

Town Owned Property Re-Use Evaluation Process

Purpose: This policy is intended to first establish the procedure by which unused or underutilized town owned property, not being sold through the tax foreclosure process, is reviewed for future use or disposition and second establish the procedures for disposition of the property.

Goals: The goals of this process are:

1. Enhance the quality of life for Groton's residents, businesses and visitors
2. Enhance and preserve the character and sense of place of the Town
3. Grow the Town's Grand List and diversify the tax base
4. Divest from real property with little to no use to the Town
5. Promote resiliency and sustainability

Decision on Disposition of Town-owned Property Process

1. The Town Manager will establish a Town Owned Property Evaluation Committee (Property Evaluation Committee) that will meet from time to time to review town owned properties. All such meetings shall be open to the public.
2. The Committee will seek input from relevant departments, Town of Groton agencies, boards and commissions and entities and will consider the following questions in evaluating properties:
 - Is the property currently used by a town department?
 - Does the property support a municipal function?
 - Is there a current or future foreseeable use by any town department?
 - Is the property suitable for active recreation or open space purposes?
 - Is the property suitable for road or drainage improvements?
 - Will significant economic development opportunities be generated by the sale of the property?
 - Will the town be relieved of potential liabilities and/or cost of maintaining the property?
3. Consult with the Town Attorney concerning title constraints or possible legal reasons the property cannot be sold. This process shall include an appraisal as required by law, a title search, and a Phase 1 environmental assessment if necessary.
4. The Committee will submit a recommendation to the Town Council regarding the disposition of property. The recommendation may be to sell the property, to sell a portion of the property, exchange property or portion thereof with another property, to lease the property, to sell the property with restrictions, to sell the property as a whole or in individual parcels or to retain the property for a certain purpose.
5. The Town Council shall refer any recommendation for sale/disposition of the property to the Planning and Zoning Commission under CGS 8-24.

6. The Town Council will hold a public hearing to gather citizen input on the potential sale, prior to acting on the staff recommendation.
7. A second public hearing per Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-163e will be conducted later in the process regarding the sale of real municipal property prior to the final approval of such sale. Notice of the public hearing will be forwarded to the RTM, and all town boards and commissions for input.
8. The Town Council makes decision on disposition of the property. If the Town Council votes to dispose of the property, a portion of the property, or to lease the property, such decision shall be forwarded to the RTM for consideration.

Disposition of Town-Owned Property Process

1. If the Town Council takes official action to proceed with a property sale/lease, Town Staff will create a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) for sale of property utilizing any direction received from the Town Council and will provide a copy to the Council prior to release. The RFP will be shared with the Planning and Zoning Commission and with the RTM for comment prior to its release. The RFP will include language to inform respondents of the requirement for a full criminal background check and credit check to be completed by an outside agency for the primary personnel of the development company prior to execution of any formal agreements. Existence of a criminal prosecution shall not automatically disqualify the responder but will be considered by the Town Council prior to approval of any agreements. The RFP will contain the scoring criteria for the review process.
2. Submitted proposals shall be reviewed by a Property Sale Review Committee made up of relevant Town staff, two representatives of the Town Council, two representatives of the RTM, and a representative of the Economic Development Commission with such members being appointed by the Mayor. All such meetings shall be open to the public.

The review process will include an extensive Internet search of the responding companies and its principals for companies that are invited to continue the process beyond the first interview.

3. The recommendation of the Property Sale Review Committee will be forwarded by staff to the Town Council for consideration of naming a preferred developer.
4. Following a second public hearing required by Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-163e and receiving comments from the PZC from the 8-24 review, the Council will decide on final disposition of the property. If the Town Council recommendation is to sell or lease in whole or in part, the property, the recommendation will be forwarded to the RTM for action. Notice of the public hearing will be forwarded to the RTM, and all town boards and commissions for input.
5. Following RTM approval, the Town Council would enter in an agreement with the preferred developer.

6. The Town Manager's office will proceed with the sale in accordance with the Town Charter and applicable state statutes.
7. Nothing in this policy will prevent the Town Council from utilizing alternative sales methods such as by auction.

Disposition of Non-Town-Owned Property Process

The section of the policy shall apply in the event the Town partner with an outside entity such as the State of Connecticut or the United States federal government to assist or promote the sale of non-town-owned property.

1. An agreement must be entered into the includes the following:
 - a. Clear responsibilities of each party.
 - b. Language detailing process to follow should outside agency provided funding become insufficient to cover services needed from the Town.
2. Any RFP process involving the Town will require Town Council approval of the RFP prior to release which shall include language to inform respondents of the requirement for a full criminal background check and credit check to be completed by an outside agency for the primary personnel of the development company prior to execution of any formal agreements.
3. Any RFP review process involving the Town shall at a minimum include relevant Town staff, two representatives of the Town Council, two representatives of the RTM, and a representative of the Economic Development Commission with such members being appointed by the Mayor. All such meetings shall be open to the public.

The review process will include an extensive Internet search of the responding companies and its principals for companies that are invited to continue the process beyond the first interview.

Adopted: Monday, July 3, 2023