TOWN OF LONDONDERRY
LAND ACQUISITION TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES- DRAFT
SEPTEMBER 16, 2026
Meeting held at Londonderry Town Office
and virtually on Zoom

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT: Taylor Prouty, Select Board; Chad Stoddard, Planning Commission; Nancy Jensen, Housing Committee

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:
A quorum being present, the Land Acquisition Task Force Meeting of Londonderry, VT was called to order at 5:00 P.M. on September 2, 2026, by Taylor Prouty, Chair

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA [1 V.S.A. 312(d)(3)(A)]:
n/a

3. MINUTES APPROVAL: Meeting 9/2/26
Chad Stoddard moved to approve the minutes of the Land Acquisition Task Force meeting of 09/02/2026, and Taylor Prouty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT: n/a

5. CONTINUE DISCUSSION OF TAX SALE PROPERTIES

Discussed tax sale properties. Taylor reported that most properties were paid up, with only one sale at Sherwood Forest having no bidders. The town can potentially assign the unsold property to someone interested, though details about potential negotiations remain unclear. Taylor also mentioned that the property in question had issues with well isolation and was originally part of a larger 3-acre parcel.

6. CONTINUE DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE USES

Reviewed town properties: cemeteries, parks, FEMA buyout lots, and various constrained parcels.

- Discussed zoning changes that affected property development, explaining how some lots were reduced from one acre to three acres due to proximity requirements, making them unusable for development. Nancy noted that upcoming zoning changes might reverse this to one-acre lots, suggesting the town could consider assigning the affected property to someone interested or potentially using it for housing commission purposes. Taylor also mentioned a separate property sale on Old Farm Road, describing challenges with access and surveys, and noted that building a fourth home on a 10-acre property would trigger road upgrades at the owners' expense.
- **Private Road Development Challenges:** discussed challenges with private road development and zoning bylaws, noting that requirements to bring roads up to town specifications can create barriers for property owners, especially when multiple landowners disagree. Taylor explained that while the town mandates certain road standards, they don't automatically take over private roads, and violations of the new

zoning bylaw would occur if developers don't meet the requirements. Chad questioned the logic behind mandating town specifications for private roads that the town doesn't plan to take over, particularly when the requirements could be impractical for narrow roads.

- **Innovative Septic System Assessment:** Chad discussed the potential use of innovative septic systems on a piece of land, noting the need for a septic engineer to assess feasibility. Taylor explored the process of property reassignment and the importance of notifying abutters, suggesting that broader notification might be necessary. Taylor also explained the unique rules governing properties divided by town highways and expressed hope that their discussions might lead to improvements in related areas beyond their specific task focus.
- **Land Use Priority Discussion:** Taylor discussed Mark Wright's texted comments to Taylor about prioritizing housing and municipal needs over conservation and recreational considerations for land use. Taylor noted that while recreation and conservation could be accommodated on any land, housing and development uses present more complex challenges. Mark also explored the possibility of acquiring properties through donations or trade deals, similar to how the Shamherd parcel was obtained, and discussed the challenges of being prepared to receive potential land gifts while also needing clear purposes for justifying land use.
- **Town Land Acquisition Strategy:** discussed the town's approach to acquiring private land, emphasizing the need to keep the process generic and sensitive when discussing specific properties. Nancy organized available listings by acreage, focusing on larger parcels suitable for town use rather than residential properties. The discussion explored challenges around purchasing properties with existing structures versus raw land, and the Town not wanting to be a landlord, with Taylor noting that the select board would need to make acquisition decisions and that town meeting approval might be necessary for purchases.
- **Land Purchase and Wetland Process:** discussed the process of purchasing land, emphasizing the importance of considering taxpayer support for large purchases funded through the tax base. Taylor highlighted the need to take a broad view of the town, including areas like the river corridor, private land, and commercial strips near motels and businesses. Taylor mentioned speaking with a landowner about a specific parcel and explained the process of wetland delineation, including the involvement of certified agents and city agents like CHP, and noted that setbacks vary depending on the wetland classification.
- **Property Use and Restrictions Discussion:** discussed property limitations and potential uses for several land parcels, noting that only about 10 acres of a 33-acre property would be usable due to wetland restrictions. Taylor described challenges with a steep access road and water issues on one of the properties, and discussed two parcels near Pingree Park that have river frontage but require considering access rights and terrain. Taylor also mentioned potential uses for these properties, including remote wastewater facilities and the possibility of creating bathrooms and a well at Pingree Park if it were used as a disposal site.
- **Bathroom Facilities for Pingree Park:** discussed potential bathroom facilities for Pingree Park, noting that while there was previous pushback on commercial uses due to

"no commercial use" restrictions, bathrooms for park purposes might be acceptable. Taylor referenced the existing portable toilets at Memorial Park and mentioned that state parks successfully operate similar facilities while following proper regulations. Taylor suggested that investing in permanent bathroom facilities could be more responsible than continuously paying for portable toilets.

- **Property Development Regulatory Challenges:** discussed the challenges of developing existing properties due to changing regulations over time, noting that two-thirds of a previously planned 33-acre site is now unavailable for the intended town garage, fire department, and post office use. Taylor explained that current regulations and environmental considerations, including well locations and pond areas, limit potential development options for facilities like bathhouses and portable toilets in the upper parking lot. Taylor emphasized the importance of ongoing foresight and preparation to adapt to future changes, suggesting potential collaboration with neighboring properties and considering alternative uses, such as a brewery, to maximize land utilization.
- **Housing Development Lot Identification Challenges:** discussed the challenges of identifying viable lots for potential housing or development projects, noting the need for engineering assessment and collaboration with neighboring parcel owners. Nancy highlighted specific issues with previous properties, including the library property and Custer Sharp property wet spots, wells, and steep terrain, and suggested exploring a network of smaller sites rather than a single large parcel. Nancy proposed reaching out to Sandra and Jeremiah for information on potential lots and suggested engaging with the wastewater committee to understand community needs and possibilities.
- **Septic System Technology Evolution:** Chad discussed the evolution of septic system technology, noting how innovations have expanded from a single page of options on the state website to eight pages, with companies like Oranco developing multiple new products and systems. Chad explained the transition from direct to indirect flow systems, which increased capacity from 6,500 to 13,000-15,000 gallons per day with a 3,000-gallon reserve, while maintaining compliance with regulations. The conversation ended with an agreement to keep the agenda generic for future discussions and to focus on funding resources at a later stage.

7. CONTINUE DISCUSSION OF FUNDING RESOURCES

Reviewed tax sale properties (Bungalow Road, Williams Street, Old Farm Road, Brophy Lane): Many are wet, remote, or highly constrained; few if any “home run” opportunities; consensus to allow return to tax rolls rather than contest bids.

Western Derry Woods parcel drew no bidders; some floodbank triangles/slivers noted; limited municipal use; adjacent owner interest historically low due to constraints.

Next Arrangements

- Check with Sandra regarding the well isolation and wastewater permit information for the Sherwood Forest property.
- Look up wastewater permits for the abutters of the Sherwood Forest property.
- Talk to Sandra and Jeremiah about the list of four possible parcels for viability, including any potential for donation or sale.

- Talk to whoever is in charge of the wastewater committee to understand their perspective on wastewater options for town-owned parcels.

9. ADJOURN:

Nancy moved to adjourn the meeting. Chad seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 P.M. Next meeting scheduled for October 7, 2026 at 5 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jennifer Greenfield, Clerk LATF