Boon Island Light sold for second time

Now held by LLC registered in Delaware

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YORK, Maine – Boon Island Light Station in the last three months has gone from being the property of the U.S. government to being sold twice to private entities.

It is currently in the hands of a limited liability corporation registered in Delaware.

The government, by way of its General Services Administration, originally sold the island and the lighthouse at the end of October to Boon Island Light LLC for $78,000.

In December, Boon Island Light LLC turned around and sold the property for $119,673 to Boon Island LLC, according to transfer tax information on file in the Town of York assessor's office.

Boon Island Light LLC is registered in Maine with Arthur P. Girard as its principal.

Boon Island LLC, registered in Wilmington, Del., in November 2014, has no identifying principals listed.

Girard is a Portland real estate developer with a keen interest in lighthouses. He attempted in 2010 to purchase the Ram Island Ledge Light off Cape Elizabeth from the government, but lost in a bidding war to a neurosurgeon from Windham, according to Portland Press Herald archives. The two ultimately decided who would get the sale by flipping a coin.

Boon Island Light Station, approximately three acres of land about six miles from Cape Neddick in the Gulf of Maine, was put up for sale for the same reasons as Ram Island Ledge Light – the U.S. Coast Guard lacks the money these days to maintain the upkeep.

An online history of Boon Island Light maintained by LighthouseFriends.com says the online auction for the property opened in May 2014 with Girard emerging as the highest bidder among about a dozen who were interested.

But, according to a person with knowledge of the transaction and who spoke on background, Girard decided to sell the property to another person with an interest in lighthouses.

"The buyer's assets are several multiples of what Art's are," this person said, adding the lighthouse is in need of extensive repair, including the interior staircase.

The property, according to details offered in the deed filed with the York County Registry of Deeds, consists of a 133-foot tapered tower, originally constructed in 1855 with ashlar granite. The stairway that needs repairing is circular, wrought iron that leads from the door to the parapet.

Included in the property, according to the deed, are the remains of a boat slip at the shore and the ruin of the former keeper's dwelling near the tower.

The GSA's interest in the property ended with the sale to Girard.

"Once the light is out of federal ownership, GSA no longer has jurisdiction," said a spokesman.

But there are covenants – or restrictions – built into the deed that control much of what can and can't happen with the lighthouse.

For instance, the federal aids to navigation called ATONS – the fog signal horn, the light beacon and the 600-foot modernized generator building – remain the property of the government and are not the responsibility of the property owner to maintain.

Any renovations or replacements to the structures not overseen by the federal government would require the approval of York officials.