

— *In our opinion* —

Ridgefield's opportunity

Ridgefield has an opportunity this week to make an excellent investment in its own future.

A special town meeting Thursday at 8 p.m. in the East Ridge Junior High School will act on a proposed municipal golf course in the Ridgebury section of town.

The town already owns more than 114 acres in the area and has the opportunity to purchase another 51 acres.

A committee of five residents, appointed by the selectmen four years ago, has studied the question thoroughly. They have prepared estimates of the construction costs, as well as of operating income and costs once the course is completed. They demonstrate the course will pay for itself through green fees and other income.

While Ridgefield could seek federal and

state open space funds to assist with the land purchase, this would take away Ridgefield's complete authority over the use of the land.

So the town meeting Thursday night will be asked to appropriate approximately \$76,000 to purchase the 51 acres and to authorize a \$650,000 bond issue to finance construction costs.

The bond issue will, in effect, be self-liquidating, with net proceeds from the golf course paying it off over a period of 20 years.

There will also be land available for additional recreational activities and facilities, in addition to the golf course.

The golfers, rather than the taxpayers, will be paying for the facility.

As we said, it is an excellent investment in Ridgefield's future. The special town meeting should approve it.