

The University is hoping to buy the Holt-Harris property in McKownville. It is nearly 9.0 acres and borders Norwood Street, the University ring road and Waverly Place. The asking price is \$1.6 million. Its assessed value is \$597,900. It includes two houses (one of which is occupied) with extensive woods and a considerable hill which shields numerous McKownville homes from the University.

Members of the Board of the Association met with University President George Philip on Wednesday, June 29, 2011 to discuss the University plans for the Holt-Harris property. President Philip informed us that the University was interested in purchasing the property but only at a more reasonable price.

Other sources indicate that the University has tentative plans to construct a University gymnasium on the site. Other uses are also possible.

The Association Board members informed President Philip that the neighborhood would much rather see the property continue to be used for privately owned housing, and if further development is to occur, additional private housing would be the neighborhood's preference. The Holt-Harris site is zoned R-15 (residential, 15,000 square foot lots).

The Board members emphasized that when the University was constructed it promised that it would not come into the McKownville residential area to construct University buildings. Since 1960 McKownville, residents have banked their futures—and the value of their homes--on this promise. Less than a decade ago the University pulled back from buying 1257 Western Avenue (the empty lot across from the fire house) after the Association brought this promise, and other concerns, to the attention of the officers of the University .

The excessive noise, lights, parking, traffic, and storm water run-off that would result from University development were all cited by Board members as reasons the neighborhood preferred private housing development for the land. Board members noted that one house on the Holt-Harris property is historic and the loss of property tax revenue to the Town, the McKownville Fire District and other property tax using governments were additional reasons for preferring private housing development to University development

The Board encouraged President Philip to look to the Harriman campus land and buildings for University expansion—not McKownville residential property.

President Philip said that the University would do what it could to mitigate negative impacts on neighbors from University development if the University purchased and developed the Holt-Harris property.

While this is horrible news for McKownville, not every residence in McKownville will receive this e-mail (because not everyone in McKownville has sent their e-mail address to the Association). Therefore, it would be neighborly on this Independence Day if you would share this news with your neighbor and others on your email list and tell them that more news concerning the University and the Holt-Harris property undoubtedly will be forthcoming.

Don Reeb, president McKownville Improvement Association.