

# HOLLIS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

August 16, 2017

Approved Sept 6, 2017

Regular Members: Tom Dufresne, Thomas Davies, David Connor, LeeAnn Wolff, Mark Post

Alternate Members: Mary Jeffery, Laura Bianco.

BOS Liaison: Peter Band

Staff: Connie Cain

Guests: Randy Haight, Meridian Land Services; Drew Kellner, Brookline Conservation Commission

## CALL TO ORDER

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

## PROPOSED SUBDIVISION, 19 FLAGG RD, MBLU 007-045

Randy Haight of Meridian Land Services brought forward a proposed 2-lot subdivision. Due to wetlands on the property, it was felt proper to advise the HCC of the plan prior to Planning Board submission. On Thursday, August 24, 2017, the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) will also be hearing an application for a variance to the buildable area for development of a residential lot that encroaches on the wetlands buffer. As there are significant wetlands on the property, there is no other suitable location to place the building box on the property, however, there is minimum impact to the buffer with this placement.

R. Haight explained the proposed driveway will be approximately 10 feet in width, entering at the southeastern most point of the property and continuing to the building area at the northern property boundary; the driveway length is approximately 600' from the entrance. There will be a bridge placed over the narrowest point of the wetlands. Based on the type of bridge and construction, there should not be any impact to the wetlands, and neither an Alteration of Terrain nor Wetlands permit is felt necessary. The bridge will be bank to bank, and will be placed at least 2 feet from the actual wetlands. Some discussion about the property in general and the driveway commenced. As the ZBA has not yet heard the application, nor has an application been made to the Planning Board, any comment and/or decision by the HCC has been withheld, pending plan submission and initial review by the Planning Board.

(Randy Haight departed at 7:17 pm.)

## WILD & SCENIC RIVERS PARTNERSHIP

Drew Kellner, member of and representing the Brookline Conservation Commission (BCC) wished to discuss the Wild & Scenic Rivers Partnership, which is a program under the auspices of the National Park Service (NPS). The Nashua River and two of its tributaries, the Nissitissit River in New Hampshire, and the Squannacook River in Massachusetts, have been chosen for this designation. While the Nashua River section does not extend into New Hampshire, the New Hampshire portion of the Nissitissit River has been determined to be part of the river system potentially eligible, and at this time, a 3-year study has been proposed to determine this.

D. Kellner explained that the river system had originally been selected about 6-7 years ago, the initial presentation had been to Board of Selectmen (BOS) in both Brookline and Hollis, and had not been properly explained nor presented to either Conservation Commission. This was reintroduced to the BCC about 2.5 years ago, and based on their investigation into the program, last month recommended that the Brookline BOS take part in the survey. As part of this recommendation, the BCC also wanted to reach out to the HCC as Hollis' participation is necessary for Brookline to participate.

Several items are looked at as part of the study, including outstanding characteristics of the river, and the river's part it may play in each community in relationship to recreation, cultural and historical values, to name a few. If each Town's BOS approves participating in the study, it must be then brought to the Townspeople as a Warrant Article at Annual Town Meeting, and pass with a majority vote. If passed, the 3-year study will begin, with the participating Towns informed of the findings, and again brought to the Townspeople for vote on participating in the program.

D. Kellner felt that the Massachusetts portions will be approved in the near future, but if the New Hampshire portion will be approved is unknown. While most of the Nissitissit River in Hollis is protected to some degree, due to Beaver Brook Association (BBA) and the Nissitissit River Land Trust ownership, Brookline is not. In order for Brookline to participate, Hollis must also participate as a connecting partner. Should Hollis choose not to participate in the study, Brookline will be ineligible as the connection to the Massachusetts portion of the river would be lost. Some of the advantages to participating would be that the management plan would protect the river

63 against future Federal or State impact, such as new dam construction, or the placement/construction of other  
64 structures, as a future pipeline, although there are no changes to existing dams. Participation in the program does  
65 not allow for Federal acquisition or the creation of a National Park, nor does it allow for exemption from local  
66 ordinances or laws. There would not be restrictions on recreational use, and no impacts to property under private  
67 ownership. The draft management plan should be available before the end of the year, but in time for the BOS to  
68 decide to participate and be able to have a Warrant Article included on the Town Warrant next March. There is no  
69 cost to the Town to participate in the study or program at this time nor is any anticipated.

70  
71 T. Davies asked, as BBA Director, if D. Kellner thought that a proposed pedestrian bridge on BBA property would  
72 be impacted by Hollis' participation. D. Kellner thought not, the council would want to be made aware at the  
73 beginning stage, but should not impact process. D. Kellner explained further that should the Towns participate in  
74 the program, a council would be appointed to oversee the river. At this time, it is anticipated that the Nashua River  
75 Watershed Association would be the oversight council, and each Town can appoint a council representative for  
76 their community.

77  
78 D. Kellner noted that the BCC will be bringing this to their BOS on August 28, 2017 for approval to participate. If  
79 the Brookline BOS approves, then it will be brought the Hollis BOS, tentatively scheduled for September 11, 2017.

80 P. Band felt that the following items should be highlighted in the presentation to the Hollis BOS:

- 81 1.) The value that participation in the program brings to Hollis;
- 82 2.) Stewardship and management of the Nissitissit River will be increased;
- 83 3.) Make clear that no Federal control. P. Band felt this would be an important point, as the Hollis BOS is leery of  
84 Federal and State government control, due to issues in the past, especially with requirements and additional costs  
85 not apparent at the start of various projects. T. Davies noted that the BBA Land Protection Group expressed the  
86 same concerns at the start, but have since explored the program more fully and have reversed their decision and  
87 endorse both communities taking part in the program.
- 88 4.) Must dispel any Town and private owners concerns.

