

Public Land

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the town could use to buy more land. But all councilors showed concern with potential use violations after the sale, particularly with wetlands.

Councilor Barbara Szepatowski said the council should approach discussions with a better attitude, and expressed frustration with land use violations in the past.

"It is a real slap in the face to a town that has done so much to preserve land," Szepatowski said of covenant violations. She urged the use of more restrictive covenants with property sales and more specific language in the agreements. When DiGiando asked the councilors to summarize their opinion,

she said she would favor selling non-wetlands, and evaluate the sales on a case-by-case basis.

She said the town is in good financial standing considering the economic climate, and could sell some plots to get money to buy more land. She also suggested a public workshop and hearing to be held.

Councilor Robert Sutton said he was "generally opposed" to land sale, because restrictions result in a crash of value in the property, and then the town would not get a lot of money from the sale. But later in the meeting, he said he would be open to examining town land plot by plot on an individual, micro-basis, and evaluating land sales on a case-by-case basis.

He said protecting the Shores

was "critical," and liked the idea of the land trust approach the town has used in the past, in which acquired land has a specific use, often preservation, which protects the land from development. "I like the fact that the town is very proactive in getting the title to those lots," he said, adding later that any formal discussion of land sale should include the Conanicut Island Land Trust.

He also said land in the Shores area should be held because of population density, and the town's limited ability to provide water and sewer utilities in the area. The town does not need to sell land because it is in good financial standing, he said.

"We are not somebody without two nickels to rub together that

needs to buy groceries next week," Sutton said.

Kelly said it should be done "parcel by parcel," and evaluate the land lot-by-lot.

"I'm not opposed to any individual buying any particular piece of property, again not the Oklahoma land rush, but the argument of step-by-step...I would be in favor of that," he said.

He told the council they should inventory the land, find out as much information about the land as they can, and then decide whether or not to sell. Some land should be handed to the land trust or kept in the town's inventory.

Councilor Michael White said the town needs to make a stewardship plan, and possibly include the sale in that plan. But selling land

now should not be done, he said.

"It is not an easy [decision] at all; the one thing I'm concerned about is...we do not have a stewardship plan for the properties we own," White said, adding that a committee should be formed to look deeper into the issue. Town Solicitor Peter Ruggiero said most municipalities approach the issue by forming a committee, and the tailor individual plans to the community's interests. The committees usually protect some land and sell other pieces to continuous land owners, Ruggiero said.

A public hearing to discuss a town land sale will be held Monday, Aug. 24, at 7 p.m. in Town Hall.

Volunteers needed for 420 National Championships

Registrations are already pouring in for the Club 420 National Championships in Jamestown. "There could be as many as 150 to 180 boats registered by the first gun," according to Nancy Lush, co chair for the event. "Each boat has a crew of two, and, counting coaches, family members and spectators, there could be as many as 600 to 1,000 people on the island for the three-day event."

The Conanicut and Jamestown Yacht Clubs are co-hosting the Club 420 Association National Championships which will take place on July 27 to 29 in West Passage. Fort Getty is featured as the venue for this event, with boats arriving on Sunday, July 26, and departing Wednesday, July 29. Developed over two decades ago, the 420 is the predominant two-person boat of the high school and collegiate racing circuits. It is 13-feet, 9-inches long and features a spinaker and trapeze gear.

Samira Hakki, the JYC co-chair said, "Everyone that we've talked to on the island has responded with great enthusiasm. The town and especially the Recreation Department are working very hard with us to prepare Fort Getty for the event. The campers at Fort Getty were mailed a notice of the event last month, and many have responded by volunteering to assist. The Jamestown Chamber of Commerce has met with the event committee and is preparing special attractions and discount booklets for the event."

According to the co-chairs, there is still a need for volunteers both at Fort Getty and on the water. Some of the positions still open include mark pullers, registration personnel, dock hands, and ambassadors at Fort Getty to help with breakfasts, lunches, launch ramp and parking management. Anyone interested should e-mail club420@conanicutyachtclub.org or call CYC at 423-1424. Time is getting short, but there are still openings for event sponsorships.



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