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A Berkshire Mall tax windfall could lessen local costs for Lanesborough safety complex

By Larry Parnass, The Berkshire Eagle
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Some taxes recovered by the Baker Hill Road District due to the sale of the Berkshire Mall will be offered to the town of Lanesborough by the district to help pay for a new site for a public safety complex.

EAGLE FILE PHOTO

LANESBOROUGH – When Lanesborough residents gather this fall to consider a land purchase, it will come with a sweetener.

A \$150,000 one.

Leaders of the Baker Hill Road District voted this week to give the town that amount of money to be put toward the site of a planned public safety complex.

“This was a sizable gift — a lump sum,” said Kristen A. Tool, chairwoman of the Police Station Building Committee.



Meet the new team planning to paint the Berkshires Mall green with cannabis

For years, Lanesborough has been working to replace an old police station at 8 Prospect St. That assignment grew into plans to incorporate ambulance services as well.

No building site has been announced, but the question is expected to come before voters at a special town meeting before year’s end, Tool said.

“We can’t move forward until we have taxpayer approval,” she said. “There is progress on securing a site.”

For years, the Baker Hill Road District’s Prudential Committee has contributed money to emergency services and police operations in town, supported by tax payments from owners of the Berkshires Mall.

In a statement, the district said it received a windfall with the recent sale of the mall, recovering “all unpaid taxes and a significant interest payment assessed on the delinquent tax.”



A proposal to build mini-cannabis farms at the Berkshire Mall is on the table. Lanesborough residents will have a chance to weigh in

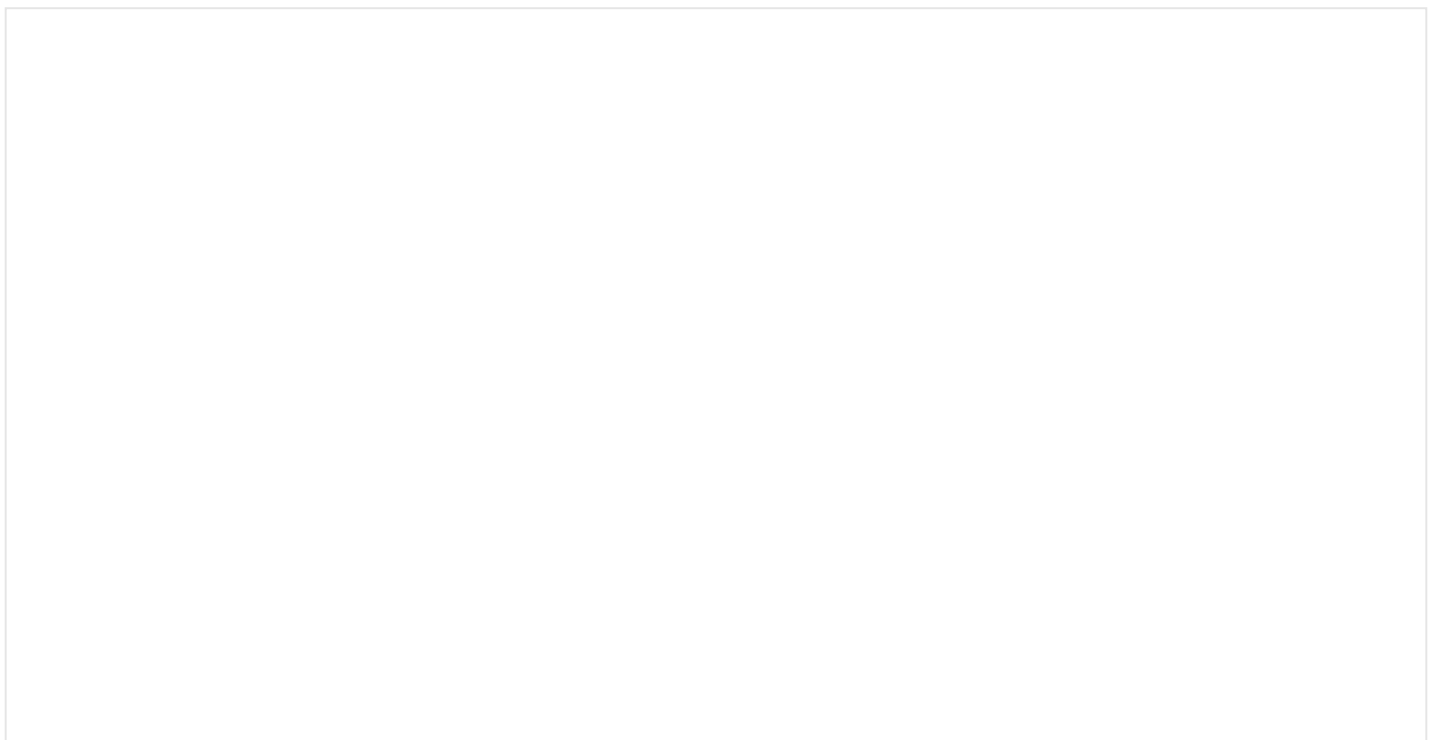
“With this gift, the Baker Hill Road District is proud to continue to partner with and strengthen its relationship with the community,” the group said in the statement, “and especially its commitment to help assure a first-class response to public safety issues in Lanesborough.”

On Monday, members of the road district plan to attend a public information session on what's next on tap for the mall: a cannabis cultivation facility.

That session starts at 6 p.m. Monday in the basement of Town Hall.

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MORE INFORMATION





Lanesborough residents seek answers on proposed cannabis mini-farms at the former Berkshire Mall

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Larry Parnass joined The Eagle in 2016 from the Daily Hampshire Gazette, where he was editor in chief. His freelance work has appeared in the Washington Post, Boston Globe, Hartford Courant, CommonWealth Magazine and with the Reuters news service.