

# Hollis Agricultural Commission

Thursday, February 8th, 2024



## NAMES OF ATTENDEES

M. Post, T. Hardy, R. Clark, M. Madden, D. Petry, J. Dufresne

## CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:39pm.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

### Current Use

D. Petry inquired whether there is support available for farmers who are in current use to remain in current use. T. Hardy stated current use requirements and tax rates are being revised at the state level and to expect changes. The Commission will continue to monitor the potential state revisions.

### NRCS ACEP-ALE Grant

M. Post and C. Quaine have been active with the HCC Joint Working Group (JWG) on the grant submission. M. Post states there are two main considerations by the NRCS when awarding the grant. First, the Town must demonstrate the authority and experience in agricultural easement management and second, the property has to meet certain agricultural eligibility criteria such as soil quality, location and current agricultural use. M. Post states there have been discussions between JWG and the NRCS coordinator, and a pre-review indicates one parcel in consideration by the JWG appears to be well suited for the program. The parcel in consideration is attractive for development, so acquiring the development rights is critical to conserve the parcel in perpetuity. If the Town is accepted as an eligible entity for the grant program, there is potential to make multiple grant applications over the next two years for additional opportunities. T. Hardy stated the FSA Director J. Holmes may be interested in publicizing the potential partnership between the Town and the agency.

### Trails Posting

T. Hardy stated there are concerns over unauthorized trail access based on recent events. D. Petry stated there may be the ability to pursue options to allow assessment of fines for unauthorized access to allow police to intervene. Additionally, public use land that was acquired for agriculture may have the right to restrict access.

There is concern that the NRPC map could be inaccurately interpreted that all land protected by the town has unrestricted public access. This is based on the current trails overlay and the color coding. D. Petry stated the Town should consider drafting notice to the NRPC stating there will be map change requests. D. Petry suggested attending the next N'orEasters meeting, and that an awareness campaign needs to be initiated. M. Post suggested inviting Trails Committee members to an upcoming meeting to work collaboratively. T. Hardy summarized by stating the action items are to pick a date to post signs in Woodmont, establish a policy for trail access during the growing season, and to pursue an awareness campaign.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M. Post motioned to accept the public minutes for the commission meeting on January 11<sup>th</sup>, T. Hardy second, motioned passed 5-0-0.

M. Post motioned to accept the non-public minutes, as edited by R. Clark, for the commission on January 11<sup>th</sup>, T. Hardy second, motioned passed 5-0-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

R. Clark motioned to adjourn at 8:30, M. Post second, motion passed 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted by M. Madden, Secretary