

Land Acquisition Review Committee
Minutes of the Meeting held May 1, 2019, 10:00 am
Silva Room, Flynn Building

Members Present: Jan Hardenbergh; Chris Morely; John Hincks, Matt Barach, and John Cutting
Staff Present: Melissa Rodrigues, Adam Duchesneau, and Beth Suedmeyer

LARC opened the meeting and met to discuss the proposed acquisition of Camp Sewataro at 1 Liberty Ledge, 44 acres property subdivided into 33 lots that has operated as a summer camp operated by the Taylor family for decades. The Town responded to a request for proposals to acquire the property in March. The Board of Selectmen released the terms of the purchase on Friday, April 19, 2019. The LARC received a presentation from the Town Manager Melissa Rodrigues regarding the terms of the purchase and the potential use of the property. The Selectmen propose to purchase the property for \$11,269,700. The Town could use as land for open space, recreation, preservation and other municipal purposes. The purchase will require a 2/3rd vote to pass at Town Meeting, which starts and a majority vote at a town election. The future use of the Camp Sewataro property by the Town has not been determined, but the town is interested in the opportunities this land presents, including opportunities that provide offsetting revenue.

The Committee members considered the guidelines intended for LARC's consideration. The mission statement indicates the following needs of the Town be considered in evaluating property:

- to preserve the character of Sudbury so defined by the Master Plan
- to provide alternative housing so defined by the Housing Plan
- to preserve and protect open space for conservation and recreation purposes, utilizing the Open Space and Recreation Plan
- to provide for community activities
- to preserve for future town/school use
- to enhance municipal revenue, including commercial potential of properties
- to protect natural resources, including water resources

The Committee voted against the Town's acquisition of Camp Sewataro after a thoughtful discussion on the opportunities and drawbacks of acquiring the property. John Hincks abstained, as he felt he wanted to better understand the position of the Planning Board before voting. Generally, the majority of the Committee felt the cost was too expensive, the property was not one of the higher priority open space parcels identified in the 2009 Open Space and Recreation Plan, it is unclear how the Town will benefit from the purchase of the property, and there were concerns about loss of tax revenue and municipal costs for the long term operation and maintenance of the property.

There were no other items of business and the meeting was adjourned.