

# HOLLIS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

December 7, 2016

Approved January 4, 2017

Present: Tom Dufresne, David Connor, LeeAnn Wolff, Cathy Hoffman, Mark Post, Peter Baker, Jonathan Bruneau, Laura Bianco, Connie Cain-Staff.

Guest: Erin White, Hollis-Brookline Middle School (HBMS) Health Teacher

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by T. Dufresne.

## **HOLLIS-BROOKLINE MIDDLE SCHOOL GREENHOUSE PROJECT**

E. White presented information on the greenhouse which the school would like to construct. This will be a high tunnel greenhouse, with approximate dimensions of 30' x 48'. The greenhouse will be sited on the north side of the school building with the entrance facing the school, and will be used as part of the health curriculum to teach children where food comes from and to understand the nutritional value of food. Additionally, other departments, such as life and earth sciences, math, art and others have expressed an interest in using the greenhouse as part of their curriculum. Town organizations, such as the Hollis-Brookline Rotary Club, the Hollis Historical Society and the Hollis Garden Club among others, have also expressed interest in the project, either as part of the initial construction or to assist with the curriculum, maintenance or other future uses. E. White hopes that the greenhouse will eventually be utilized by all grades, not just HBMS students.

To date, funds for the greenhouse itself have been received, but additional funds are needed to cover greenhouse and raised beds construction costs, tools, composting bins, and other associated items. Grants have been applied for and received towards the purchase of the greenhouse, along with donations from area businesses and the public, totaling about \$13,603. Another \$13,760 is needed to cover the remaining costs, \$10,000 of which will be allocated toward solar panel installation. The Hollis Energy Committee has expressed interest in constructing a solar energy system to power the greenhouse with any excess energy to be utilized by the school to offset energy use. Rick Hardy of Brookdale Fruit Farms and staff at the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension (UNHCE) have lent their talents towards the planning and selection of the greenhouse; Joan Cudworth of the Transfer Station has provided her experience towards the proposed Stormwater Collection plan, and has been an invaluable resource in many other ways. Community volunteers will be solicited to assist with construction to offset costs.

Going forward, future use and maintenance will involve the Hollis Garden Club during the summer months when school is not in session and may involve other community organizations. Community involvement has been the most successful method in other communities, and it is hoped to be so in Hollis as well.

During L. Wolff's discussion with E. White about the greenhouse project, the topic of students providing the HCC with plantings to be used on properties per Management Plans was discussed. E. White felt that the students could grow plants for HCC use when needed. This could also include student education on invasive plant species and the effects of those species when introduced into new areas.

P. Baker asked if the HCC would be responsible for invasive species removal on the Siergiewicz Farm property. The Board of Selectmen are the overseers of this Town property, and any activity will require their approval. T. Dufresne noted that during the timber harvest, the management plan calls for the logger to remove some as incidental to the timber harvest. Any remaining will need herbicide treatment prior to hand-pulling. L. Wolff felt that the hand-pulling could possibly be done by students as part of the educational experience. T. Dufresne stated that moving forward would be subject to Selectmen approval of the work and appropriation of funds for the herbicide application, but the longer the wait, the more it will spread. Additionally, once the herbicide treatment has been done, it would be at least a year or more before new plantings could begin. The NH Moose Plate grant program may cover 100% of costs associated for the invasive species removal if a grant was approved. L. Wolff confirmed that this project aligns with the eligibility requirements of the grant program.

D. Connor asked how the solar energy system will be utilized by the greenhouse; E. White explained that high tunnel greenhouses have an "insulation" layer between the outer and inner walls. This insulation layer is kept open by a fan moving the air around to keep the layers separated; additionally, vents are used to regulate the interior temperature and keep air moving around the interior. The solar energy system would provide the power needed, which is not significant. Any excess energy produced would be utilized by the school or be sold back into the grid. The plan calls for the panels to be placed on the existing school building and lines run to the greenhouse. Some discussion occurred in regards to how panels and lines are anticipated to be constructed. E. White noted that Woody Hayes of the Energy Commission has created the plan for installation.

62 T. Dufresne noted that with the severe drought over the past year, the plantings done at Dunklee Pond two years ago  
63 have suffered greatly, and many have died. Next spring, the area will need to be inspected to determine the status of  
64 the plantings and how many will need to be replaced; this could be a potential project. L. Wolff asked if funds could  
65 be donated to the HBMS Students and used for plantings for either property. T. Dufresne will discuss with Town  
66 Attorney on HCC funds, as most of the available funds have been received from LUCT monies paid, and State laws  
67 govern the use of those funds.

68  
69 P. Baker asked how many other schools have greenhouses. E. White did not know the actual number, but are  
70 becoming more prevalent over the past several years. UNHCE stated they are receiving a significant number of  
71 enquiries, and are investigating whether or not to add information, such as best management practice fact sheets  
72 and a FAQ relating to greenhouse construction, to their website.

73  
74 T. Dufresne felt the project was a good fit for Hollis, and asked E. White to submit a formal request for funds, via L.  
75 Wolff, to the HCC. Members will take under advisement when received. T. Dufresne thanked E. White for her  
76 presentation.

77  
78 (E. White departed at 7:35 pm.)

## 79 80 **NEW/CONTINUING BUSINESS**

### 81 82 *STEFANOWICZ FARM*

83 T. Dufresne informed members that he had recently met with the Board of Selectmen regarding the Stefanowicz  
84 Farm boundary survey. The draft survey submitted must be finalized to comply with legal requirements. The  
85 Selectmen authorized an expenditure of up to \$4999 for completing the final survey, and authorized T. Dufresne to  
86 move forward with having the final survey created; this should be the final item needed prior to closing. It is  
87 anticipated that the survey will be completed around the start of the New Year. The Selectmen are anticipated to  
88 sign the purchase and sales agreement on December 12, 2016. M. Post asked when the closing would occur. T.  
89 Dufresne thought that once the purchase and sales document is signed, closing is required within 90 days unless an  
90 unanticipated item is discovered during that time. As the owners have been open with items relating to the sale, this  
91 should not be an issue.

