

Hollis Conservation Commission

Minutes of the September 21, 2022,

Public Hearing and Meeting

Approved October 5, 2022

HCC Regular Members present: Tom Dufresne, Paul Edmunds, Mark Post, Thomas Davies, Joe Connelly, Karen Bridgeo

HCC Alternate Members present: Laura Bianco, Bernadette McQuilkin, Peter Band

Staff: Connie Cain, Amiee LeDoux.

Members of the Public: Sherry Wyskiel, Trails Committee Chair; Peter Baker, Doug Sattler, Joseph Garruba, Craig Birch, James & Jonathan Rock, Attorney George Baker.

T. Dufresne called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

T. Dufresne appointed Bernadette McQuilkin to vote in Jonathan Bruneau's absence.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

T. Dufresne opened the meeting stating that under RSA 36-A:5, to obtain public input regarding the expenditure of \$550,000 of conservation funds for an Agricultural Conservation Easement on the properties identified as Hollis MBLU 037- 011 and 037-012, owned by the Joseph W. Rock Revocable Trust of 1992 and the Barbara S. Rock Revocable Trust of 1992, James Rock & Jonathan Rock, Successor Trustees. The properties are located at 50 Shattuck Lane, and a vacant lot on Wheeler Road in Hollis, New Hampshire, consisting of 263.90 acres.

T. Dufresne shared a brief Powerpoint presentation highlighting various property features. He stated that the approximate price is \$2070 per acre. He also noted that there is approximately 50 acres of fields and 50 acres wetlands, with the rest either being forest or building sites. The wetlands are an excellent habitat for endangered turtles.

T. Dufresne thanked James and Jonathan Rock for their generous gift to preserve the land through the HCC. He also thanked P. Edmunds, Chet Rogers, and the Board of Selectmen for their contributions to this sale.

T. Dufresne opened the floor for public comment.

Sherry Wyskiel, 211 Wheeler Road, Trails Committee Co-Chair, approached the commission representing the Trails Committee. She shared that the Trails Committee unanimously supports the easement purchase of the Rock Brother's land without trail usage, because there are already too many trails to try and maintain as it is. She thanked the Rock Brothers, and the HCC, especially P. Edmunds, for his tireless efforts to secure the easement for the town.

Peter Baker, 40 Buttonwood Drive, stated that in his many years of service to the Town this property had always been highly ranked, and that he did not think that the Town's protection of the property would ever occur. He thanked HCC and Rock Brothers. P. Baker shared that he felt that while the property may be a good agricultural lease property, the best use of the land would be as a good water protection and recharge area.

He asked is there would be best practices for agriculture outline if it made sense to use the property as such?

T. Dufresne replied yes, there is a best practices outline.

P. Baker asked if the well and water line, as referenced in the easement document, is for the entire farm or the house?

T. Dufresne replied that it was for the house.

P. Baker state that he was concerned about the state definition of agriculture being so broad and asked how the HCC would counter any future changes to the State definitions of agriculture. He also shared that there might be a future desire to add storage of products not produced on the property to the allowed uses for the land. He noted that Woodmont West had provisions to restrict any holding areas; he felt that prohibitions banning products not coming from property should be added. P. Baker asked if there were any farm dumps on the land, and could they be located?

T. Dufresne responded that they were certain they could do that.

Doug Sattler, 92 Irene Drive, approached the commission and thanked the Rock Brothers and the HCC. He asked how they should expect the transaction to proceed from today and what the timing would be? T. Dufresne replied the paperwork was done, pending the final plan from surveyors. T. Dufresne also shared that they were pursuing contracting with a third-party land use trust to monitor the conservation easement to ensure that conditions in the easement are adhered to. There should be HCC funds available for this monitoring. He anticipates that documents will be completed before the end of October, however, the land trust negotiations may not be until sometime after closing. D. Sattler asked if there was a Level 1 Environmental study conducted? T. Dufresne replied yes. T. Dufresne added that due to the cost of the easement, no appraisal of the property was done.

D. Sattler asked what the nature of the public access restrictions are and if they were in perpetuity? T. Dufresne replied that the property owners, now and in the future, could decide on public access. The Rock Brothers can lease portions

for agricultural and timber cuts. The only restriction will be that the property cannot be developed and no additional buildings can be constructed except as given in the conservation easement. T. Davies noted that he saw some confused looks from the audience when the discussion turned to Land Trusts. He wanted to clarify that having a Land Trust holding the conservation easement for the Town would better protect the property and provides better monitoring to ensure that the conservation easement is being adhered to and enforced. P. Baker asked if there was currently a land trust involved in the purchase? T. Dufresne replied yes, he currently has two Land Trusts interested. Due to Town policy, any potential purchase or expenditure of over \$5000 must involve three separate quotes or interests before agreements can be continued. The HCC is still in discussions on this and no final decisions have been made.

Joseph Garruba, 28 Winchester Drive approached the HCC, and also expressed his thanks to the Rock Brothers and the HCC. He also recapped the HCC accomplishments over the year.

K. Bridgeo asked T. Dufresne about property insurance if a Land Trust were to monitor the property; T. Dufresne stated the Land Trust would pay for the insurance.

