

## Interim Report of the Town Land Committee

During the past eight months, the Town Land Committee has held public meetings, reviewed the Town's assessment records, researched title records in the Cumberland County Registry of Deeds, and inspected town-owned properties. The Committee has now completed its work on half of the properties owned by the Town of Baldwin. This interim report will describe all of the properties owned by the Town, provide recommendations to the selectmen for those properties on which the Committee has completed its work, list properties in Baldwin owned by the State of Maine, and summarize certain issues that arose during the Committee's review of the assessment records. The Committee will continue to study those town-owned properties for which no recommendation is listed below.

### I. Real Estate Owned by the Town of Baldwin

**Map 1, Lot 64:** small triangular parcel with frontage on both sides of School Street. The property abuts the both the Maine Central Railroad right-of-way and the former location of Route 113. This lot is near the westerly intersection of School Street and Route 113. Portions of the lot are wet, and the remainder is covered mostly with small pines. Trash and demolition debris have been dumped on the property.

*Recommendation:* that the selectmen put this property out to bid and convey it by quitclaim deed to the highest bidder.

**Map 4, Lot 11A:** two acre lot on Brown Road. This parcel is a former town dump. The low-lying portion of the property is wet and blanketed with invasive bamboo. The mound in the rear of the lot is wooded. Deed reference: Book 2524, Page 427 of the Cumberland County Registry of Deeds.

*Recommendation:* that the Town retain ownership of this lot. Because of its prior use as the town dump, this property is not marketable. A sale to a private party could create liability issues.

**Map 5, Lots 13, 13A, and 37:** three contiguous lots west of the Baldwin School totaling 62 acres. Lots 13 and 13A have extensive frontage on Route 113. The town garage is located on lot 37, and the new town cemetery is on lot 13A. Deed references: Book 6544, Page 294; Book 12586, Page 342.

**Map 5, Lot 15:** 135 acres northerly of Route 113 that was the town farm many years ago. The Town Farm Road, which is off the Deacon's Road, provides access. Other than a 3-4 acre field, this lot is wooded. There are a significant number of mature white pines, but the bulk of the trees appear to be new growth. Tote roads used for logging crisscross the property. A cellar hole is located beyond the locked gate. Deed reference: Book 448, Page 418 (April 20, 1878).

**Map 5, Lot 28:** small triangular parcel abutting Pigeon Brook Road and the Maine Central Railroad right-of-way. The lot is covered with small trees and brush, with large pine trees on the easterly boundary.

*Recommendation:* that the selectmen put this property out to bid and convey it by quitclaim deed to the highest bidder.

**Map 5, Lots 48-56:** Nine lots, each under an acre, on the Saco River southwesterly of Half Moon Pond. These lots are numbered 2 through 10 on “Don’s Deep Vale Area on the Saco” subdivision plan. A deeded right of way provides access from Pigeon Brook Road through the fields owned by Highland Farms. Deed reference: Book 6800, Page 246. The subdivision plan is recorded in Plan Book 73, Page 22.

**Map 5, Lot 12:** The Town owns the land on which the town office sits and the adjacent parking lot (there is no frontage on Route 113). Deed reference: Book 12046, Page 95. The remaining portion of this lot is owned by S.A.D. #55, but because the Baldwin School will not be used as a school after June 2015, the district intends to offer this property to the Town for a purchase price of just over \$71,000.

**Map 6, Lot 19:** small lot off Depot Road/Routes 5 & 117 that abuts the Maine Central Railroad right-of-way near the freight shed. The property is wooded. Six or seven abandoned metal tanks and an old truck are on the lot. Deed reference: Book 2641, Page 467.

*Recommendation:* that the selectmen put this property out to bid and convey it by quitclaim deed to the highest bidder.

**Map 7, Lot 11:** one acre parcel near Dug Hill Brook between Route 113 and Senator Black Road. The property abuts a former town road. The lot is wooded and contains a cellar hole and other remnants of a long-gone residence. No known right-of-way to the property exists. Deed reference: Book 2713, Page 413 (2<sup>nd</sup> full paragraph on page 414).

*Recommendation:* that the selectmen put this property out to bid and convey it by quitclaim deed to the highest bidder. The terms of sale and the deed should include a stipulation that no structures can be built on the property unless it becomes part of a lot that is at least two acres.

**Map 10, Lot 18:** 0.4 acre lot at the intersection of Douglas Hill Road and Bowie Road. This property contains a cellar hole, dug well, brush and small trees, and an infestation of Japanese knotweed. In 1993, the Town had a tentative agreement with Harvey Bliss, the abutter at that time, to convey this parcel to Harvey in exchange for an easement to Map 10, Lot 24 (see below) for the purpose of cutting and removing timber. The deal fell through because Harvey never signed the easement. According to the deed prepared by the Town in 1993, the lot is 120 feet by 140 feet. Deed reference: Book 3636, Page 166.