89 D. Kellner asked if having Jamie from the National Park Service attend to help answer questions would be helpful;  
90 P. Band felt yes, but the BOS will be looking at D. Kellner to present information as he is known to the BOS.

91  
92 T. Davies stated that he felt that the HCC should be thinking more globally in order to assist other area  
93 communities with their protection efforts as well as in Hollis. In assisting our neighbors protect and conserve their  
94 communities, it benefits the efforts made by Hollis in protecting the region as well as our own community. What  
95 impacts our neighbors impacts Hollis.

96 M. Post felt that participation in the program provides value to Hollis in protecting water resources upriver, and  
97 allows Hollis to be a good neighbor to Brookline.

98 T. Davies asked P. Band if the BOS will consider the HCC recommendations in regards to participation; P. Band  
99 replied yes.

100  
101 T. Dufresne made the motion to recommend to the Hollis BOS that Hollis participate in the Wild & Scenic Rivers  
102 3-year study for the reasons discussed; seconded by T. Davies. All members in favor, none opposed, and the  
103 recommendation was approved by a vote of 7-0-0. T. Dufresne will communicate this to the BOS prior to their  
104 next meeting.

105  
106 (Drew Kellner departed at 7:55 pm)

#### 107 108 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

109 T. Dufresne motioned to enter into non-public session to discuss a potential land acquisition under RSA 91-A:3, II  
110 (d); seconded by M. Jeffery. All members in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried 7-0-0. The HCC entered  
111 Non-Public session at 7:58 pm.

#### 112 113 **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

114 T. Dufresne motioned to return to public session and to keep the minutes sealed under RSA 91-A:3, III; seconded  
115 by M. Post. All members in favor, none opposed. The motion to return to public session carried 7-0-0, and the  
116 minutes were sealed. The HCC returned to public session at 8:10 pm.

#### 117 118 **BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES**

119 None available at meeting time.

#### 120 121 **NEW & CONTINUING BUSINESS**

#### 122 123 *OLD CITY TRAIL*

124 T. Davies stated that he had a sign created for the Old City Trailhead Kiosk that was recently placed in the kiosk,  
125 detailing where the Conservation Commission property and where the BBA trail started, along with BBA dog

126 policies and other information. Additionally, both T. Dufresne and T. Davies spoke to Tom Bayrd, DPW Director,  
127 about clearing and stumping proposed parking area. HCC will contract to have any trees necessary removed, as  
128 the parking area is HCC property, and the DPW can stump area afterward; T. Dufresne asked T. Davies if he and  
129 Peter Smith would flag trees to be removed. Director Bayrd also discussed drainage, felt that some 4-5 inch  
130 culverts would be needed. P. Band suggested that the project be brought forward to the BOS for approval.  
131

#### 132 *JOINT HCC-AG WORKGROUP*

133 M. Post stated that an information meeting for the Stephanowicz Farm one-year lease had been held; 4 farmers  
134 have expressed an interest in the one-year lease. Bids are due on September 8, 2017.  
135

136 Discussion on the proposed multi-year lease has begun; the process will be begin in October. As M. Jeffery is  
137 stepping down from the workgroup, another HCC member is needed. Both L. Bianco and L. Wolff have tentatively  
138 volunteered; a vote will take place at the September 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.  
139

#### 140 *AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE*

141 The AgCom has started discussing the major impacts on farmers due to revisions to the Food Safety Act, which are  
142 required to be in place for 2018. As this will impact public access on those Town properties which have  
143 agricultural leases, M. Post advised the HCC that he will be presenting the proposed changes and their impact to  
144 the HCC before the end of the year.  
145

#### 146 **OLD HOME DAYS BOOTH**

147  
148 T. Davies asked if members wanted to propose a theme, as in the past. Last year's scavenger hunt was labor  
149 intensive and other organizations were not vested in participating. L. Bianco stated that Joan Cudworth, Transfer  
150 Station Lead, wanted to discuss a combined effort this year. T. Dufresne suggested a questionnaire on Hollis'  
151 recycling efforts over the past year with a prize as a possible booth event. T. Davies asked members to come up  
152 with ideas and be prepared to discuss at the September 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.  
153

154 T. Davies stated that he had obtained bulbs, although at some difficulty because vendors generally don't ship until  
155 after mid-September. He was able to find one vendor who guaranteed delivery on September 6<sup>th</sup>, but at a greater  
156 expenditure than the previously approved \$250; with the cost being \$301. Members should also be prepared to  
157 bag the bulbs for handout at the next meeting.  
158

159 T. Dufresne motioned to revise the previous approval given on June 21, 2017 and increase the amount of approved  
160 expenditure from \$250.00 to \$325.00 for the purchase of bulbs and plastic bags for handout at Old Home Day;  
161 seconded by L. Wolff. All in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0. T. Davies to submit  
162 receipts for reimbursement once they are received.  
163

#### 164 **MINUTES**

165  
166 T. Dufresne motioned to approve the public minutes of the July 19, 2017 meeting as written; seconded by L. Wolff.  
167 All members were in favor, none opposed, and the minutes were approved 7-0-0.  
168

169 T. Dufresne motioned to approve the non-public minutes of the July 19, 2017 meeting with one word correction  
170 at the end of Line 24, and to keep the minutes sealed; seconded by M. Jeffery. All members were in favor, none  
171 opposed, and the minutes were approved and sealed 7-0-0.  
172

#### 173 **ADJOURNMENT**

174  
175 T. Dufresne moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by L. Wolff, but really by all. All members in favor, none  
176 opposed and the meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm.  
177

178 Respectfully submitted,  
179 Connie Cain  
180 Staff