

State of Vermont Military Department
Testimony to Senate Appropriations Committee
January 25, 2024

Waterbury Armory Disposition Plan:

Waterbury Armory became available for disposition in the spring of 2023 after the Artillery Unit was transferred to the Massachusetts National Guard through the divestiture process. Just as VTNG was preparing to put the armory on the market for public sale, the July floods occurred, and the Administration asked VTNG to allow FEMA to use the site for claims intake. The FEMA operation continued through mid-October 2023. Once FEMA moved out, VTNG notified the Governor's staff of the intent to proceed with putting the armory up for sale unless there was another requirement. At this point VTNG was told by the Administration of BGS' intent to purchase the property for the appraised value of \$890K.

Use of Proceeds from Waterbury Armory sale:

To purchase land in Franklin County.

The VTNG has a long-term plan to build four regional super-armories strategically located around the state. One of them will be in Franklin County. The original planning cycle was to pursue a normal Military Construction (MILCON) cycle of 7-10 years.

Why the need to expedite the receipt of proceeds from sale of Waterbury Armory:

During a recent effort to accomplish some much-needed upgrades to the St Albans armory pending an out-year MILCON project, the Guard was informed of the identification of PCB laden paint through out the building. Further investigation determined it would cost approximately \$5M to remediate the building before renovations could occur. This effort would require a 50% state match. As a predominantly federal entity the VTNG is not eligible for federal mitigation/remediation dollars. Additionally, the building is on the historical register and probably cannot be demolished. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the VTNG and the State to sell the building to a party that has access to the federal mitigation dollars and is better suited to rehabilitate the armory for commercial use.

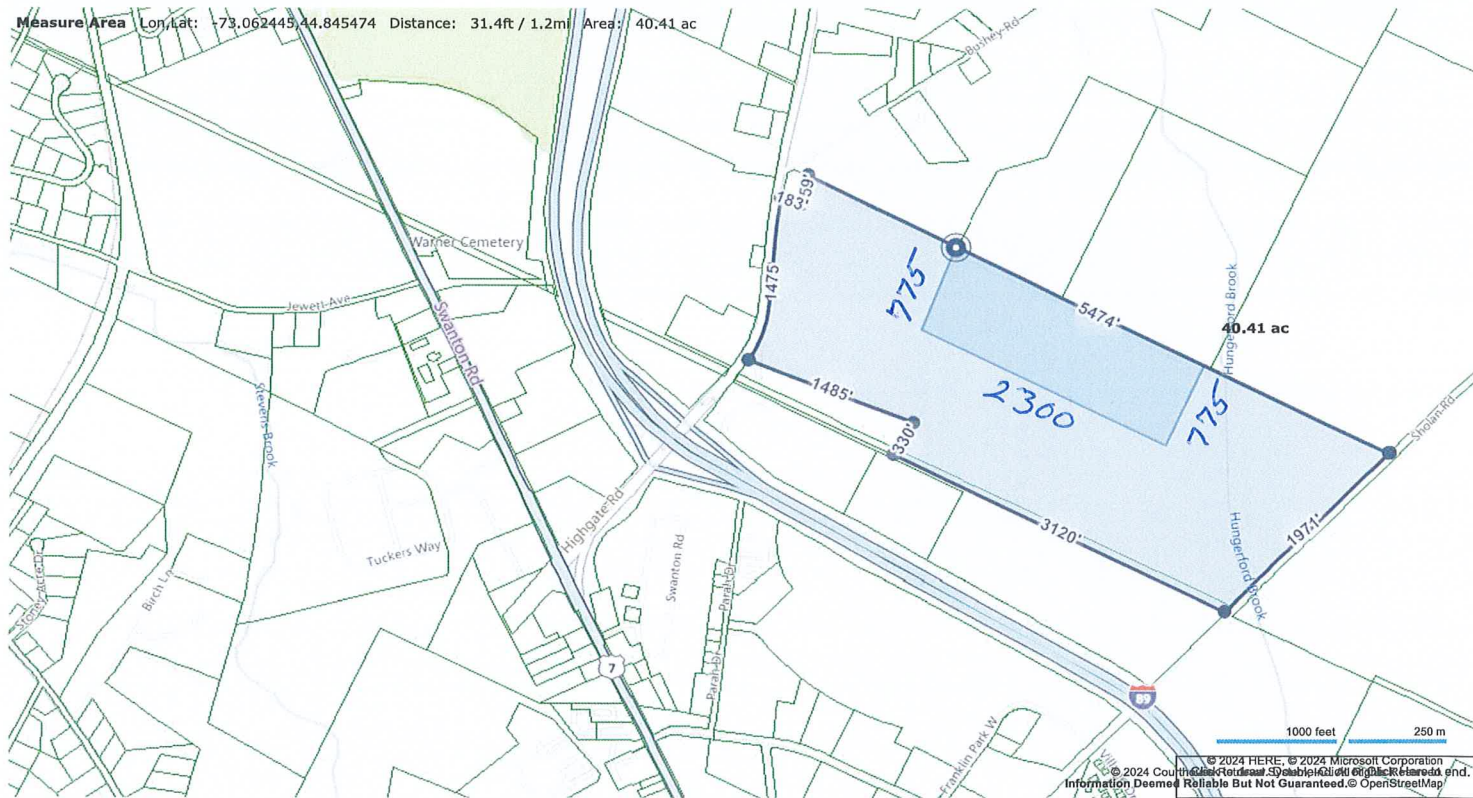
This has prompted the VTNG to pursue a congressional add/earmark in the DoD MILCON budget to accelerate the construction timeline by several years. To be able to successfully compete for the proposed earmark, VTNG needs to own the property or be well along in the process for the proposed project to be viable at the time it is submitted to the budget committee.

Backing into a timeline, VTNG needs at least 60 days to execute a purchase once a sales agreement is signed. It is anticipated that earmarks will be due to the Senate Budget committee around April 15th. This means a negotiated sales agreement must be in place by February 15th at the latest. Therefore, the Military Department needs to have 100% of committed funds available by that date.

Land Purchase Price:

The asking price for the land the Military Department is currently pursuing is \$1.1M for a 40-acre parcel. The property is directly adjacent to land purchased by AOT and is the same price per acre as negotiated with AOT. The Military Department currently has \$190K from the sale of Lyndonville Field Maintenance facility, which, along with \$890K from the Waterbury Armory sale, makes the pending purchase viable. The Military Department is in a position to be able to sign a purchase agreement immediately, pending funding.

Measure Area Lon, Lat: -73.062445, 44.845474 Distance: 31.4ft / 1.2mi Area: 40.41 ac



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