

# HOLLIS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

October 3, 2018

Approved October 17, 2018

Members Present: Tom Dufresne, Thomas Davies, Mark Post, Jonathan Bruneau

Alternate Members: Joe Connelly

BOS Liaison: Peter Band

Guest: Ryan Rodney, NHTI Student from Brookline

Staff Note: All times given in the meeting minutes below are approximate, based on the time stamp of the meeting recording. CC

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

## BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

None available at meeting time.

## NEW/CONTINUING BUSINESS

### *Land Use Change Tax split – Thomas Davies*

C. Cain compiled a list of other area communities and the percentage of how much each community allows to their local Conservation Commission. Of the 20 Hillsborough County communities reviewed, the average was 72%. T. Davies stated that the average amount of the 50% that the HCC receives is about \$100,000 annually, or less than 1% of property taxes received by the Town annually. Further discussion ensued about the LUCT split, how the Town can and does use the LUCT funds, the unexpended fund balance, Current Use, and how the LUCT is determined. T. Dufresne reminded members that funds deposited into the HCC account can only be used towards the purchase of conservation lands or maintenance of the same, per RSA 36-A. T. Davies noted that the City of Boston, MA manages their properties via a City Department; discussion continued regarding the use of Conservation funds.

T. Dufresne noted that he is on the Selectmen's agenda for October 8, 2018, and will bring this matter to the Board's attention at that meeting. T. Davies will attend with him.

### *Pepperell MA Potential Land Fill Site*

T. Dufresne informed members that he had met with the Pepperell, MA Conservation Agent in regards to the potential land fill proposed near the Pepperell MA Airport on Route 111. P. Band asked if more details are available; T. Dufresne stated that the plan is to take fill from Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts, and use the site to dispose said fill. The estimated volume is between 8 to 15 large trucks per day at the height of the operation. It is unknown if the material will be clean, and T. Dufresne is concerned that some of this fill will come from the MBTA's Green Line expansion, which could contain anything.

P. Band asked if the fill will be specifically for hazardous waste; T. Dufresne replied no, it is will consist of soil which cannot remain at the site for whatever reason. The need for the landfill is due to an increase in construction in metropolitan areas in all of New England, but felt primarily Massachusetts. Discussion ensued over the Nashua River history and clean-up over the past 40-50 years. The primary concern is that whatever is placed on the site could leach into the Nashua River, and re-pollute the river. The Nashua River is approximately 200 feet from the site, which is designated a "quarry" by the MA DOT, and is located over or near one of Pepperell's major aquifers on Route 111. The former Pepperell Town Administrator and Dept. of Public Works Director had given tacit approval for the landfill, as the Town of Pepperell would receive approximately \$1 million for allowing the site; neither are in these positions presently. Trucks could be traveling via any of the State Routes through Hollis, and there is no way to prevent this use. *(There were about 3 people speaking at once during this short segment, and a part of the discussion could not be understood on the recording. CC)* P. Band asked if the landfill was a proposal or had it been approved yet. T. Dufresne stated that it has not yet been heard by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Legislation, but the approval process was similar to that of the gas pipeline which was proposed a few years ago. Additionally, Massachusetts agencies, such as the Pepperell Conservation Commission and others, along with local Land Trusts, are forming a coalition to try to prevent such use. Residents of Pepperell and surrounding committees are asking questions regarding the project, but the contractor is not answering.

T. Davies felt that, should the Commonwealth approve the landfill against resident's wishes, it would set precedent for these types of uses. He felt that Hollis should show support other Conservation Commissions in the area, especially

those who directly about Hollis; a State Line should not impact supporting our neighbors. P. Band will bring before the Board of Selectmen, and request that they support the HCC's efforts in this matter. T. Dufresne stated that Pepperell Conservation Commission will not need anything official until the first of the year, and the HCC will wait until at least the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting to take an official vote.

#### *Flint Pond Field*

T. Dufresne noted that Tom Jambard of the Budget Committee had previously proposed using the Broad Street field, MBLU 019-023, at the south of the Flint Pond Water wellhead as a suitable location for Recreation Commission practice fields; this property is considered a "wet" meadow. Craig Birch had suggested that the field should be mowed. T. Dufresne noted that the field had not been mowed in a few years, and while it is unknown who has the responsibility to maintain the property, there is a Right-of-Way to the former Flint Pond Water Co. wellhead from Broad St on the property which is approximately 656' x 15'. T. Dufresne spoke with Travis Spaulding, who has the correct equipment to mow this type of meadowland; T. Dufresne was quoted \$550 for a one time mow. It was noted that there is invasive species on the field, some discussion ensued. T. Davies asked if any impact to wildlife by the mowing of the field; it is not thought to impact wildlife, property has been mowed regularly until the past 3-5 years.

