



Trustee Special Meeting Minutes

Date: January 7, 2026

Time: 7:00 PM

In Attendance: Peter Griffin, Chair; Lisa Thornton, Vice Chair; Rich Parow, Trustee; Neil Fallon, Trustee; Cheryl Haas, Searles Coordinator; Ross McLeod, BOS Representative

Excused: Frank Merchel, Trustee; Michael Mazalewski, Secretary, E Daigle, Trustee, Jim Bull, Trustee

Agenda:

- Presentation by Ryan DeJoy- Windham Woods

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM

Windham Woods Presentation:

- Ryan DeJoy provided copies of the Windham Woods (Rt.111) site plan as well as an aerial view of the property/surroundings, and an artist's rendition of the Dome project.
- Mr. DeJoy shared that the reason he had requested this meeting was to develop a mutually beneficial relationship between Windham Woods and Searles School & Chapel. He stated the following benefits Windham Woods could provide:
 1. Snow removal
 2. Landscaping services
 3. Shared parking
 4. Access to Windham Woods property to set up tents for Searles large outdoor events
 5. Windham Woods would encourage their clientele to book events at Searles.
- Cheryl and the trustees provided response and clarification to the aforementioned possible "benefits".
 1. Cheryl explained that Searles is a Town owned building therefore all snow removal and landscape work are done under the town contracted services.
 2. Parking: It was explained that in most cases Searles has sufficient parking on its own property as the limitations on event size dictates the need for parking.
 3. It was also explained that most renters book events at Searles in order to access the building's unique interior. Very few tent events are booked.
 4. Whereas, Windham Woods is a 501c3 organization it was unclear if referred renters would book as a private entity or under the auspices of a 501c3 client.
- Lengthy discussion ensued regarding increased traffic concerns. Mr. DeJoy stated that use of the dome would typically be during low traffic times i.e. during the 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM school day. Dome event rentals would occur after 5:00 PM and the traffic flow would be going into the property not out to the street. Weekend and summer rentals would generate larger events which would require more extensive traffic remediation. Mr. DeJoy offered the following possible solutions:
 1. Install a traffic light at Windham Woods expense.
 2. Provide a police detail during Windham Woods dome events
 3. Provide additional egress options through neighboring properties e.g. Old School, Sharma property, and Searles Chapel Rd.



- Ross spoke to the lack of beneficial connectivity in Windham. He encouraged providing connectivity between Searles and Windham Woods BUT that this is regulated through use of a gate. This gate could be closed when Searles is holding events.
- Rich offered to work with Windham Woods to address landscape needs on property borders.
- Mr. DeJoy shared his plan to follow the approval procedure i.e. apply for required variance, address the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen, address the TRO, etc.
- Mr. DeJoy solicited the Trustees support of the dome project. Peter advised that the discussions of today's meeting would need to be shared at the next Searles Trustee monthly meeting. Whereupon, Peter will contact Mr. DeJoy to report the trustee's sentiment.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Thornton
Searles School & Chapel Board of Trustees, Vice Chairman