

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Executive Session Minutes
March 15, 2017
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 7:48 pm

Present: Walter F. Alterisio, Leah D. Basbanes, member(s); Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator; James Dow, Chief of Police (present only for Executive Sessions 1 & 3)

Executive Session 1) Real Estate

Ms. Hutton updated the Board on the Dumont and Coulouras situation. The Chief and Ms. Hutton have met with the Dumont's. They discussed two possibilities, first purchasing the property in whole and second the option of just the house and garage. The Board inquired as to what the garage is currently used for. Chief Dow responded that the Dumont's store equipment in it. There was then a brief discussion of alternative sites. The simple matter is that there isn't much suitable land available, and the Dumont property is really best situated. From there Ms. Hutton returned discussion to the Dumont's asking price. For the house and the garage, the Dumont's want \$1.1 million. For the remainder they would like \$2.2 million. They would be willing to let the town purchase the house and garage first and buy the remainder later. The total cost would be around \$3.3 million. Possible funding sources include using some Chapter 90 funds for Highway, which would require support from the Board of Road Commissioners. Other sources of funds would include selling the existing Highway Barn, the current Fire Station, and the present Police Station. Chief Dow noted that the real tackle for Highway would be putting them successfully into that garage building.

He noted that the Dumont's would be willing to work with the town to get the town the pieces that the town wants. Right now the Dumont's appear to have a possible buyer, so it appears increasingly that time is of the essence. Ms. Hutton then turned discussion to the Coulouras's. They are asking for roughly \$500,000 in total and they want to continue to live in the property for a period of time afterwards. Given the cost being asked for, Ms. Hutton suggested that the town might consider eminent domain. The value of the property is about \$375,000. The town has previously offered about 10 percent above that. The town appears to be well situated to prevail. The Board expressed deep reservations in using eminent domain. There was then ensuing discussion about how to approach the issue absent that option. Ms. Hutton noted that the likely path for the Coulouras's is to hold out for a period of time to see what the town does. In the meantime they aren't likely to get their asking price. The Board then discussed if the building could be repositioned in order to avoid the Coulouras's property. Ms. Hutton noted that the lot simply isn't big enough for the building to be one story.

Chief Dow then elaborated on why the Dumont's are carving up the land in the way they are. It is to preserve their access to the back land for development. The Board expressed a desire to stave off another housing development and to acquire the whole lot. Ms. Hutton suggested continuing to work on purchasing the house and garage for the public safety building, not approach purchasing the Coulouras property at this time. The public safety building would constitute the corner stone for this. Discussion turned back to the Coulouras's briefly. They appear prepared to retire in the next 3 to 4 years and move out of town. The thought of the Board would be to wait on that front while otherwise pursuing the Dumont property. This includes finishing up the feasibility study, and working on a public information campaign. In that vein, the Board expressed some thoughts about wanting some kind of conceptualized presentation of what the building would look like.

Ms. Hutton agreed to look into this. Chief Dow finished off by noting that the Dumont's are looking at a 4 to 5 year time frame, so the town will need to put something in place relatively quickly. Otherwise, it appears the Dumont's would be very willing to sell to the town; from there discussion centered on the timeline. Ms. Hutton stated the timeline would be to buy the property in 2018, then in 2019 handle the soft cost and/or design, and then 2021 for start of construction. This is an aggressive timeline, but not impossible if the town has the will. The building numbers are very preliminary, and there are numerous ways to pick at the number. Ms. Hutton expressed confidence that this could be accomplished. She then highlighted Groton and what they have done on their public buildings, including their relatively new Fire Station.

Approved and adopted on 4/18/18

A motion to exit this Executive Session and enter the next was made by Leah D. Basbanes at 8:18 pm. The motion was seconded by Walter F. Alterisio. The motion was adopted without objection by Daniel F. Devlin, Walter F. Alterisio and Leah D. Basbanes.

Respectfully submitted by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jakob K. Hamm". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

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

Approved and adopted on 4/18/18