

Killingworth Open Space Committee

Minutes of Special Meeting, Thursday, February 19, 2015, Town Hall.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM. Attending were Dennis Cronin, David Gumbart (Chairman) and Charlie Martens. Absent was Sue Davenport.

2. Communications: the role of the Open Space Committee (“OSC”), and its currently assigned task(s), as provided by the Board of Selectmen (“BOS”), was discussed. In addition, a recommendation was made to suggest to the BOS that its rationale in bringing an open space acquisition to town vote be made transparent.

3. Current open space priorities: the Town recently hired an appraiser to conduct an appraisal of the 305-acre Venuti property on Route 148. That report has been completed and submitted to the office of the First Selectwoman. Further, the appraisal was shared with the OSC and the Venuti family. As per communication from First Selectwoman Iino, the OSC has been asked to provide a recommendation, following review of the appraisal, on whether the Town should seek to acquire the property at a price within the appraised range. If there were reasons to seek another appraisal, that too could be a recommendation.

The OSC, having reviewed the appraisal, and also being aware of the response of the Venuti family to the same appraisal, does not believe the Town should move forward at this time with a vote on acquisition of the Venuti property. The OSC does recommend the Town communicate with the appraiser to inquire about the possibility of utilizing The Preserve, a current 1000-acre open space project by the State of Connecticut and Town of Old Saybrook, as a “comp,” to further ensure that the current appraisal of the Venuti property incorporates all relevant land sales that may influence the estimate of fair market value of the property.

While this extra information may or may not bring about negotiations between the Town and Venuti family regarding acquisition of its property, it may provide the Town and family with greater confidence in the appraisal’s determination of fair market value.

4. New Business: no additional business was discussed.
5. Old Business: no additional old business of the OSC was discussed.
6. The meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



David Gumbart, Chairman