferred to a truck for transport to a composting center. (See Fig. 4)



Figure 4 Amphibious Excavator

C&D Underwater Maintenance

**SCOPE, DURATION & BUDGET:** The cost of the work will be determined by competitive bid. The requested funding of \$50,000 was set based on inquiries to contractors and previous Water Department projects. Permitting has been initiated and will define the scope of the work.

A late summer or early fall timeframe would be the least disruptive to recreational activities. The core of the work could be completed in a week.

The CLC is asking for the total amount of \$50,000 from the CPC. Our request for full funding of this project from the Community Preservation Committee arises from a lack of alternative resources. As a result of an April 2021 decision by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue regarding the proper use of enterprise accounts, the CLC can no longer access the monies that were originally earmarked for committee use. For many

years profits from a cell tower on Littleton Water Department (LWD) land provided our funds. In fact, those profits should be for LWD use only – i.e. providing clean drinking water to their customers. While the Littleton Water Commissioners have been more than generous during our transition, the CLC must find new partners to help provide our services.

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES:** The 3 floating masses that have appeared on Long Lake's north shore have become more than an eyesore. They have ruined the lily pads in which they've lodged. They make that portion of the lake a place to avoid. And they are made of the same decaying organic matter and nutrient-rich muck that is ruining Long Lake. The CLC accepts the responsibility to see that these floating islands are removed.

**HOW REMOVING FLOATING ISLANDS ACCOMPLISHES CPA GOALS:** Lakes enhance our open space, and like Long Lake, they are often the natural hub of the community. They are not only a recreational resource but a center for wildlife in our midst. They enhance our lives in every season and are cherished by those of us who share them.

New lakes can't be purchased like available land. The ones we have are the ones we've got. So, caring for our lakes needs to be a top priority. And our lakes need care.

Providing funding to remove Long Lake's 3 stubborn floating islands will be a benefit to the lake community. It will enhance our adjacent conservation lands and the Long Lake neighborhood. Removing this nutrient-rich material will improve the lake's ecosystem, preserving habitat for wildlife. And it will help Long Lake remain a wonderful place for recreation and relaxation.