

Bond Vote for Purchase of Flore Property

The Selectboard is seeking voter approval for the purchase of the Flore property, located on Route 116 just north of the Hinesburg Fire Station. The owners of this property have offered to sell to the Town, prior to putting it on the real estate market. As we think towards the future of Hinesburg, this purchase option provides an opportunity, which may not be available again for many years. This property will assist the Town in creating a vital town center, and will serve as a gateway to the community. A few of the potential benefits of this purchase are:

- With the recent addition to the fire station, it is expected that the station will be more frequently used for public meetings and community events. Lack of parking is at times an issue for the fire station. The parking issues arise, not during emergency calls because many emergency personnel respond directly to the scene, but instead during training, mutual aid emergencies, meetings and community events. With the further utilization of this facility, it is expected that the number of occasions when lack of parking is an issue will increase.
- The house could serve as a temporary headquarters for the Police Department, which is currently overcrowded in the Town Hall offices.
- The property could serve as a location for a future Police facility, either as an addition to the fire station, or as a separate building. When the Fire Department was planning the recently completed addition, consideration was given to building a space for the Police Department on the south side of the fire station. Due to buried utilities and the limited lot size this was not possible. In fact, there is not enough space on the existing lot for both the Fire and Police facilities. Acquisition of the Flore property eliminates this problem.
- The Town is exploring the possibility of building a connector road behind Saputo Cheese to join the Charlotte Road with Route 116 at Commerce Street, to relieve the congestion at the Route 116/Charlotte Road intersection, and reduce traffic in the village center. This parcel will be a valuable property, located on a corner lot at this intersection and will be a strategic location for emergency response such as police, fire and EMS. Acquisition now may prevent the need to purchase costly easements and right of ways in the future.
- As the Town focuses on re-zoning, the area surrounding the Flore property will be critical in creating a gateway to the village center. Located on the edge of the commercial district, it will offer valuable site control and the flexibility the Town needs as plans are made for future municipal facilities.

The Town's professional appraiser has rated the value of the property at \$138,000. To insure that the building meets the standards set by the Vermont Department of Labor and Industry for a public building, an additional \$20,000 has been allocated for necessary renovations. Because of this, the Selectboard has set the price in the warning article for the bond vote at \$158,000.

How will this affect your tax rate? The bond payment will be spread over the next ten years (from 2002 to 2012). This expense will translate into a tax increase of from ½ to 1 cent per \$100 appraised value. Therefore, the owner of a \$100,000 property could expect a tax increase for the purchase of this property of between \$5.00 and \$10.00 annually for the next ten years.

This bond vote will be open for discussion at Town Meeting on Monday, March 5, 2001, and will be voted on by Australian Ballot on Tuesday, March 6, 2001.

