

# Latest River Farm Offer From NOVA Parks Rejected By AHS Board

**While the board rejected the latest offer from NOVA Parks to purchase River Farm, it wants to continue negotiations.**

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FORT HUNT, VA — On Sunday, the board of the American Horticultural Society rejected an offer from NOVA Parks to purchase River Farm.

A statement released by AHS indicated it wants to continue negotiations with NOVA Parks.

"The negotiations with NOVA Parks have been a positive experience. The AHS board has not been able to reach an agreement on selling River Farm to NOVA Parks, so we must decline the current offer," said Board Chair Terry Hayes in a statement. "I would like to thank NOVA Parks Executive Director Paul Gilbert, Supervisor Dan Storck, and others who have been in conversations with us over the past year for their cooperative attitudes and support."

River Farm, the headquarters of the American Horticultural Society and once the northernmost of George Washington's farms, was put up for sale for \$32.9 million in 2020. AHS began taking offers in 2021. This was the second time it rejected an offer from NOVA Parks, which is seeking the purchase in partnership with the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust.

The NOVA Parks and Northern Virginia Conservation Trust's effort is part of the [Save River Farm](#) movement, which seeks to protect River Farm as a public property that will not be redeveloped or privatized. Members believe not keeping River Farm as a publicly available resource would go against Enid Annenberg Haupt's financial gift that allowed AHS River Farm in 1973.

AHS previously indicated it was not considering an offer from a developer. As reported by the Washington Post, former Department of Education official A. Wayne Johnson [wants to purchase River Farm](#) and adjacent sites to create a luxury resort. He indicated River Farm would be preserved with public access.

An AHS statement indicated it hopes to find a purchaser "that meets our goals of respecting the history of this beautiful property, conserving the greenspace, and ideally allowing a level of public access to the grounds."

The Post reported that the board is split, with half wanting to sell River Farm and half believing it should remain the AHS headquarters and a public space. The board will continue to discuss the direction of AHS.

The AHS board vote comes after the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved additions to the previously approved historic overlay district for River Farm on Sept. 14. The board approved the historic overlay district in April, but changes were approved due to state legislation allowing Fairfax County's Architecture Review Board to have more authority to protect River Farm from development.