

Recommendation of the Johnston Drive Property Use Committee to the Town of Enfield Selectboard

ADOPTED 6/22/2023

Background

In November 2022, the Town of Enfield Selectboard appointed a Johnston Drive Property Use Committee (JPUC). The purpose of the JPUC was to develop a recommendation to the Selectboard about whether the Town should retain the municipally-owned property on Johnston Drive, and if so, what the future use of the property should be.

Since December 2022, the JPUC has been meeting bi-weekly to complete this charge. To solicit feedback from key stakeholders, the JPUC held targeted meetings with the following groups to hear their visions and concerns about the Johnston Drive property:

- Master Plan Task Force;
- Mascoma Lake Association;
- Conservation Commission; and
- Recreation Commission.

The JPUC also contacted the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail and local snowmobile groups. The Friends of the Northern Rail Trail advised that they do not have a position on the future use of the Johnston Drive property and view it as a local issue, and the snowmobile club just stated that they use the property during the winter for lake access.

In addition to meetings with the above-listed stakeholder groups, the JPUC convened a meeting specifically with abutters to the town-owned property on Johnston Drive on March 9, 2023 and held two public forums (one online and one in-person) on April 27, 2023 and May 11, 2023.

Definition of Property

The municipally-owned property on Johnston Drive is comprised of four separate parcels, known as Tax Map 14-3 (aka Parcel #3), 14-4 (aka Parcel #4), 14-5 (aka Parcel #5), and 14-6 (aka Parcel #6) respectively. The JPUC's recommendations detailed herein address all four parcels.



Recommendations of the JPUC

Throughout this process, the JPUC received extensive feedback from stakeholders, abutters, and the general public. The JPUC members carefully considered all comments and questions without pre-determined conclusions. While there is no single recommendation that will please everyone or alleviate all concerns, the JPUC's goal was to reach consensus on a series of recommendations that balance the public good of lakefront recreation, align with the vision of the Town of Enfield's Master Plan, mitigate abutter concerns, and positively benefit the Town of Enfield financially through the sale of a portion of the property.

Accordingly, the JPUC hereby makes the following recommendations to the Town of Enfield Selectboard.

- 1) Regarding Parcel #3 - The Town of Enfield Selectboard should consider selling Parcel #3 upon the conclusion of its current lease encumbrance.
- 2) Regarding Parcel #4 and Parcel #5 - The Town of Enfield Selectboard should retain Parcel #4 and Parcel #5 for public recreation.
- 3) Regarding Parcel #6 – The Town of Enfield Selectboard should sell Parcel #6 for fair market value. The JPUC recognizes that an abutting property owner has a right of first refusal for this parcel.
- 4) Regarding the Recreational Use of Parcel #4 and Parcel #5 – The JPUC recommends the Town of Enfield Selectboard should utilize these parcels for recreational purposes as follows.
 - a) Walk/bike/water access public recreational land, with limited vehicular access as detailed below.
 - i) Vehicular access to the property should be limited to public safety vehicles, property maintenance vehicles, and vehicles with Disability Plates and Placards pursuant to RSA 261:88.
 - ii) An unpaved parking area sufficient for three handicap-accessible vehicles should be provided to ensure access to the property for Enfield residents with mobility-related disabilities. These spaces should be clearly marked and enforced as handicap access only.
 - b) Existing structures on Parcel #4 and Parcel #5 should be demolished.
 - c) Interpretative/educational signage should be erected in conjunction with the Mascoma Lake Association related to lake flora/fauna and responsible public use of the property.
 - d) A picnic table (or tables) may be provided for public use on the property.
 - e) A bicycle rack may be provided for public use on the property.
 - f) Swimming should occur at one's own risk and signage should advise the public accordingly.
 - g) Refuse containers should not be provided. "Leave No Trace" (i.e. pack in, pack out) principles should apply to the property.
 - h) A port-a-potty should not be provided unless Town staff determine that public use of the property is sufficient to warrant the provision of a port-a-potty.

While the JPUC recommends that Parcel #4 and Parcel #5 be permanently retained for recreational purposes, the Committee recommends that the Selectboard monitor the use of these parcels in the future. If the Selectboard determines that the parcels are being: 1) underutilized or 2) maliciously utilized in a way that results in environmental harm, persistent vandalism, or damage to property, then the Selectboard should re-evaluate the recommendation to retain these parcels.

These recommendations were duly adopted at a meeting of the Johnston Drive Property Use Committee on June 22, 2023.

Nate Miller, Chair

Alice Kennedy, Vice Chair (and Selectboard Representative to the JPUC)

Affrille Degoma

Julie Eckert

Franklin (Bud) Lynch

Brad Rich

Nancy Smith

Kevin Marker (Ex officio)

Ed Morris (Ex officio)