

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Executive Session Minutes
March 22, 2017
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 8:10 pm

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

Executive Session commenced at 8:10 pm

Executive Session 2) Simmons Property Proposal

Ms. Hutton informed the Board that David Simmons, who owns property adjacent to the MUD, has offered to donate his property to the town for the building of the public safety complex. Chief Dow elaborated on how the whole thing occurred and how he found out that Mr. Simmons had decided he would like to donate the property. From there Ms. Hutton noted that there is a vacant piece of land next to Mr. Simmons property that the town would need to purchase in order to make this work. Jean Carpenter owns that land. Ms. Hutton has not yet approached Ms. Carpenter since she was not yet authorized by the Board. That property is assessed at about \$170,000. Even if the town has to spend that money, the town would only have to spend that sum rather than the cost of the Dumont property.

She has had the architect look at the property to determine if the building as designed currently would fit. The architect concluded it would fit with Ms. Carpenters property included. There is a slope to the overall property that would likely require a retaining wall. Otherwise the property is suitable. Mr. Simmons would keep his existing house for the rest of his natural life, upon his death it would pass to the town. The only other condition would be recognition of the gift both for David Simmons and his father. He isn't asking for great fanfare, but would like acknowledgement. The Board suggested naming the facility or something similar. Ms. Hutton then informed the Board that this can't make it to the Annual Town Meeting, but Town Counsel has advised that the donation may be secured by a contract and then formal acceptance of the gift by the town could be completed at a Special Town Meeting in the fall. Ms. Hutton recommended talking to Ms. Carpenter to see if she would be amendable to selling her lot. Discussion then turned to the issue of setbacks and existing structures that surround the property.

Chief Dow noted that the further back the building is set, the bigger the retaining wall. He also noted that the town needs to have a site for a potential water tower and the back end of this property could serve that purpose well. Ms. Hutton noted that Mr. Simmons wants a reverter that ensures that the town may only use the property for the public safety building otherwise it would revert back to him. This location would not require an accompanying water project. There was some concern about the Dumont property and how it would be developed. The Board expressed interest in still pursuing the Dumont property. Whether that means putting a solar farm on it, or making it a commercial development, there was considerable interest in obtaining the property. Chief Dow suggested pursuing the back land while allowing the house and garage to be sold off separately. Ms. Hutton expressed some concerns with how to justify purchasing the Dumont property absent the public safety building.

Without the building on it, it can't be financed over 40 years and at the cost is hard to explain to the public. It could only be done over 20 years. There was discussion of whether the garage on the Dumont property could still be purchased. The Board was also concerned about the Coulouras's and the situation with them. Discussion then returned to what uses would occur on the Dumont property. The backland would cost about \$2.2 million. Ms. Hutton stated that in her opinion, this isn't the right time to ask the public to purchase land for a significant sum for future uses; especially without a detailed plan. Ms. Hutton agreed to talk to the Dumont's to see what could be done to potentially still purchase the backland and whether they would be willing to hold any sales plans for the backland for a year. The Board reiterated the belief that the public is looking for diversified revenue in the tax base and that some use could be found for Dumont that generates

Approved and adopted on 10/31/17

funds. In the meantime, work will continue with the architects and engineering for the Simmons property to pursue that option for the public safety building.

A motion to exit Executive Session and adjourn was made by Leah D. Basbanes at 8:50 pm. The motion was seconded by Walter F. Alterisio. The motion was then 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', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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

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