



November 6, 2023

Board of Trustees
George Stevens Academy
23 Union Street
Blue Hill, ME 04614

Dear Trustees:

When GSA publicly committed to exploring liquidating all their real estate assets, with the exception of the main GSA campus, the Town of Blue Hill identified the merits of purchasing the property currently leased from GSA for our elementary and middle school, Blue Hill Consolidated School (BHCS). As the Town currently owns the BHCS school building and all improvements, the purchase of the land makes good sense.

We therefore are formally expressing the Town's interest in purchasing both the leased land and a substantial portion of the underlying parcel of land identified in the Town's tax maps as Map 28, Lot 78. According to a survey provided by GSA, the total size of the parcel is approximately 40.0 acres and GSA has expressed a desire to retain approximately 1.5 acres adjacent to High Street. Our offer is for the remaining acreage on the lot, approximately 38.5 acres, and is conditioned on inclusion of a deeded, perpetual right of way from High Street to the property similar to that described in Schedule A to the July 12, 1989 lease agreement between GSA and the Blue Hill School Committee.

The Town recognizes our public school's vital importance to the community and the purchase of this property would ensure the future of BHCS beyond the current 2088 lease expiration. The additional acreage could also be used for future town municipal projects, community gardens, recreational facilities for Blue Hill residents, and/or a variety of other future town needs.

A Town purchase of the property would safeguard the school grounds and provide land to support these additional municipal services, thus removing any necessity of a future "eminent domain" process.

The Town has been informed that the GSA Trustees are in possession of an appraisal of the subject property but, despite several requests from the Select Board, we have not been provided with access to that appraisal or the value reflected therein.

To establish the fair market value of the property, which is particularly difficult to do given the long term lease—without rent payments—of the portion associated with BHCS, the Select Board commissioned an appraisal by a well-established firm. Among other things, the appraiser noted several unusual features of the subject property:

- The 64+ year remaining life of the BHCS lease;
- The likelihood that extensive development of the property would involve significant road construction costs; and
- The limitations on access to the interior portion of the lot (that portion not subject to the lease); which is surrounded by private properties and the land subject to the lease, with the only access to High Street being a narrow strip of land adjacent to a steep bank and stream.

Based on the appraisal we obtained, the Select Board is pleased to offer, on behalf of the Town of Blue Hill, 100% of the appraised value (\$95,000) for the 38.5-acre parcel (together with deeded right-of-way access to High Street). This offer is subject to negotiation of a definitive agreement between GSA and the Town and will be subject to the affirmative vote of the Town's legislative body at a Town Meeting together with other customary terms and conditions.

We look forward to receiving the GSA Trustees' response.

Thank you for your consideration.

BLUE HILL SELECT BOARD

/s/ Ellen S. Best

On behalf of the Inhabitants of the Town of Blue Hill, Maine

Cc: Shelley Jackson, Head