

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Conservation Easement Review Board has received and reviewed Milltowne Plaza Inc.'s application to the Farms and Forests Conservation Program for the sale of 9 parcels of land to the Town of Bethlehem (tax parcel IDs 109.00-1-33.1, 109.00-1-31, 109.00-3-4.1, 109.00-3-10, 109.00-3-9, 109.10-1-129.1, 121.00-3-8.1, 122.00-1-1.11, 122.00-1-2.11.); and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Town Board Resolution establishing the Farms and Forests Capital Reserve Fund provides procedures, which includes a recommendation to be provided from the Conservation Easement Review Board to the Town Board; and

WHEREAS, the Conservation Easement Review Board of the Town of Bethlehem has determined that the 300+ acres of land currently owned by Milltowne Plaza, Inc. in the town meets all four of the Town's core Conservation Values. This determination is based on a completed Bethlehem Open Space Conservation Criteria Assessment, prepared by the Open Space Coordinator, and reviewed by the Conservation Easement Review Board at its July 18, 2022 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the purchase of the subject parcels will help to preserve community character, including, but not limited to: active working farmland, agricultural soils and farmland, locally significant historic and cultural resources; scenic views, vistas and landscapes; and areas vulnerable to erosion;

WHEREAS, the subject parcels include: lands adjacent to or containing streams and tributaries, freshwater emergent wetlands, lands adjacent to preserves or public/private recreational facilities; lands adjacent to roads used by cyclists; and also contiguous lands that serve as viable wildlife greenways and travel pathways;

WHEREAS, the subject parcels include: forest and woodlands greater than five acres; forested lands or grasslands adjacent to streams; lands that support habitat for native species of both flora and fauna;

WHEREAS, the subject parcels include: lands important for the protection of water quality; wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, tributaries of the Hudson River that flow through town, as the health of these streams and the greater watershed contribute to the overall health of the Hudson River Estuary Ecosystem.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Milltowne Plaza Farmland Preservation project, with land characteristics and conservation values as described above; is consistent with the purpose for which the Farms and Forests Capital Reserve Fund was established; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conservation Easement Review Board recommends the use of the Farms and Forests Capital Reserve Fund for the Milltowne Plaza Farmland Preservation project.

The motion to provide a positive recommendation to the Town Board for use of the Farms and Forests Capital Reserve Fund to purchase the Milltowne Plaza Farmland Preservation project and document the land's consistency with the Town's conservation criteria in a Resolution was made by CERB Chair Francis Sheehan, was seconded by Stuart Lyman, and duly adopted by the following vote:

AYES: 5

NOES: 0

ABSENT: 0

DATED: 07/18/2022