



This communication is provided by the Cotuit-Santuit Civic Association on behalf of the Prudential Committee.

The Town of Barnstable has decided to dispose of the Cotuit Elementary School and some or all of the 13.5 acres of land surrounding it. Given the importance of the property to the Village and its proximity to important elements of Cotuit's water supply, the Prudential Committee formed a committee to explore options with the Town with respect to the property. The goal is to determine if the Cotuit Fire District should acquire all or a portion of the property, including the school building, and if acceptable terms for such a transaction can be achieved.

Please join us for a discussion concerning the future of the Cotuit Elementary School property, led by the Prudential Committee and its appointed School Subcommittee. The meeting will be held on March 25, beginning at 6:00 p.m., via Zoom. Access information is set forth below.

Here is a general overview of the matter:

The Cotuit Elementary School was built in 1955, on an aggregate 13.5 acre parcel of land that had been acquired that year by the Town of Barnstable. The Barnstable School Department closed Cotuit Elementary in 2008. In 2009, the empty school building was leased to the Waldorf School of Cape Cod, an occupancy that continued for ten years, until it was terminated by the School Department in June, 2019. The building has been vacant since that date. The School Department turned control of the building over to the Town of Barnstable later that year. The Town has now declared the building and the property to be surplus, and is exploring options for disposal.

The property extends from Main Street to Old Oyster Road. It currently consists of tennis courts, a baseball diamond and open fields available for public use, a wooded area with walking trails, and the school building and associated land.

There have been several open meetings of the Asset Management Advisory Committee of the Town at which discussions concerning the property have taken place. That Committee has recommended that the Town proceed with a demolition of the school building. It has been suggested that this would be followed by a subdivision of the property to establish three buildable lots out of what is currently the wooded area and the land from and including the school building out to Old Oyster Road.

The lots would be disposed of to third party developers in order to recoup some or all of the demolition costs. This is one option that is being considered, but other plans might develop which could lead to a different result. One such option is a potential transfer of some or all of the property to the Fire District.

There are a number of reasons why this is something for the District to consider. Chief among them is the fact that the land is immediately upgradient of Cotuit's #3 well and proximate to the pump station. In fact, the school is about 800 feet from the well head, and approximately 90% of the property is in the zone of contribution to the well field. Any new development on the land is therefore of great concern for the protection of that well field. In addition, the property represents a significant and important area of open space for the community, and the fields, wooded areas and tennis courts are used for recreation.

Of course, any transaction would require the approval of the voters of the District. And we are not yet at a stage where the proposed details of any possible arrangement have been agreed upon in a form that could be presented to the District.

There will be a general informational meeting held by Zoom on March 25, at which a presentation will be made concerning this situation. The committee members would like to share what we have learned, answer your questions and get your input.. We look forward to your participation. Details on accessing the meeting are as follows:

Real-time public comment can be addressed to the Prudential Committee utilizing the Zoom link or telephone number and access code for remote access below.

Link: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3462071880>

Meeting ID: 346 207 1880

Or Dial+1 646 558 8656 US Roll Call

Committee members:

Jaci Barton

Jim Dannhauser

Tom Hoppensteadt

Mark Lynch

DJ MacKinnon (unpaid consultant to Committee)

Ron Mycock

Fran Parks

Adam Zais

