

February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Proposal to purchase neighboring property, Illington Road

The Saunders family, residing at 410 Illington Road, proposes the purchase of the adjacent property, currently owned by the Town of Yorktown. The property was obtained by the town through a foreclosure process from the previous private owner.

The lot is a long, narrow piece of land, sandwiched in between the Taconic State Parkway and Illington Road. It has a stream (which continues from the Saunders property) leading to a pond on the lot, which continues to the Croton reservoir. On the pond are the remnants of a dam and the spillway from a water wheel, believed to have been a sawmill in the 1800's. Just off Illington Road, and also on the property in question, is a ~ 40' by 20' cemetery, surrounded by a stone wall. Dating to the 1700's, the plot is the burial site of the Gerow family, whose decedents are supportive of our purchase of the property and have previously written to the Town of Yorktown.

Over the years, the property has been the dumping ground for major trash and construction refuse, including pools of cement dumped by trucks, as well as heavy materials left in the woods. Silt from the parkway has become trapped behind fallen trees, causing the streams to flood parts of the woods, killing off large trees.

3 large willow trees collapsed in to the pond, blocking the water flow, causing the dam to finally give way a few years ago.

During the 1990's, the 4 front adult tombstones were stolen from the cemetery, leaving only one adult stone which had fallen over and was covered by debris, as well as the small, initialed markers of children.

At our own expense, we have had 4 replica tombstones made from photos and drawings obtained from the Gerow family, having them installed and re-consecrated on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2003. In addition, we have paid to remove the pools of concrete and trash, and had plantings placed to shield the cemetery.

The proposal is for us to purchase the property at \$10,000.00, with the hope that we can continue to add remaining tombstones as their details are discovered (2 more are already confirmed), and repair and maintain the dam and the streams, additionally ensuring that the lot is not a dumping ground for trash.

Attached please find recent photos taken of the dam and the cemetery, as well as a short film made at the request of the town board, showing the property more broadly.

Many thanks.

Kind regards,

*Marcia Saunders*

Marcia Saunders

