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Please support granting deed to Wilson & Sapiro for Gilmanton land to fix mistake

ed@laconiadailysun.com Feb 20, 2018

To The Daily Sun,

I urge Gilmanton voters to approve of the upcoming Town Meeting warrant article asking if the town would convey a deed to Graham Wilson and Virginia Sapiro confirming their ownership of part of Tax Parcel 420-73.

This makes sense for several reasons. First, the proposed deed simply fixes an unintentional mistake made 21 years ago. In 1997, the town conveyed this land back to its owner at the time, once the town received payment for back taxes. However, that deed's description of the land didn't correctly recite the land's earlier history of ownership, creating a technical problem that Wilson and Sapiro recently discovered. The quitclaim deed that they now seek from the town will correct that flaw and confirm their current ownership.

A rectangular advertisement with a black header and a white body. The header contains the text "Tax Tips are Back" in white, bold, sans-serif font. The body contains the text "Advertise Every Tuesday in The Laconia Daily Sun" in black, serif font, with "The Laconia Daily Sun" in a larger, stylized font. Below this is the date "Jan. 15-April 9" in black, sans-serif font. At the bottom is a red button with the text "CLICK HERE" in white, sans-serif font.

**Tax Tips
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Advertise Every Tuesday in
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Second, it's only fair that the town make this fix. Over many decades, various owners have paid to acquire this land, have rightfully used it as their own, and have paid property and timber taxes on it to the town. The town's tax maps and records have consistently shown this tract to be in private ownership and use.

Third, the town's confirming deed will enable Wilson and Sapiro to proceed with their conservation plans for this 21-acre tract. Consisting mostly of a beaver swamp with no deeded access to it, this land is a "hole in the doughnut" surrounded by other land they own. Once this legal problem is fixed, Wilson and Sapiro plan to donate the development rights on this land (a "conservation easement") to the Five Rivers Conservation Trust, a local land trust with other holdings in Gilmanton. This will benefit Gilmanton by keeping the land available for forest management, wildlife, and recreation, and the land will remain on the local tax rolls.

The selectmen endorse approval of this article, and I hope you will, too.

Tom Howe

Gilmanton Iron Works