

REFERENDUM QUESTION NUMBER 6
MAY 4, 2021
PROPOSED PURCHASE OF THE MEADOWOOD PROPERTY
EXPLANATORY TEXT

PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Located on the north side of Simsbury, the 288-acre Meadowood property was once a tobacco farm where Martin Luther King, Jr. worked for two summers in the 1940s. The land sits between the Great Pond section of Massacoe State Forest and the 4,400-acre McLean Game Refuge.

INTENDED USE OF THE LAND:

The Town of Simsbury may use the land in the future for trails and access points for hiking and exploration for neighbors and visitors, conservation of wildlife habitat, agricultural soils and working farmland, and preservation of the cultural heritage of the area with a portion of the site memorializing Martin Luther King Jr.'s time in Connecticut and on this farm.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Board of Selectmen identified the purchase of Meadowood as a priority in their adopted capital plan. At the April 6, 2021 budget meeting, the Board of Finance did not include the purchase and acquisition of Meadowood within the FY 21/22 budget submitted to the Town's annual budget referendum, scheduled for May 4th. Pursuant to Charter Section 409, Electors submitted a certified petition to the Board of Selectmen to require the call of a special town meeting and automatic referendum on the purchase and funding of Meadowood. The Special Town Meeting was held April 24, 2021 and adjourned to vote by referendum as required by Charter Section 406.

COST OF THE LAND ACQUISITION:

The Town's contribution towards the acquisition, site improvements, and bonding costs is \$2,515,860, or approximately \$8,700 per acre. The total cost of the Meadowood property is over \$6 million. Grants and private donations to be obtained by the Trust for Public Land will fund the balance of the purchase price.

The median valued single-family homeowner would pay approximately \$25 a year for ten years.

As proposed, the Town plans to fund its \$2,515,860 through borrowing (bonds). The bond would be for 10 years.



The Trust for Public Land holds an option to purchase the property until July of 2021, for subsequent conveyance to the Town.

THE BARNs ON FIRETOWN ROAD:

MAP OF THE MEADOWOOD PROPERTY:



https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf1216/f/agendas/4-6-20_0.pdf

https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif1216/f/agendas/bof_packet_9-15-20.pdf

Approved by the Simsbury Board of Selectmen on April 24, 2021