

\*\*\*\*\*  
MAUREEN & JOSEPH  
52 PROSPECT ST  
TOPSFIELD MA 0

# TRI-TOWN TRANSCRIPT

COMMUNITY NEWS COMPANY

VOL. 49 NO. 1 3 SECTIONS • 44 PAGES • 75 CENTS

FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2008

www.wickedlocal.com

## Topsfield voters turn down Rail Trail delay

By Brendan Lewis  
blewis@cnc.com

Rail Trail opponents suffered a substantial blow to their campaign Tuesday when an article to delay the trail construction was defeated by roughly 70 votes at Tuesday's Town Meeting. As the only article in a 50-article warrant that required a head count, both sides

seemed to have equal strength when first vocalizing their votes. The petition article, which would have effectively lost roughly \$40,000 in grants for the first section of the trail, was defeated 194 to 125. "Our motion was set up not to be delaying," said Bob Morgan, spokesman for a neighborhood group opposing the rail trail. "We are concerned about maintenance and cost."

Rail Trail Committee Chairman Joe Geller spoke for a second time after many residents opposing the trail made claims about the rail trail's potential cost to taxpayers. "I'm taking off the gloves... we're being railroaded," Geller said, explaining that any cost of the trail would have to be approved by Town Meeting. "This committee (the Rail Trail Committee) will not

come here to ask for those funds." The proposed bike path is set to run 4-and-1/2 miles through Topsfield and be connected with a 26-mile long trail through Essex County. The first section would be built in the downtown area by Grove Street and Washington Street. The more than 300 residents who filled Proctor Elementary School's auditorium also shared their sentiment toward the con-

struction of two 55-plus housing developments in Topsfield by approving zoning changes that will allow the two developments to begin permitting. The Police Department saw multiple successes Tuesday, as a Masconomet school resource officer, a new police officer, a station drainage tank, and a station

► SEE TM, PAGE 1

► TM, FROM PAGE 1

elevator were all approved with ease (See related stories). Among articles that were defeated included a push for a leash law for dogs, and a town code amendment that would allow committees to levy fines. A petition to institute fines for littering was tabled until proper legislation would allow it to pass. However, town officials commended the two Coke brothers who had created the article. The brothers had made the effort after realizing that the town had no enforceable laws against littering. Moderator John Kinhan was instrumental last night in moving the process along, regulating speakers' time and nixing conversations not germane to a certain session.

If a t t