



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

November 16, 2022

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Executive Director

Dennis J. McDonald
Supervising Property Agent
Connecticut Department of Transportation, Division of Rights of Way
2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington, CT, 06113
Dennis.McDonald@ct.gov

Re: Proposed land transfer - property consisting of four separate parcels along the easterly side of Ashley Falls Road and North Elm Street in North Canaan

Dear Mr. McDonald

The Council on Environmental Quality (“Council”) notes that the Department of Transportation (DOT) is proposing to transfer an approximately 27-acre property, consisting of four parcels, located along the easterly side of Ashley Falls Road and North Elm Street in North Canaan. The property is identified as undeveloped wooded land with ponds, streams, other water, or wetlands. In addition, the property is identified as containing or being within a 100-year flood zone and is subject to a Flood Management Certificate from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The Council’s review of the property using DEEP’s spatial screening data confirms this information and indicates that the property is also located within an area designated as forestland habitat.

Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Section 23-8(b) establishes a goal of “twenty-one per cent of the state's land area shall be held as open space land.” However, based on the Council’s independent review, a total of approximately 562,900 acres or 84 percent of the total statewide goal of 673,210 acres has been preserved to date. Given the state’s goals to protect forestland and preserve open space land, the Council recommends retaining the parcels noted above as open space by the state. Should the state decide not to retain the parcels as open space, the Council strongly recommends including restrictions on the future use of the parcels that would retain the undeveloped nature of the property.

Thank you for your consideration of the Council’s comments.

Sincerely,

Paul Aresta
Executive Director

c. Paul Hinsch, Connecticut OPM
Andrew Hoskins, Connecticut DEEP