

Charitable trust investigators in NH, Mass to determine future of Meredith's Camp Menotomy, potential sale

Girl Scout council's needs at odds with deed restrictions

By Thomas P. Caldwell, for The Laconia Daily Sun - Jun 3, 2026



A historical photograph shows earlier Girl Scouts enjoying watersports at Camp Menotomy in Meredith. (Courtesy photo)

MEREDITH — Former campers have joined the Meredith Neck and Islands Alliance, and other Lakes Region residents, in opposing the proposed sale of the Camp Menotomy property on Meredith Neck Road to a developer who hopes to build lakeside residences there. Beyond

seeking to preserve the pristine nature of the 95-acre shoreline property, opponents point to the original deed, recorded in 1962, and preserving its function as a campground.

The Camp Menotomy Trust, a tax-exempt Massachusetts organization which owns the property, has been leasing it to Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts for \$1 a year. The Girl Scouts no longer intend to rent the property, due to declining interest since the COVID-19 pandemic, and because of the rustic nature of the campground.

The terms of the deed specify the property can be sold only if the Arlington Girl Scouts or their successor, or another organization, does not wish to “hire the camp grounds for camping purposes, and if no other organization can be found to utilize the site for camping purposes.” The proceeds of any sale must benefit the Girl Scouts of Arlington, Massachusetts.

In the trustees’ most recent filing with the Internal Revenue Service, dated Nov. 13, 2025, the trust lists total assets of \$102,119, valuing the land and buildings at \$87,000.

“The Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, Inc. is the successor in interest to the supported organization (trust beneficiary) named in the governing document, which was the Girl Scouts of Arlington,” according to the form. “The organization provides access to a campsite to the supported organization for a \$1 per year triple net lease. Such lease has been determined to have a fair market value of at least \$300,000.”

A triple net lease is an agreement where the tenant agrees to cover both the rent and any ongoing expenses on a property.

Attorney Adam Hamel of the McLane Middleton law firm, representing the Meredith Neck and Islands Alliance, wrote to the Massachusetts Charitable Trust Unit to oppose the sale, pointing out that Eric Carlson, the chief executive officer and owner of Camp Quinebarge, had made a triple net lease offer which would fulfill the terms of the deed.

Carlson offered to operate “a for-profit or non-profit residential summer camp” for children, with the trust having “no costs or management responsibility, as it did when the previous lessors operated camps on the Property for the past approximately 63 years.”

The offer included paying \$110,000 per year in rent, and providing annual “camperships” for Arlington Girl Scouts or girls from Arlington, Massachusetts, giving it an upper value of \$600,000 a year. Carlson also pledged to make several million dollars worth of capital improvements on the property to support modern residential camping, and assume responsibility for real estate taxes.

Prior to receiving Carlson’s offer, the Camp Menotomy Trust had entered into an \$18 million sales agreement with Jeremy Martin, principal owner of Lakes Region Design Group. Martin's plans call for construction of seven lakeside residences on the property. Scott Tranchemontagne, speaking for Martin, told The Laconia Daily Sun in 2024, “The buyer is aware of the regulatory

requirements, and Thomas Donovan, the former director of Charitable Trusts at the NH Attorney General's Office, is working with the government officials on the buyer's behalf, to satisfy the applicable procedural requirements to close the sale. The buyer is committed to close the transaction and proceed with the proposed low-density, environmentally sensitive project."

That sale has been held up while the New Hampshire and Massachusetts charitable trust units review the deed, and its implications for the sale.

Mary Schmidt and Julie Braverman Bruno of the Boston law firm Verrill Dana LLP filed a petition with the probate court in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, to support the sale, on behalf of the Camp Menotomy Trust. They wrote the trustees "fully considered the possibility of finding another non-profit organization to rent or operate the camp," but the two professionals they hired to look into it "indicated that the poor condition of the camp and the need for substantial capital investment would be a barrier to such a rental."

In making his offer, the document reads, Martin, "noted that 'the camp improvements suffer from functional obsolescence and physical deterioration,'" and estimated the cost of making improvements to render it competitive with other area camps would be \$8.5 million.

The attorneys also cited real estate appraiser Wesley Reeks' review of recent sales of New Hampshire camps, which he found offer "superior dining halls, recreation buildings/structures, other support buildings, plumbing/shore facilities, etc."

The trustees' memorandum continued, "The Trustees realized that the sale of the Property for fair market value would result in approximately \$800,000 of annual income ... factoring in conservative investments of the sale proceeds and a modest four to five percent return."

Emphasizing that "the express purpose of the Trust is to benefit the Girl Scouts of Arlington," the filing stated, "The Trustees, in consultation with the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, agreed that it would not be feasible to lease the Property to another camp operator without significant detriment to the Beneficiary, the girl scouts of Arlington, and therefore, decided to sell the Property."

They noted Martin offered to reserve 30% of the total acreage for walking trails and conservation.

"After the P&S was signed," the court document states, "there have been multiple local newspaper articles regarding the sale, which included the sale terms and the terms of the Trust. During the negotiations with Mr. Carlson, the trustees learned that the leadership of five different camp associations in the northeast were directly contacted and informed of the pending sale and the terms of the Trust. As of this time, no other camps have reached out to the trustees with interest in leasing or purchasing the Property."

Responding to the trustees' petition, Hamel argued, "they rely upon the circular and unsupportable argument that leasing the property as a camp is infeasible based upon an increased property tax bill — a situation that they themselves created and that would be abated.

"The Trustees entered into the proposed purchase and sale agreement prior to placing the Property on the market."

He said, with one camp interested in leasing the property, "to fulfill the express purpose of the Trust, and to protect the interest of the intended beneficiaries — Arlington Girl Scouts and Arlington girls — the Commonwealth should oppose the Petition and should require the Trustees to meet with Mr. Carlson and/or make a serious and earnest effort to locate other interested camp operators."

He further argues the trustees' efforts to demonstrate infeasibility ignore the paragraph stating the property cannot be sold unless no other organization can be found to use the site for camping. "Pursuant to the express language of Paragraph 10, the Trustees have a fiduciary duty to respond to that triple-net lease offer by negotiating with Mr. Carlson (or any other camp) to agree upon a 'reasonable rental' amount.

"The Petition fails to cite any support for allowing the Trustees to abandon that mission given that Mr. Carlson seeks to step into the shoes of the previous lessors."