

Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts Long Range Property Planning FAQ

Why are you selling a property that is part of the council's important history?

Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts' Board of Directors has a mandate to ensure the best use of our resources for maximum benefit to the girls we serve. While change is always difficult, we have a responsibility as stewards of the Girl Scout movement in eastern Massachusetts to ensure the long-term fiscal health and marketability of our council. The findings of the Long Range Property Planning task force are helping us make these informed, albeit difficult decisions. The Board of Directors conducted in-depth, thoughtful and frank discussions prior to voting to divest these properties. Knowing full well how difficult this news would be for many in our council, we did not make these decisions lightly. We are committed to maintaining our council's sense of history and tradition and will announce plans to celebrate and document the importance of these properties to girls and adults in our council.

Why didn't we have a chance to participate in the decision-making process?

The Long Range Property Planning task force included volunteers, alumnae and staff to ensure as inclusive a process as possible and that all perspectives were represented. The Board of Directors' in-depth, thoughtful and frank discussions prior to voting took into consideration how difficult the sale of any property would be for many in our council. However, it is the Board's responsibility to ensure the best use of our resources for maximum benefit to the girls we serve. Based on the thorough data and analysis presented by the Long Range Property Planning group, and taking into consideration range of perspectives on this issue, the Board was able to make informed decisions that ensure the highest quality program delivery to girls, protect our council's interests, advance our mission, and ensure our sustainability.

What are the council's plans for serving girls in this area when the properties are sold?

The Long Range Property Planning task force factored in the usage and locations of all council properties as part of its evaluation process and recommendations. That enabled the Board of Directors to give significant consideration to whether there was a nearby property to accommodate programming and property usage by girls and adults from our council. For example, we have already begun offering programs at Veasey Park in Groveland, MA, and will continue to look for other quality venues to host programming and events.

What will the properties be used for after they are sold?

One outcome of the property appraisal process is that each property's value and potential uses have been assessed. In each case, the professional appraiser has assessed whether a property would have appeal to conservation groups and if so, whether such usage would net our council market value for the property. Whenever possible, we will place high consideration on offers from groups that would maintain the property for public use, allowing for continued use by Girl Scouts. We will also make it a priority to seek usage that is respectful of and consistent with the current character of the neighborhood.

When will the sale be completed and will we have an opportunity to visit the properties before that happens?

We will make plans to market the two properties — The Center in Rowley and Paradise in Beverly — that the Board has approved for sale. It may take up to two years for these sales to be completed. We will identify opportunities to host property visits before the sales close.