

January 30, 2021

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BY EMAIL

Mr. Jeremy Martin
Planning and Development Director
c/o Code & Planning Office
PO BOX 1207
Camden, ME 04843

Re: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – CONVENTION CENTER at SAGAMORE FARMS

Dear Jeremy,

I write today to update my Letter of Interest for Sagamore farms sent on September 20, 2020. I continue to have interest in a public/private partnership to develop a convention center and event venue at the Town's Sagamore Farms parcel.

I am interested in exploring a scenario in which we identify a suitable location at Sagamore Farms and enter into an agreement to reconstruct Hedges hall there with all necessary parking and infrastructure.

As I mentioned previously, in August 2020 I purchased the salvage rights to the Hedges Hall Convention Center (formerly Guinley Hall) at Point Lookout in Northport. Rather than salvage the building, I decided to deconstruct and store the building, which would then be re-erected onto a pad at a different location.

Deconstruction is an area of construction and redevelopment that has gained renewed attention in recent year, as concerns about sustainability and carbon footprint have risen in the public discourse. Most deconstruction efforts appear aimed at salvages as high a percentage of component systems as possible. Moving buildings is nothing new. Amazing feats have been accomplished in this area. However in every case I have seen, the destination site has been identified and preparations have been made to receive the structure to be moved. What is so unusual about the Hedges Hall project is the demolition of a building of this scale that is less than 25 years old, is not functionally obsolete, and generally is in excellent condition.

In our case, my team of fourteen and I are carefully labeling, dismantling, and palletizing the electrical, mechanical, and plumbing components. We are sectioning the structural elements into components that can be moved by forklift, to make transportation and storage easier. I have assumed it will take three three years to find a location and I have planned on storing the materials for at least that long. We are approximately 1/3 through the effort, and have removed and stored all of the wood floors, carpets, all interior millwork, and speakers, projectors, room dividers, and most of the lights and ceiling

tiles. We are now dismantling the HVAC system, sprinkler system, and have begun sectioning the structure.

I did not have a location in mind for re-erection when I started this process. While the building could be used for other purposes such as retail or commercial/industrial space, I think its highest and best use would be to use it for an event center except without permanent foodservice. The best location would be a scenic one close to a major city where year-round occupancy/utilization would be highest.

I am cognizant of the challenges presented in relocating the hall. Despite several efforts, the Point Lookout property did not work out as a public-facing resort and event center. There are probably a number of reasons for this, but my guess is that the ratio of rooms to assembly space is not appropriate for a hotel. My sense however is that the closing of Point Lookout is a loss for the region. Hedges Hall in particular has been the location for many weddings and other special events. While I see the development as a challenge, I see real community benefits to relocating Hedges Hall in Camden.

For one, an event facility of this size does not exist in the Town, to my knowledge. This would be a great venue for weddings and other events that support local service businesses – whether hotels, entertainment, or restaurants & catering. Secondly, it would support cultural institutions, such as conferences. Destination events like CIFF and the Pop-Tech Conference have required facilities to host their activities. Thirdly, the project would add to the tax base. While it would not have permanent staff as it did in Northport, it would contribute to employment through construction, maintenance, and event staffing. It would further add to local and regional employment through a broader economic development strategy (supporting local businesses and special events as a conference center).

I see no conflict between the bike trailer, solar farm, and event center. I expect that the event center would be in use year-round, with a wedding business running from May through November that would be the anchor use. I think the access to the site is adequate, subject to some improvements and widening of the farm road. I believe that septic can be dealt with on-site. The building would want to be located on the higher portion of the site, and we would need to enhance and then maintain a viewshed from the Hall.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Respectfully Submitted,



Michael J. Mullins