

September 27, 2022

Katie S. Dykes, Commissioner
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-5127

Dear Commissioner Dykes:

On behalf of the Andover Planning & Zoning Commission, I would like to submit this letter of support for the Town of Andover's application for funding through the State of Connecticut's Open Space and Watershed Protection Program administered by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. More particularly, the Town of Andover is seeking to purchase 162 acres of forest land situated along Shoddy Mill Road, currently owned by the Laudano family, to augment the town's existing open space inventory.

The acquisition of this particular property is consistent with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development, the Capital Region Council of Governments and the CG3 Climate Change Initiative.

The property is situated within what is referred to as the Western Highlands Open Space Corridor, which was identified as a priority in Chapter 8 "Protecting Natural Resources – An Open Space Plan" of the town's 2015 Plan for the Conservation and Development, the town's most current such plan.

In addition, at the time Andover's 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development was prepared, a survey was sent out to its citizenry so as to identify priority goals among local residents. Two of the three goals for which residents were willing to pay for in the form of additional taxes, open space and the protection of the environment, were identified.

The town's Plan of Conservation and Development specifically identified the preservation of 21% of the town's total area. The acquisition of the additional 162 acres of land with funds in part provided through the state's Open Space and Watershed Protection Program would bring the town significantly closer to that goal. Andover would not be able to afford this open space purchase without the financial assistance provided by this grant.

We look forward to working with you toward our mutual goal of open space preservation.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

W. Jed Larson, Chairperson
Planning & Zoning Commission