

Springdale Study Committee Minutes
September 10, 2015
Town Hall Lower Level Meeting Room

Attendees: Eric Aborjaily, Juris Alksnitis, Nancy Kostakos, Doug Novitch, Anne Reitmayer, Matt Schmid, Doug Straus, Catherine White

Liaisons: Kate Cannie (WC), Joanne Connolly (COA), Justine Kent-Uritam (OSC), Carol Lisbon (PB), Amey Moot (OSC/CC), Mark Sarro (PB), John Sullivan (CC)

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm by Catherine White
2. **Minutes** from the August 18 meeting were approved.
3. **Survey response data** as of 9/10 was discussed. 468 responses were received, and sentiment had not changed substantially since our August review of 214 initial responses. Open space continues to be the dominant preference, with 258 respondents showing strong interest, followed by active recreation with 152 respondents showing strong interest. All other uses were predominantly of no interest. Senior housing was at 290 no interest, 38 strong interest (82 low to medium interest). Although 152 indicated strong interest in active recreation, each of the active recreation uses overall received considerably more no interest votes than high interest votes. The same was true of possible sale of the property for development. There was strong interest in possible sale of the house with limited acreage, while preserving most of the acreage as open space. Ms. White noted that although the data does not seem to support development at this particular site, many people commented on the town's need to address its affordable housing shortage.
4. **Combined use:** It was clear that many people did not understand the question regarding combined use, which Mr. Alksnitis noted was disappointing as the site is certainly large enough to accommodate more than one use.
5. **Possible sale of the existing buildings with limited acres (approximately 3)** was then discussed, as it seemed to be of some interest in our survey results. Mr. Novitch had been tasked with examining possible market value of this scenario, and he reported that his real estate contacts felt the existing buildings and 3 acres could sell for \$1.8 to \$2.0 million, if the existing driveway was to become a town road with a curb cut to the existing buildings, and a second termination curb cut providing limited parking and open space access. Some members of the Committee thought that \$1.8 to \$2.0 million seemed high, particularly if the remaining land was publicly accessible. Mr. Straus pointed out that it would be possible, in this scenario, to build a second house and still retain the majority of the land for open space. There was further discussion of public access via the driveway/road or via a walking path, with Mr. Sarro and Ms. Moot noting that installation of a walking path would likely require relocation of the existing driveway to the right. Ms. White noted that the Snyders have now moved out, and the town has discovered a possible asbestos issue, which makes leasing the property challenging. Ms. Lisbon also explained that town process requires an RFP for possible lease or sale of the property, making town ownership of the property even more challenging.
6. **Conservation restrictions** were also discussed, with Ms. Kent-Uritam offering that her considerable experience in this area has proven that holding the land in fee simple is a much better option now. There have been numerous cases of conservation restrictions being ignored by new owners, and towns having to spend exorbitant amounts of money to fight these violations.

7. **Combined use concept:** Mr. Alksnitis offered his thoughts and notes on a possible use for the site (attached) which would use the Audubon conservation design approach to position multi-unit housing along the edges of the site, including family and elder units, with some affordable in each category. His strong feeling is that it is our responsibility to begin to address the affordable housing issue that is making us vulnerable to unwanted types of development. Mr. Schmid agreed and felt that, as a Committee, we need to be bold with our recommendations, and that we should at a minimum, recommend a housing authority that would start addressing our affordable housing shortage. Ms. Lisbon and Ms. Reitmayer also agreed that the Town needs to address this issue, and Ms. Reitmayer, who has considerable experience with affordable housing developments, recommended that we go through the exercise of understanding the cost of subsidizing affordable housing in Dover. Ms. Moot agreed with the idea of a housing authority and that we need to address our affordable housing issue, but strongly disagreed that 46 Springdale is the place for us to address this problem. She feels very strongly that cluster housing at 46 Springdale would ruin the site from a conservation perspective, and would put untenable strain on water supplies for other parts of Dover. Ms. White also said that adding 40 or more residents to the site would reduce its current value as a wildlife corridor. Mr. Novitch also expressed his strong feelings that convincing the town to pursue this kind of development would be way too ambitious for Dover echoing the responses of the Survey. The Committee nevertheless agreed that we would consider further research and consultation with Audubon experts in this area.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Kostakos