

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Executive Session Minutes
November 16, 2016
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Entered Executive at Session: 8:07 pm

Present: Walter F. Alterisio, Leah D. Basbanes, member(s); Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator; James Dow, Interim Chief of Police

Dumont Property as Possible Site for Public Safety Complex

Ms. Hutton updated the Board on the current state of the public safety complex and noted that the time has come to discuss the purchase of property. She provided the Board with proposed plans by the Dumont family for a proposed subdivision on their property located on Lowell Street near the intersection with Main Street. The amount the Dumont's are asking for their house lot is \$350,000 and their asking price for the garage lot is \$800,000. In order for the public safety complex to be built on the property, it would need to be two stories. Ms. Hutton went over the proposed building noting that it would technically fit just on the house lot. Chief Dow stated his belief that the price on the garage is based on a belief by the Dumont's that a commercial business will come in to buy the property. He stated that he talked to the Dumont's and to a potential buyer. The number still appears high. Ms. Hutton expressed some hesitancy in approaching all of the impacted properties at this time. She would like, however, to approach the homeowners whose property would be the most impacted by the public safety complex being built on the Dumont house lot. A purchase of their property could be used to augment the Dumont's house lot. An idea initially proposed by the architect. If authorized Ms. Hutton stated she would only approach them with the help of Chief Dow to see if they are willing, even remotely, to sell their property. If they sold their property, the public safety complex could then be a single story, meaning a significant savings.

Chief Dow then elaborated on the process so far and his thoughts about how the neighboring homeowners, if they sell, would end up not being a loss or increase in the cost of the project for the town. The Board expressed some concerns about the proposed development plans by the Dumont's and locating the public safety complex there. There was some discussion of how a commercial district might be developed in the area instead. It comes to a matter of vision for the future. Chief Dow suggested that the town perhaps consider buying more of the Dumont's property with the plan to do more than just a public safety complex in that area. Ms. Hutton agreed to attempt to work with the Dumont's on what the development of the property would look like. Ms. Hutton reminded those present that the reason this is being done under Executive Session is because the Dumont's plans are neither public nor formalized. The only foreseeable problem in addressing the Board's concerns about development of the property is that the town likely cannot afford to buy all of the property and still build the public safety complex.

The Board stressed that long range opportunities for the area need to be considered. A lot of residential development is occurring in Dunstable with about 75 lots being developed in various different parts of the town. Chief Dow noted that the Dumont's see this property as their retirement plan and their future. He suggested that offering other alternatives to development could work. Ms. Hutton noted that any such development will require some re-alignment of public ways and intersections around Lowell Street. The consensus was that Ms. Hutton and Chief Dow would work on the public safety complex first and foremost, but also keep an eye on the development plans for the rest of the property. She noted that the garage portion would be a great place to re-locate the Highway Garage for example. Chief Dow stressed that this site appears to be the best one. Many locations were looked at, including the property behind the current police station. Re-locating to the Dumont property would allow the town to sell the existing Police Station. There was consensus that building the public safety complex just outside of the town center is preferable since a significant building of this size would otherwise impact the appearance of the town.

Ms. Hutton proposed getting all of the Dumont brothers in one room to talk about the whole property. There was some brief discussion of the current state of the Dumont family's commercial business and the sense that the Dumont's are ready to retire. Chief Dow noted that there is a considerable amount of gravel on the property
Approved and adopted on 4/18/18

where other sites had water issues and ledge issues. This property is easier and better to develop. The Board noted a lot of the wetlands in the area and the possibility of preserving wetlands on the Dumont property along with addressing any possible development concerns. Chief Dow stated he has asked the Dumont's about what they consider the real value is to them. The numbers being quoted currently are what they think is fair, but that is before any evaluation or assessment of value. The conclusion was that the Board is in favor of this plan. Ms. Hutton agreed to work with the Dumont's to see how willing they are to consider the towns long term master plan vision in regards to the development of their property.

A motion to adjourn and exit Executive Session was made by Leah D. Basbanes at 8:30 pm. The motion was seconded by Walter F. Alterisio. The motion was adopted without objection by Walter F. Alterisio and Leah D. Basbanes.

Respectfully submitted by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jakob K. Hamm', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jakob K. Hamm
Admin. Assistant to the Selectboard & Town Administrator

Approved and adopted on 4/18/18