



TOWN OF SUDBURY

Office of Selectmen

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For Immediate Release

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The Board of Selectmen is pleased to announce that an agreement has been reached between the Town and the owner of the Johnson Farm property to sell approximately 33 acres of the property to the Town for conservation and passive recreation purposes. The agreed upon price is \$2.9 million. Under the terms of the sale the owner will retain two one-acre lots along the Landham Road frontage for the construction of single family dwellings, and a 20-foot wide access to the rear of the parcel located along the northern property boundary will be reserved for public use. There will be restrictions on the two lots so that they can only be developed as single family homes. By separating out the two front lots the Town is able to bring down the purchase price for the remaining 33 acres that are the most attractive for preservation and recreation.

Purchase and preservation of this property will eliminate the threat of development as previously proposed, and will end all litigation between the Town and the developer on the property. The property contains significant wetlands, vernal pools and streams and contributes groundwater to the Town's drinking water supply wells. It abuts other permanently protected lands to the west, and forms a large wildlife corridor of over 200 acres. The property is listed as a priority parcel for preservation in the 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Town had previously tried to purchase the land in 2007. While that effort was unsuccessful, its importance to the Town for natural resource protection has not changed.

The Board of Selectmen is also mindful of the impact of other recent dense developments very close by to this same neighborhood, including the Coolidge at Sudbury and the Landham Crossing developments, as well as other subdivisions and senior housing developments which have been constructed in South Sudbury over the last 10 years. Protecting this parcel will relieve some of the pressure from these recent developments on the Loring School and the local roads.

The Board is recommending that three funding sources be utilized for the purchase: \$1 million in CPA funds, \$1.9 million in a debt exemption, and private fundraising which will be put towards and used to reduce the debt exemption portion. The Board reviewed our Community Preservation fund in the context of this project and other projects in the pipeline, and felt that the funding of this project should not be 100% CPA funds. Doing so would effectively leave no debt capacity in the CPA for 4-5 years and thus leave no ability to act on unknown but possibly very important other projects that might become available in the future. Dividing the funding sources therefore seemed to be the most logical solution. It will ensure that this project is viewed positively by the entire Town, and not just the South Sudbury neighborhoods, as the debt exemption portion of the funding will require a ballot vote.

The Board will be submitting an article at the December 3rd Special Town Meeting for the funding for this proposal, as well as placing the question on the December 9th ballot. The Board will also submit a request for CPA funding to the Community Preservation Committee with a request that they approve the \$1 million request and also submit an article to the Special Town Meeting.