

9/30/11

From Don Reeb, President, McKownville Improvement Association, 5 Norwood Street, Albany NY 12203; 489-3909; donreeb@gmail.com

Survey to determine the desire of McKownville Residents to obtain a Special District Purchase of the 9.5 Acre "Holt-Harris" Property

The Holt-Harris property is a 9.5 acre parcel of forested rolling hills that is much like a woodland park. The property is at the end of Waverly Place, borders the upper East side of Norwood Street, and backs onto the perimeter road of U Albany's campus. Please help us determine whether there is sufficient communal will for a Special District Purchase of this land. A Special District Purchase would mean that those homeowners in the Special District designation (this could be a part of McKownville or all of it) would agree to an increase in their property taxes over a 10 year period. The Special District Purchase would be handled by the Town and the Town would own the property.

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What we expect to happen if the land is **not** protected.

1. U Albany could purchase it. U Albany would **NOT** be restricted by town zoning requirements. They could do whatever they wanted with the property. This could destroy the quiet residential character of the surrounding neighborhood if a parking lot, gymnasium or dorm was built there.
2. It could be purchased by a private developer. In this case, they would be subject to town zoning laws. The property is currently zoned residential. Subdivision regulations limit the site to two homes.
3. Increased traffic and traffic noise on Western Avenue and nearby streets. If U Albany purchased it, the University ring road might be moved to go around the edge of the property cutting deep into the neighborhood.
4. Increased flooding in the basements of McKownville due to the cutting of mature trees and undergrowth on the property.
5. Loss of a gorgeous piece of property with its beautiful Norwegian Pines, rolling forested hills, and Pine Bush sand dunes.
6. Loss of an historic home associated with the Great Western Turnpike.

What we expect to gain for purchasing the land.

1. Obtain a beautiful piece of property with the creation of a park-like preserve for town residents for walks in the woods and the enjoyment of wildlife.
2. Preserve the tranquility of McKownville as it now exists.
3. No increase of flooding at least due to the loss of trees and undergrowth on this property.
4. Protection of the land from development so that we would never have to worry about it again.
5. A buffer would be kept between McKownville and U Albany.

Please let us know your sentiments about obtaining this land for the town by answering the following questions. Answers are anonymous except for street name.

1. I live on _____ Street in McKownville.
2. Please check one.
 - a. _____ I am in favor of a Special District Purchase of the "Holt-Harris" property.
 - b. _____ I am **not** in favor of a Special District Purchase of the "Holt-Harris" property.
3. If your answer to # 2 was yes, what is the **maximum** you would be willing to have your taxes increased per year for 10 years in order for us to obtain the "Holt-Harris" property through a Special District Purchase? (\$30, \$50, \$75, \$100, \$125, \$150, other) _____

We will come by on _____ and pick up your survey. You may also mail it to Don Reeb at the above address. Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.