P. Baker asked about a wetland delineation to protect the wetlands for future owners/users. Craig Burch, 22 Van Dyke Road replied that there is very good mapping already and that a wetland delineation is not be needed while the Rock Brothers are the owners of the property.

T. Dufresne wished to acknowledge and thank J. Chester "Chet" Rogers for his assistance in bringing this property to the HCC's attention several years ago, and for helping get the ball rolling on this acquisition.

MOTIONS

T. Dufresne motioned to close the public comment portion of the public hearing for the property known as the Rock Farm, owned by the Joseph W. Rock and the Shirley S. Rock Revocable Trusts property, identified as Hollis-Map-Block 037-011 and 037-012, P. Edmunds seconded. All members in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

T. Dufresne motioned to approve the expenditure of \$550,000 to the Joseph W. Rock and the Shirley S. Rock Revocable Trusts in exchange for an Agricultural Conservation Easement for the property known as Hollis Map Block 037-012 and 037-011, consisting of 263.90 acres; seconded by P. Edmunds. Voting in favor of the expenditure were: T. Dufresne, P. Edmunds, M. Post, J. Connelly, T. Davies, K. Bridgeo, B. McQuilkin; no one opposed, and none abstained, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

T. Dufresne motioned to end the public hearing on the expenditure of conservation funds for an Agricultural Conservation Easement on the properties identified as the Rock Farm, seconded by P. Edmunds. Voting in favor were: T. Dufresne, P. Edmunds, M. Post, J. Connelly, T. Davies, K. Bridgeo, B. McQuilkin; no one opposed, and none abstained, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0. The Public Hearing closed at 7:31pm.

T. Dufresne called for a brief recess at 7: 32 pm.

T. Dufresne brought the meeting back to order at 7:35 pm.

COMMITTEE AND BOARD UPDATES

PLANNING BOARD UPDATE – T. Dufresne

T. Dufresne attended the Planning Board meeting of September 20, 2022. He shared that the Toddy Brook development was not continued due to a missed deadline by the developer.

T. Dufresne shared that he and B. McQuilkin walked the Chamberlain property on Witches Spring Road, and saw that there were a lot of wetlands. There is an addition to be made to the property of 2 new houses.

TREASURER'S UPDATE – T. Davies

As of September 19, 2022 there is \$1,152,639.77 available to the use of the HCC.

A brief discussion took place on the land use change tax and the purchases of the various plots of land over the last several years.

NEW OR CONTINUING BUSINESS

Expenditures

P. Edmunds stated a bill from the Telegraph-Cabinet has been received for the Rock Farm public hearing notice for the September 21, 2022, in the amount of \$36.80.

P. Edmunds motioned to approve the expenditure of \$36.80 to pay the bill for the public notice, seconded by T. Dufresne. Voting in favor of the expenditure were: T. Dufresne, P. Edmunds, M. Post, J. Connelly, T. Davies, K. Bridgeo, B. McQuilkin; non opposed, and none abstained. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Old Home Day Wrap-Up

T. Dufresne noted that B. McQuilkin and J. Connelly have volunteered to coordinate the for the 2023 Old Home Day Booth. A. Le Doux motioned to put T. Dufresne in the dunk tank. C. Cain seconded. Room thundered in applause. (Both Amiee and I wish to keep this in, so we remember for next year. 😊)

B. McQuilkin mentioned that people had approached her about invasives and if there is a way to help connect people to services with equipment to help pull out invasives. Discussion took place on invasive treatments. C. Cain noted that the town website could be utilized to post information about invasives if someone on the HCC wrote up something on how to deal with them.

Trampoline Removal, Hannah Drive

T. Dufresne shared that there were 3 guys that needed to serve community service. J. Connelly volunteered to be there and help. Discussion took place on how to utilize the community service hours productively for this project and others.

Ludwig Siergiewicz Farm, Old Mooar Hill Road

T. Dufresne shared that Eric Radlof started treating the invasives on Siergiewicz Farm. Bittersweet growth has exploded recently. T. Dufresne stated a site walk can be arranged.

Hazardous Waste Collection

T. Davies shared that on October 8, 2022 Nashua is having a household hazardous waste collection at the Crown Street location. He suggested that the HCC could do something to encourage proper disposal of hazardous waste in Hollis. T. Dufresne suggested that T. Davies research it. M. Post suggested that they talk to Joan Cudworth at the DPW. B. McQuilkin volunteered to help research, and to continue to advertise the doings of the HCC in various ways.

MINUTES

T. Dufresne motioned to approve the public minutes of September 7, 2022, as written, seconded by M. Post. Voting in favor were: T. Dufresne, P. Edmunds, M. Post, J. Connelly, T. Davies, K. Bridgeo, B. McQuilkin; none opposed, and none abstained. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

T. Dufresne motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by M. Post. Voting in favor were: T. Dufresne, P. Edmunds, M. Post, J. Connelly, T. Davies, K. Bridgeo, B. McQuilkin; none opposed, and none abstained. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Amiee Le Doux,
Recording Secretary