*Recommendation:* that the selectmen put this property out to bid and convey it by quitclaim deed to the highest bidder. The terms of sale and the deed should include a stipulation that no structures can be built on the property unless it becomes part of a lot that is at least two acres.

**Map 10, Lot 24:** 112 acres at the top of the Saddleback Hills located south of Douglas Hill Road and west of Saddleback Road. The property is heavily wooded and has seasonal views of

Mt. Washington. According to local lore, the proprietors never conveyed this lot to a private landowner. There is no known right-of-way to the property.

**Map 11, Lot 71:** a two acre parcel on Route 113 in West Baldwin village. A former town garage (originally a district school) is located on the property. The garage, which is in poor condition, is used by the Town and the fire department for storage. This lot is covered by pine trees and is wet in places. The boundaries are marked with iron pipes. Deed reference: Book 26741, Page 292.

*Recommendation:* that the selectmen sell this property by listing it with a real estate broker. Given the poor condition of the structure and the fact that the Town has significant frontage on Route 113 in a more central location, the committee believes that this property has little value to the Town. According to the deed description, the parcel is a conforming lot under the zoning ordinance. As a result, the committee believes that the property has substantial market value as a house lot or business location. In light of this value, the Committee recommends listing the property for sale with a real estate broker to maximize the return to the Town. Article 13 of the 2015 town meeting warrant authorizes the selectmen to dispose of real property in this manner.

**Map 13, Lots 24-26, 28, 29A, 31, 32, & 34:** these lots are located on or near Convene Road in the area known as Pantherville. Most are an acre or less, but lot 25 is 4.5 acres, lot 28 is 2.5 acres, and lot 34 is 12 acres. Lots 24, 31, and 32 have frontage on Convene Road. Lots 23A, 29, & 44 are not listed in the tax commitment book and may also be owned by the Town.

*Recommendation:* that the Town retain ownership of these lots. Because of ambiguous deed descriptions, the property lines are unclear, at best. Absent boundary surveys by a licensed professional, these parcels have minimal market value at this time. If the town later forecloses on additional properties in this area, an opportunity may arise to reconfigure or mark property lines without expensive boundary surveys.

**Map 14, Lot 52:** 4.63 acre lot on Sand Pond Road with frontage on Sand Pond. The town beach and a small boat launch are on the property. Deed reference: Book 21530, Page 229.

## II. State-Owned Land in the Town of Baldwin

**Map 1, Lot 1:** 33 acres on the Standish line.

**Map 1, Lot 58A:** 105 acres on the Saco River southwesterly of East Baldwin village. Access is from School Street.

**Map 2, Lot 2:** 560 acres near the Standish line abutting lot 7A.

**Map 2, Lot 7A:** two parcels on the Standish line totaling 575-600 acres. A portion of lot 7A abuts Map 1, Lot 1.

**Map 6, Lot 20:** small lot abutting the Maine Central Railroad right-of-way northerly of Depot Road/Routes 5 & 117.

III. Assessment Records Review

The Committee reviewed the assessment records to determine which properties were owned by the Town. During this review, the Committee noticed discrepancies between the tax maps and the 2014 tax commitment book. These discrepancies are listed in Exhibit A.

June 9, 2015

Committee Members: Kurt Olafsen, chair  
Vin Lawrence, secretary  
Josiah Pierce

Exhibit A

**A. Lots incorrectly listed as owned by the Town**

1. Map 3, Lot 5: the Town quitclaimed this lot to Maurice L. Douglas, Jr. about 15 years ago by deed recorded in Book 14597, Page 311. The property may still be owned by Maurice.

2. Map 6, Lot 23: the Committee found no evidence that this lot was ever owned by the Town. It is probably owned by the heirs of Judith Van Vliet of Woodstock, Maine, who died in April. Judith was an heir of Florence Locke.

**B. Lots not listed in the tax commitment book**

Map 1: Lots 26A; 32 (apparently part of the Norton House property, which is Lot 33); 53A; 76A; 82E; 82F, 91, 100, and 101B

Map 2: Lot 2 (owned by the State)

Map 3: Lot 20A

Map 4: Lots 1 (may be owned by Simonds) and 6

Map 6: Lots 19 (owned by the State (see above) and 34C

Map 8: Lot 8A

Map 9: Lots 6A; 39; and 41C & D (part of Woolley property; should not be shown as separate lots on tax map)

Map 10: Lots 2; 28A; and 38A

Map 11: Lots 9-2; 9-3; 37; and 49A (small pond)

Map 12: Lot 7 (may be owned by Maietta)

Map 13: Lots 23A; 29; and 44