J. Bruneau motioned to approve an expenditure of up to \$600 for the mowing of the property known as the "Flint Pond Field," MBLU 019-023; seconded by M. Post. All members in favor, none opposed or abstained. The motion carried 5-0-0, and T. Dufresne will arrange for Travis Spaulding to mow the field.

#### *Town Deeds & Easements Record Keeping*

T. Dufresne felt that the Board of Selectmen should consider hiring a staff person dedicated to documenting and maintaining Town owned property deeds, easements, and other conveyances. The Town should not expect volunteers to track these documents as there can be large turnovers, and the official records should be kept by the Town not volunteer Boards and Committees. P. Band stated that creating such a position would be subject to Selectmen and Budget Committee approval; validity for the position would be primary and a job description would also need to be created. T. Dufresne noted that some of this information has been lost over time, and that Connie Cain has been attempting to rediscover and track, but this is not her primary job duty. Discussion ensued over unpaid/paid volunteers, stipends, and per diem positions.

#### *Stefanowicz Farm*

T. Dufresne, M. Post, Jim Oehler, and John Dufresne conducted a site walk for the Nichols-Smith Land Trust to determine what part of the property is best suited for a potential conservation easement. The property consists of a lot of good forest areas, and some forested areas may be better to convert to an agricultural use. These areas include the top of the hill, which also contains good farmland soils. It is possible to harvest the existing trees, and convert to fruit trees, but the area is a nice forest area as well. J. Oehler walked the site to determine which areas would be best suited to remain forest or become agricultural and any potential issues that are on the property, such as invasive species locations. J. Oehler recommended determining the agricultural areas before determining what part, if any, should be placed under a conservation easement. It would be difficult to remove areas after the conservation easement is placed. Long term plans for the property still need to be determined; T. Davies informed members that Brandon Rackliff, Beaver Brook Association's Asst. Natural Resources Manager, has a long history with the property, having worked for Donald Stefanowicz for years, and that he should be consulted as a resource for the property. Brandon had recently taken T. Davies for a tour of the property, and pointed out various items of interest. M. Post will contact him for additional information.

T. Dufresne would like to have the conservation easement written in such a manner as to not tie the hands of the Agricultural Commission during their management of the agricultural lease areas. M. Post stated that such items will need to be addressed in a long-term lease of the property, incorporating into one or two year leases is difficult to do. The Board of Selectmen need to make decisions for the property's future, the property and buildings are deteriorating without regular maintenance. Discussion of the property continued briefly, including future use, the lease document, and other similar issues.

#### *Federal Hill Road Recreation Trails*

T. Davies stated that Priscilla Hamilton of Federal Hill Rd had contacted him concerning the snowmobile use of the recreational trails near her property and the Hildreth Conservation Area in the upcoming winter. Use of the trails for other than snowmobiles is still a safety concern, and policing is difficult. She would like to discuss the matter with the HCC in the near future. T. Dufresne will invite her to an upcoming meeting. Discussion of various aspects of trail use were discussed. T. Davies stated that he is also meeting her at her property on October 8, 2018 at 2:00 pm.

118 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION**  
119 M. Post motioned to enter into Non-Public session to discuss potential land acquisition under RSA 91-A:3, II (c) & (d);  
120 seconded by T. Davies. T. Dufresne polled the members, all those present voted to enter into Non-Public session by a  
121 vote of 5-0-0. The HCC entered into Non-Public Session at approximately 7:44 pm.  
122  
123 **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**  
124 T. Dufresne motioned to conclude the Non-Public session and to keep the minutes sealed until voted by the HCC to  
125 release, seconded by M. Post. T. Dufresne polled the members, all members voted to conclude the Non-Public session  
126 and keep the minutes sealed by a vote of 5-0-0. The HCC concluded Non-Public Session at approximately 8:15 pm.  
127  
128 **MINUTES**  
129 T. Dufresne motioned to accept the public minutes of the September 19, 2018 meeting as written; seconded by M.  
130 Post. All members in favor, none opposed, and the minutes were approved by a vote of 5-0-0.  
131  
132 **ADJOURNMENT**  
133 T. Dufresne made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by J. Bruneau. All members in favor, none opposed, and  
134 the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:27 pm.  
135  
136 Respectfully submitted,  
137 Connie Cain  
138 Staff