

**Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard**  
**Executive Session Minutes**  
**December 18, 2017**  
**Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827**

**Convened:** 8:22 pm

**Present:** Walter F. Alterisio, chair, Leah D. Basbanes, vice chair, Ronald J. Mikol, member; Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator

**Discussion of Dumont Property**

Ms. Hutton started by updating on the current status of the Dumont property. The Dumont family has had a few offers on the property and wishes to know what the town's intentions are and whether the town remains interested. Ms. Hutton elaborated on some of the things she's explored in relation to the property such as a solar farm. If the town were able to purchase the property and use to 10 to 20 acres of it for a solar farm, there would be income generation on the property. If the town purchased the land, it could also move the Highway Garage to the property and sell the existing one. Such a sale would generate about \$500,000 in value. Nothing the town does will be neutral in regards to this, and an outlay would have to be made by the town in terms of debt financing. The solar could be placed in the back of the property mostly, if not completely, out of sight. There was discussion of whether the solar would have to come off Main Street or could come off Lowell Street. The Board's preference would be Lowell Street. There were some questions as to the cost of tie in for a solar farm into the grid and what happened in regards to the solar farm built on the old Charles George landfill. This resulted in discussion of the different types of "phase" such as one phase versus three phase. Three phase is a different type of power from single phase. Three phase is used mostly in commercial buildings and has a higher power output. Ms. Hutton turned back to the size. The minimum size would be 5 acres, and up to about 15 acres. Ms. Hutton has a solar company willing to put forward proposals for what could be built, what the incentives would be, and what the costs would be. She noted that the incentives are going to change in January, so that will impact things.

The incentives for this are likely to be a bare minimum for what is on offer from the Commonwealth. The Board was concerned about what the investment would be for return. Citizens Energy is leasing the Charles George landfill. Ms. Hutton reported that there is also a proposal to put solar panels on Swallow Union as well. The Board was interested in that if it would be able supply the schools energy needs. Ms. Hutton then reported that the solar company would invest some money into the question of whether this property could be developed for this purpose. And she wanted to ensure the Board is interested prior to asking them to make that kind of investment. Discussion shifted to the Dumont property and what kind of wetlands it has. It is possible that some land grant funds could be procured for some of the property. A good chunk of the property is wetlands and those can't be developed. Still, there's enough there that if sold to private developers the land could end up a subdivision. There was brief discussion of whether or not to also pursue a neighboring property as well. Ms. Hutton stated that it really wouldn't need to be. The town would be buying the garage and the undeveloped land, the residential house the Dumont's own would be cut out. There was some discussion of alternate development besides solar, such as some commercial development that would be off town center. Discussion returned to the option of purchasing neighboring land as well. What basis would be used, and what the cost would be in addition to the Dumont property. Ms. Hutton's opinion was that such property isn't needed.

She noted that there is already an access road, that would remain, which would allow access to the garage building for Highway Department and for the remaining property. This prompted discussion of the various possibilities such as solar and other commercial opportunities. The access road would be wide enough to satisfy any needs for a road even if commercial development were to occur. The asking price of the Dumont's would be about \$3.1 million. That would mean obtaining a little over 70 acres. Discussion then turned towards how to pay for the purchase. The Dumont's would be willing to have the payment go over about 2 years, but no more. Ms. Hutton noted that it would be better to just borrow the total cost in bond at once and get a good interest rate. The \$3.1 million is a firm number for all of the property. So, with the Highway Garage at \$500,000 that brings the total down to closer to \$2.6 million. The solar would likely provide about \$80,000 a

*Approved and adopted on 4/18/18*

year. Dumont believes they can build close to 16 lots even with the wetland issues. That's the basis for their price. It's ambitious and reality is its more likely 13 lots. The Board then inquired as to what 91 River Street would get the town. Ms. Hutton reported that some of the River Street property could be sold.

Fish & Wildlife is interested in 5 acres of the property. There should be around 50 acres, but it still needs to be surveyed. So, \$250,000 could be obtained if a single lot was sold by the town to Fish & Wildlife. So, that's \$750,000 towards the \$3.1 million would bring the cost down to roughly about \$2.3 million. Ms. Hutton suggested keeping the focus on the 74 acres Dumont is seeking to sell, figure out what the debt would be, how to finance it, and firm up what the town can sell otherwise to help finance like the River Street option. Ms. Hutton promised to have this information for the Board in the next few meetings. The Board was pleased noting that there are a lot of ways to develop the Dumont's property. There's a pond on it as part of the wetlands that could be beautified and possibly used as part of conservation and recreation. This prompted some finishing up discussion about surveying River Street and whether the property could be carved up in a way that makes sense for conservation and possible value to the town. The last time the town considered a survey, the cost was in the ballpark of about \$12,000. The River Street parcel is flat, relatively open, near water, and pretty good property. So a balance has to be considered. It was decided to meet on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 with a subsequent meeting on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018.

A motion to exit Executive Session and adjourn was made by Leah D. Basbanes at 8:53 pm. The motion was seconded by Ronald J. Mikol. The motion was then adopted without objection by Walter F. Alterisio, Leah D. Basbanes, and Ronald J. Mikol.