

TOWN OF FARMINGTON  
LAND ACQUISITION COMMITTEE  
January 14, 2016

The meeting of the Farmington Land Acquisition Committee was held on January 14, 2016 at the Farmington Town Hall. Present were Committee Members Mastrobattista, Cowles, Hinze, Kramer, Quigley, Suffredini (appointed at the 1/12/2016 Council meeting as 2<sup>nd</sup> Council representative), and Wadsworth and Land Acquisition Consultant Dolphin. Also in attendance was John Vibert.

*Call Meeting To Order:*

Committee Chair Mastrobattista called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

*Public Comment:*

John Vibert spoke regarding the Land Acquisition Committee's past discussions toward establishing an Open Space Zone that would provide tax exemption to property owners for preserving property, and therefore additional incentive for preserving rather than developing their excess land. He explained that land in Farmington in excess of the minimum zoning for the property is already taxed at a reduced level, so that when property owners consider donating a conservation easement to protect their excess land they find that it will not provide them any reduction in their taxes. To highlight the key points of the open space zone that had been discussed, he handed out an outline to the Committee members (which has been attached to the minutes for the record). Mr. Vibert encourage the Committee to continue working toward the establishment of this zone.

*Approval of Minutes:*

Upon MOTION made and seconded (Wadsworth/Quigley) it was VOTED 6 in favor and 1 abstention (Suffredini) to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2015 meeting as written.

*Correspondence:* None

*New Business:*

As requested at the last meeting, Ms. Dolphin presented information about the Frechette property at 8446 Main Gate. Ms. Dolphin submitted a location map of the property and explained to Committee members that currently this property is not considered a building lot as evidenced by a 1985 subdivision map filed on the Town land records. Any development, including a single house on the existing land, would require subdivision approval. She added, while there is significant wetlands on the property, there is likely developable land for possibly more than one lot on the north and western part of the property. Committee member Wadsworth noted that property was of significant size within Farmington Village and was adjacent to another large vacant parcel to the south (8448 Main St.) that would link with a parcel on the Land Acquisition List at the corner of Tunxis St. and Main St. (8976 Main St.) He suggested listing both properties.

Following discussion, a MOTION was made and seconded (Wadsworth/Hinze) and unanimously VOTED to list 8446 Main Gate and 8448 Main Street on the Farmington Land Acquisition List following review by the Farmington Conservation Commission.

*Old Business:*

*Acquisition Update:*

Ms. Dolphin reported that she and Evan Cowles (representing the Farmington Cemetery Association) met to discuss the potential acquisition of 124 Scott Swamp Road for use for the expansion of Riverside Cemetery. She added that she and Kathy Eagen plan to meet with Graham Stevens, Director of Constituent Affairs & Land Management Division of DEEP, to discuss the Town's options of a legislative conveyance, DEEP transfer or swap of the property.

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Ms. Dolphin further reported that the transfer of Lot 10A Slater Road continued to be on hold pending the resolution of title concerns.

*Executive Session to discuss selection of site or purchase of real estate*

Upon MOTION made and seconded (Wadsworth/Quigley) it was unanimously

VOTED: to go into Executive Session. The session was opened at 5:50 p.m. Attending were Committee Members Mastrobattista, Cowles, Hinze, Kramer, Quigley, Suffredini, and Wadsworth and Land Acquisition Consultant Dolphin.

Executive Session was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

A MOTION (Wadsworth/Cowles) to adjourn was adopted at 6:31 p.m.

ESD

1/14/2016

## Open Space Zone

- Purpose: to provide an incentive for land preservation
- Applicable to all undeveloped lots and excess land in Farmington
- Provides preservation of open space without changes in ownership
- Provides property tax exemption to the owners of preserved lots
- Lots would be designated as Open Space Zone by the TPZ
  - Simple majority required
  - Characteristics considered by the TPZ would include:
    - Location
    - Environmental value
    - Size
    - Development value
- Open Space zoned lots could be re-designated into another zone by unanimous agreement of the TPZ
  - All exempted taxes would need to be paid prior to the re-designation
- Town properties could be zoned as open space to provide an extra level of protection