



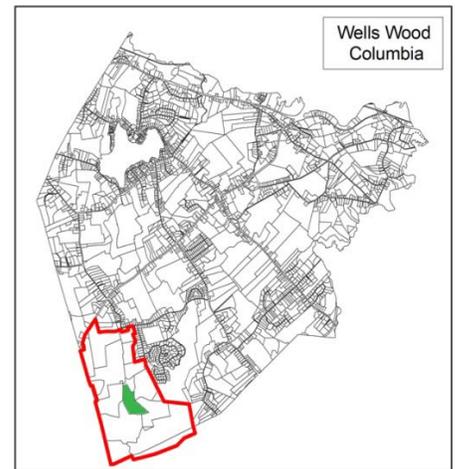
## Columbia Special Town Meeting

Thursday June 1, 2017 at 7:00 pm  
Yeomans Hall, 323 Route 87

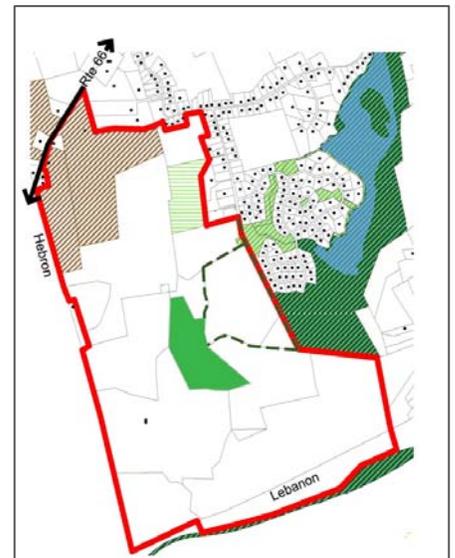
**Clause 1:** That the Town purchase for \$105,000 an undeveloped parcel of land consisting of 57+/- acres identified as parcel 3 on Map 43 by the Town Assessor from the title owners thereof once all requirements and conditions contained in the resolution of the Columbia Board of Selectmen adopted at its Meeting on March 21, 2017 have been addressed, and that such purchase price be taken from the Town's Land Acquisition Fund established pursuant to Town Ordinance 8-13 and Section 7-13lr of the Connecticut General Statutes as set forth as line item #20-6388-013 in the Town Budgets for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2017 and beginning July 1, 2017.

**Information:** The Oberlander property (shown in green on the maps) is in the Wells Woods area of Columbia. The land in Wells Woods was originally sold as farmland in the 1800s by Mr. Wells of Boston, one by one the parcels were later abandoned because the land could not support a family. At one time there were 12 homes, a schoolhouse and several town roads connecting them. This property has many stone walls outlining former farm fields, house and barn foundations and remnants of a saw mill on the brook.

Columbia has a detailed Open Space Plan with specific goals and criteria to protect valued natural and cultural resources for future generations. The Wells Wood area (outlined in red) is a focus area for preservation as it is over 1,275 acres of unfragmented forest lands, significant wetlands and wildlife habitats.



**Opportunity:** The Oberlander property, in the center of the Wells Woods focus area, can be accessed using former town roads that were discontinued in the early 1900s, the Town still owns these narrow strips of land (shown as green dashed lines on the map). This property would provide passive recreation for hiking and bird- and nature-watching with connections to other nearby trails. This property also is important to protect for environmental reasons: a town-wide wetlands evaluation found wetlands on this property classed as an "outstanding" wildlife habitat with "outstanding" ecological integrity.



**Finances:** The purchase price is based on an appraised value of \$105,000. The property has been assessed for property tax purposes at full value as the owners have never requested the reduced assessment permitted by Connecticut State's PA-490. Any outstanding property taxes and interest will be deducted from the purchase price at the closing. The purchase will be funded by Capital Project #20-6388-013 Land Acquisition, which has an available balance of \$264,001.