

TOWN OF WELLESLEY MA



SSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Press Release:

The Board of Selectmen, with the support of the School Committee, has initiated efforts to acquire the parcels at 818, 822 and 826 Worcester Street on behalf of the Town. All three parcels are adjacent to the Hardy School site and are located in the Single Residence 10 district. The Board believes that the purchase of these properties will substantially improve the long-term usefulness of the site to the Town by providing for a means of access and egress directly from Route 9 as well as adding over an acre of land. We are currently in discussions with the owners of these parcels and look forward to providing an update to the community as soon as we are able to.

The parcels at 818 and 822 Worcester Street have long been considered to be ideal additions to the property. The Town has recently learned that the owner of both 818 and 822 has agreed to sell both lots to a developer. Both the Board of Selectmen and School Committee see this as a unique and time-sensitive opportunity to acquire those two lots without displacing a homeowner. Furthermore, the Town always looks for opportunities to improve and expand Town-owned property for current and future municipal uses. We have begun discussions to determine whether or not we can reach an agreement on the value of the properties with the owner. If we are not able to do so, we may seek the authority from Town Meeting to take 818 and 822 Worcester Street by eminent domain.

The Board of Selectmen, with the support of the School Committee, has also agreed that if the Town acquires 818 and 822 Worcester Street, those properties and the connection to Route 9 would be greatly improved by the addition of 826 Worcester Street. We have begun discussions with the owner of 826 Worcester Street to see if a mutually acceptable agreement can be struck.

Together, the acquisition of these three parcels will offer the Town more flexibility to address traffic, safety and circulation issues associated with the site and create new opportunities for additional municipal uses. With the Town's recent acceptance into the MSBA process, the Board of Selectmen and School Committee will be seeking funding at a Special Town Meeting later this

spring to, among other work, conduct further comparative analyses of the Upham and Hardy sites. Both sites have a number of pros and cons that the Town must consider. As part of the MSBA process, the Town must follow required protocols and gain the approval of the MSBA Board in order to be eligible to receive MSBA reimbursement for approximately 30% of costs associated with constructing a new school, a substantial savings for Wellesley taxpayers. Whether or not the new school is constructed at the Hardy site, acquiring these three properties will substantially improve the long-term value of the property for future municipal uses.