

Wayland offers excellent schools, open space

By Melissa Beecher
STAFF WRITER

Wayland's semi-rural character, protected open spaces, quality school system and a location that is less than 30 minutes from Boston has made it a desirable community that many call home.

Rich in history, Wayland prides itself on what some believe is the first free public library in the state. Established after a \$500 donation from Francis Wayland – a Brown University professor many believe was the source of the town's name – the library is more than 150 years old. There are plans to expand the library in 2003, the additional space to house updated technology and reading rooms.

The historic district in the town's center will soon see a new public safety building scheduled to be completed in fall 2002. The complex will house the police and fire departments.

Wayland enjoys a public school system considered one of the best in the state. Achieving the top-ranking score in Massachu-

setts in this year's MCAS test, the school system also will be completing a construction project. Wayland Middle School will gain 11 additional classrooms and a new auditorium to meet enrollment needs which have been on the rise since 1992.

Residents and officials in Wayland also have taken steps to control growth by protecting conservation areas. Nearly 25 percent of Wayland's land is conservation property. After voting in initiatives like the Community Preservation Act, this marks the first year that residents have paid surcharges on property taxes to be used to buy additional open space, build affordable housing and protect historic structures.

Environmentally minded, Wayland also has worked in conjunction with Raytheon to clean a contaminated site on Boston Post Road. Still in planning stages, remediation work will begin at the site in 2003.

At this year's Town Meeting, residents also overwhelmingly approved the Wetland Protection Bylaw to further protect delicate areas found along the banks of the Sudbury River in town.