EAST HADDAM OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

December 2023

Dear Boards, Commissions, and Community Groups,

The East Haddam Open Space Committee has one property, the Kronberg Property – North Moodus Road – 95.8 acres, that has been awarded a grant from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection under the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program. A description of the properties is below. Should you have any questions please contact Jim Ventres at 860-873-5031 or james.ventres@easthaddam.org.

Kronberg Property – 95 +/- acres – North Moodus Road

SPONSOR: **Town of East Haddam**

CONTRACT COST: **$479,000** TOTAL PROJECT AREA: **95.8 acres +/-**

Proposed Open Space – 74 acres / 78% (78% or $373,620 grant eligible) **Proposed Municipal Use / School 21 acres / 22%** (22% or $105,380 municipal cost)

OTHER EXPENSES: Contract, Title Search, Closing		**Total $5,000 +/-**
	SURVEYING	**$30,000 +/-**
	TOTAL PROJECT COST:	**$514,000 +/-**
DEEP GRANT AWARD:	**(47.3%)**	**$243,000**
TOWN SHARE ESTIMATE:	**(52.7%)**	**$270,900**

Existing Bond Authorization Remaining - $485,650

Property Description:

This ninety-five-acre parcel is located on the east side of North Moodus Road. The view from North Moodus Road is the twenty-two acres of farmland. The farmland has been in agricultural use for over one hundred years. The remaining land to the east is a forested parcel covered with a mixture of predominately oaks, maples, and beech trees, some intermittent streams, small wetland patches and at least one vernal pool that all support a variety of the woodland species.

The parcel is in the Moodus River and Salmon River Watersheds. The parcel is directly south of the 211-acre East Haddam Middle School property. Most of the school property is a series of bike paths and hiking trails that are to the east and west of the school site. With the assistance of the Southeastern Ct New England Mountain Bike Association seven miles of trails have been created on the Middle School property. The potential for additional trails to the south will connect to the Hidden Valley Farm Preserve on the Moodus River which is managed by the East Haddam Land Trust.

The recreational resources include hiking, cross country skiing, horseback riding, mountain biking, wildlife observation, star gazing, and photography. The proposed main trails, which would use the existing logging and horseback trails in most cases, have been marked on the attached map.

The farmland is in hay production and the owners would like the town to continue the lease agreement with the farm that is to the south of this property. The wooded section of this parcel has been managed for forest products and can continue to be logged in the future.

It is recommended to purchase the entire parcel but to reserve the twenty-one acres south of the middle school for future municipal use. This section of the land is at the same elevation as the middle school. One never can predict the needs of the community fifty years down the road but when an opportunity to add land to existing municipal facilities arises, we should take advantage of it. The CT DEEP grant application would be for the remaining land.

Protection of this scenic view would continue to be an asset for those who go to Grandview Campground and Banner Estates. The "Grandview" has always been the agricultural fields and forested hillside that are part of this property.

Potential Schedule to discuss property vote and bond authorization.

Open Space Meeting Schedule

11/30/23 Public Information Meeting - Thursday – 7 pm – Meeting Rooms 1 & 2

12/6/23 Board of Selectmen Resolution – Wednesday - 7 pm – Meeting Room 1 & 2

12/11/23 Board of Finance Resolution – Monday – 7 pm Meeting Room 1 & 2

1/17/24 Town Meeting – Wednesday – 8 pm – Meeting Room 1 & 2

1/30/24 Referendum Vote