

FAQ's for KTW

What is "Keep the Woods"?

"Keep the Woods" aims to **preserve and protect valuable open space and watershed land in the Farmington Valley**. It formed recently because an extremely important open space and watershed, the Ethel Walker School Land, is threatened. The school needs money for its endowment and proposes to develop the property into a subdivision.

Why is this land so important?

One critical reason is that it **sits atop a drinking water aquifer serving several towns**. Every day we drink recent runoff from this land. Because this land is undeveloped, **our water is pristine**.

In addition, the land connects to other smaller pieces of protected open space, forming a **major wildlife habitat and for recreational resource**. It is an outstanding asset for the school, the Town, and the Farmington Valley region.

What is this fundraiser about?

The goal of this fundraiser is to support the Town and the First Selectman in their efforts to **preserve the Ethel Walker property in its undeveloped state**. We aim to work in conjunction with the Trust for Public Land, a national non-profit, that will negotiate and seek grant funding to help make this possible. The **Trust for Public Land** does not charge a fee, but asks for a donation.

Why is this important for Simsbury?

Simsbury has a long legacy of caring about and preserving open space; this property is **#1 on the list of important properties to preserve**. We have preserved some wonderful family farms in town, with similar town-wide support; they offer something different than this property does.

This is the **last major piece of open space in Simsbury**, With the backing of the Trust for Public Land, many environmental groups, and private individuals, we can secure it for the future of both the school and the town. **The school doesn't want a subdivision on their campus, but they do need money for their endowment.**

Many towns wish they could rewind the clock and have such a wonderful town recreational asset for everyone to enjoy. In this case, our community could enjoy the trails and the wildlife, while maintaining the long term quality of our drinking water. **We are extremely fortunate to have this. Why would we want to risk degrading it?**

How will the town pay for this?

Most likely by a **bond voted for in a referendum**. The bond can be serviced yearly by an open space allocation fund. **In the long run the town will come out ahead** by reducing the load on our school and other municipal services - all while securing the quality and quantity of our water supply.

In contrast, taxes from residential development do not cover the cost of required town services. Residential development has never been shown to reduce taxes.

What can I do?

Donate an auction item or donate money (tax deductible).

Attend the fundraiser.

Join our email list.

Attend community meetings.

Contact the First Selectman Tom Vincent (658-3230).

Most importantly, **spread the word!**

Give Preservation a Chance!