

May 3, 2023

To: Beth Moreau, Chair of the Land Use Commission

Re: Staff Review of City-Owned Parcels for Potential Reuse as Workforce Housing

As requested, the planning staff has reviewed the list of city-owned parcels to evaluate the potential reuse for workforce housing. As part of the review, staff focused on the parcels over one acre in size. Staff also utilized the city mapping software (MapGeo) to identify any site constraints such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Lot Shape and Size
- Access Availability
- Wetland Resources
- Natural Features
- Steep Slopes
- Soil Conditions
- Available Utilities and Infrastructure
- Proximity to Employment Centers, Services and Recreational Amenities
- Conservation, Utility, or Other Easements
- Existing Use(s)
- Abutting Land Use(s) and Development Patterns

After an evaluation of these site constraints, staff shortlisted 11 properties for further evaluation and performed an on-the-ground site-visit. The site-visit proved to be invaluable in understanding the attributes of these properties and assessing their suitability for use as workforce housing. In nearly all instances, the shortlisted properties had significant and obvious conservation value as active or passive park land. Additionally, a number of properties also had the presence of active recreational facilities such as regulation-sized ball fields with associated parking, concessions, and lighting. Other properties, such as the Sagamore Creek parcel behind the High School, demonstrated enormous ecological and passive recreational value with the potential to become landmark parks and/or smaller wildlife conservation areas.

In the end, our preliminary review and recommendation to the land use committee would be to focus on three (3) city-owned properties for further study and reuse potential as multi-family, workforce housing. The properties are as follows:

1. 1 Junkins Ave. (the lower city hall parking lot – approx. 1 acre)
2. Falkland Way (the open parcel in front of the PHA property / approx. 1 acre)
3. 35 Sherburne Rd. (the Lister Academy / approx. 5 acres)

Notably, the site visits afforded staff the opportunity to evaluate some abutting or nearby private parcels that may offer better opportunity for workforce housing development.¹

Table 1 below illustrates the assessment criteria we used when evaluating each property. If requested, we can provide further detail on our assessment at the next Land Use Committee meeting on May 5th.

Respectfully,

Nicholas Cracknell, Principal Planner

Cc: Peter Britz, Planning Director

¹¹ In fact, staff identified over 15 privately-owned parcels (representing nearly 100 acres of land) that appeared to support high-density, multi-family housing. Notably, nearly all of these parcels are located outside the existing Gateway Districts so the LUC would be well-served to consider further zoning map amendments to encourage some of these parcels to permit workforce housing developments.

Exhibit 1 – Aerial Images of Properties



134 Preble Way (5.2A) – Active and Passive Recreational Facility



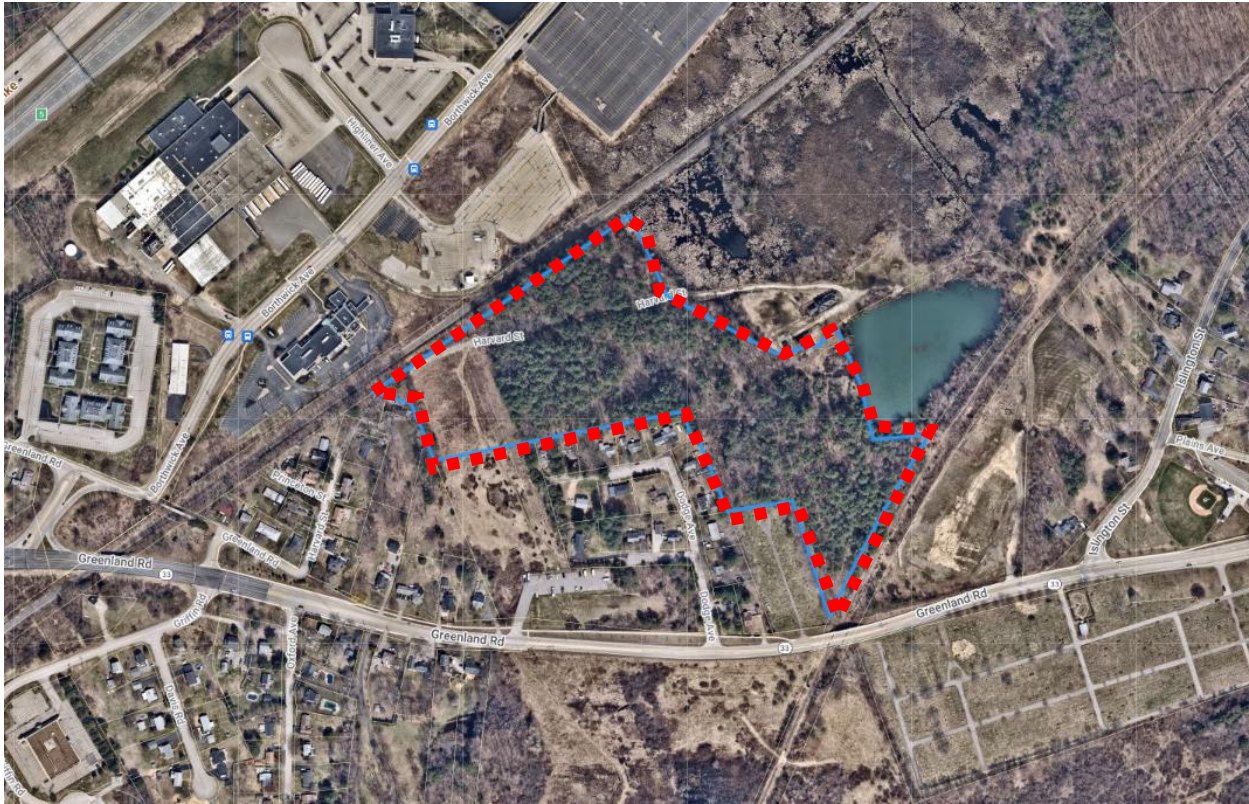
Jones Ave. (66A) – Passive Recreational Park and Conservation Area



Sagamore Ave. (16A) – Passive Recreation and Conservation Area



25 Granite Ave. (4A) – Active Recreational Facility



Greenland Road (30A) – Passive Recreation and Conservation Area



445 Borthwick Ave. (17A) – Passive Conservation Area



35 Sherburne Rd. (5.3A) – Potential Reuse as Multi-Family Housing



Lower Parking Lot – 1 Junkins Ave. (1A) – Potential for Multi-Family Housing



Falkland Way (.9A) – Potential for Multi-Family Housing



Sagamore Ave. (10.6A) – Passive Conservation Area



Sherburne Road (4.3A) – Passive Recreation and Conservation Area

Table 2 – Potential Private Properties for Multi-Family Housing

| Address | Area (Acres) |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Kearsarge Way | 2 |
| Dunlin Way | 8.5 |
| 1275 Maplewood Ave. | 3 |
| 827 Woodbury Ave. | 9 |
| 650 Maplewood Ave. | 1.8 |
| 913 US Route 1 Bypass | 5 |
| 686 Maplewood Ave. | 1.4 |
| 608 Middle Street (Greenleaf) | 2 |
| 195 Greenleaf St. | 3.5 |
| Ledgewood Drive | 1.2 |
| 1035 Lafayette Rd | 3 |
| Lang Road | 25 |
| 2300 Lafayette Rd. | 10 |
| 1600-2032 Lafayette Rd. | 3 |
| Total | 78 |