

South Hadley Fire District #2  
Elmer Brook Sub-Committee  
Frank DeToma, Bill Selkirk, Jim Menard  
20 Woodbridge Street  
South Hadley, Mass  
March 18, 2019

RE: Options for Elmer Brook Property

Option:

1. Leave District property as is
2. Sell lot #19 to State/Trust, leave lot 20 as is
3. Sell lot #19 & 20 to State or Trust
4. Sell lot #19 to State/Trust, Lease land to Developer for Cluster housing for low income/elderly housing
5. Sell lot #19 to State/Trust, Lease land to Solar Developer

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RE: Pro/Con for each Option for Elmer Brook Property

Option:

1. Leave District property as is

**Pro/con** – status quo/ no additional revenue

2. Sell lot #19 to State/Trust, leave lot 20 as is

**Pro/con** – officially gives formal access to upper trails, & gives District limited additional one time revenue (approx. \$1000.00 a acre)

3. Sell lot #19 & 20 to State or Trust

**Pro/con** – takes responsibility of property from the District, allows formal access to trails, gives District limited additional one time revenue (approx. \$1000.00 a acre)

4. Sell lot #19 to State/Trust, Lease Lot #20 land to Developer for Cluster housing for low income/elderly housing

**Pro/con**- officially gives formal access to upper trails, giving District limited additional one time revenue (approx \$1000. An acre), leasing the land to a developer of cluster housing for low income/elderly gives the District unknown dollars for land lease. Leasing the land for housing gives the District permanent Buildings and puts the District in the housing business

5. Sell lot #19 to State/Trust, Lease Lot #20 land to Solar Developer

**Pro/con** – officially gives formal access to upper trails, giving District limited additional one time revenue (approx \$1000. Per acre). Leasing the land to a solar developer provides the District with a good amount of revenue (approx 10K per acre) annually. The con for solar development would be the cutting down of around 20/25 acres of trees on lot 20 and a change to the status quo

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RE: Elmer Brook Property: Sub-Committee Recommendation

The sixty-five acres of land was left out of the initial sale of 600 acres to the State in 2002 for a reason, it had a Value. The committee looked into the options of the land and our opinion is this: We recommend the District to sell lot #19 to the State/Trust to formalize the parking and trail access for people who like hiking and access the mountain range, removing the District from the responsibility of possible liability for personal injury. Giving the District additional revenue from the sale of lot #19 to the State and or a Trust.

We also recommend to the District lease part of lot #20 for development of a Solar farm, in leasing for Solar the possible revenue of 10k per acre for 20 to 30 years would be a positive flow of revenue, those revenues could be utilized for past and future capital expenditures enabling the District to have a revenue flow yearly which would enable the District to plan and save for reserves. There is only so much money you can raise from taxation and water rates. For a small district like ours this is a heavy burden on District homeowners. We realize the negatives from recommending this option: changing the natural look for the residents of the area, and for anyone who hikes around the Elmer Brook area.

There are positive suggestions that we can make in the Request For Proposal. Our recommendation would be to go beyond the towns-by-laws and have a buffer of more than 100ft between the solar farm and the existing homeowners property line increasing it to a 200ft buffer. We also recommend to have either a percentage or a one time dollar amount put aside to go into a fund to plant new trees in South Hadley. We believe the combination of putting lot #19 into the mountain range property and the development of a solar farm together is good for the District and should be a model for maximizing the greater use of lands in South Hadley.