### 92 93 *HOWE FIELDS CONSERVATION EASEMENT, MBLU 026-026 & 026-080, Ranger Road*

94 Land Protection Study Committee (LPSC), HCC Members, and Town Staff met on November 28, 2016 to discuss and  
95 resolve issues that arose during the review of the draft Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) Deed document. Language  
96 modifications and/or items for Town Attorney review were tentatively agreed, pending Town Attorney, property  
97 owner, and/or NRCS review. T. Dufresne stated that no major changes occurred, but due to language required by the  
98 Federal Government, the property will require close monitoring. P. Baker noted that the language clarified that the  
99 HCC must give approval prior to any changes to the ALE plan, in addition to meeting local ordinances or regulations.  
100 The applicant must apply for approval to the HCC via a written application, along with a description of the full scope  
101 of the work; the HCC will then have 60 days to approve or deny. The objective is to now present these revisions to  
102 the Town Attorney.

103  
104 P. Baker stated that he had received communications from the property owner that the review from her attorney  
105 would be received prior to Christmas. At this time, no vote is needed, just consensus of the HCC to move forward. T.  
106 Dufresne polled members, who agreed to proceed, pending final review of the ALE deed.

### 107 108 *MUDDY BROOK*

109 As discussed at past meetings, it appears a boardwalk was illegally constructed behind private property on Pierce  
110 Lane to cross Muddy Brook. The boardwalk ends on the eastern shore of Muddy Brook near the Stefanowicz Farm  
111 boundary. In reviewing recent aeriels, it appears that a section of the boardwalk has broken off and floated  
112 downstream. Due to the wetlands, members felt that waiting until the area has frozen over would not cause undue  
113 damage to the wetlands as well as making access easier. This item will be brought back up in February/March 2017.

## 114 115 **BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### 116 *Planning Board – Cathy Hoffman*

117 Representatives of the Flint Hill Real Estate Trust have submitted a request to the Planning Board that the  
118 landscaping requirement, which was part of the February 2006 subdivision approval, be reconsidered and removed  
119 as one of the conditions for approval. The subdivision is located off Richardson and Wright Roads, and includes  
120 Lovejoy Lane and Cutter Place. Due to the housing market and economic recession experienced from that time until  
121 the past 1-3 years, only the area off of Richardson Road has been developed as Lovejoy Lane, and the road, to be  
122 known as "Cutter Lane," has not yet been constructed. The representatives feel that this requirement is no longer  
123 necessary, as natural vegetation has filled in the areas.

124 On December 3, 2016, PB members inspected the property to review the present conditions. C. Hoffman noted that  
125 natural vegetation has filled in the areas to be landscaped, but abutters have requested that the PB require the  
126 landscaping plan be implemented as the original approval required. The PB has contracted Doug Gagne, former PB  
127 Member, to act as a land consultant on this matter, and his findings will be submitted to the PB for discussion at the  
128 next meeting on December 20, 2016. Ordinance language to resolve timing issues was recently approved by Town  
129 Meeting, but this subdivision is grandfathered and not subject to the recent language update.

130  
131 *Joint Conservation-Agricultural Commissions Work Group – J. Bruneau & M. Jeffery*

132 M. Post received a report from Heather Foley of NRCS earlier this week, but has not been able to complete a full  
133 review to date. Erosion appears to be the main concern, but the group will be able to review and report back to the  
134 HCC at the next meeting. Federal Food Safety regulations going into effect in 2018 may impact public access to some  
135 areas, and will be discussed by the group as well. The next group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 14,  
136 2016 at 4:00 pm in the Community Room.

137  
138 The Land Protection Study Committee will be holding their next meeting on December 12, 2016, but nothing new to  
139 report at this time. In the absence of Peter Band and Thom Davies, there were no Selectmen or Treasurer's reports.

## 140 141 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

142  
143 T. Dufresne polled members to determine if the December 21, 2016 HCC meeting should be held. After discussion of  
144 all pending items, members were in favor of cancelling the meeting. The next HCC meeting has been scheduled for  
145 January 4, 2017.

146  
147 L. Wolff requested that the HCC review the draft for the 2016 Town Report once complete; please let her know if you  
148 would like to review.

149  
150 L. Wolff announced that she will be hosting a dinner and "make your own pasta and sauce" demonstration at her  
151 house as a fundraiser for the HBHS greenhouse. The cost for materials and dinner will be \$50 per participant, which  
152 will be donated to HBMS Greenhouse project.

## 153 154 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

155 T. Dufresne motioned to go into Non-Public session to discuss a potential land acquisition, under RSA 91-A:3, II (d);  
156 seconded by P. Baker. All members in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried 8-0-0. The HCC entered Non-  
157 Public session at 8:00 pm.

## 158 159 **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

160 T. Dufresne motioned to return to public session and to keep the minutes sealed under RSA 91-A:3, III; seconded by  
161 C. Hoffman. All members in favor, none opposed. The motion to return to public session carried 8-0-0, the minutes  
162 were sealed, and the work group returned to public session at 8:15 pm.

## 163 164 **MINUTES**

165 T. Dufresne motioned to approve the minutes of November 16, 2016 as written, seconded by C. Hoffman. All  
166 members in favor, M. Post abstained, none opposed, and the minutes were approved by a vote of 7-0-1.

## 167 168 **ADJOURNMENT**

169 M. Post motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by P. Baker. All members in favor, none opposed, and the motion  
170 carried by a vote of 8-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

171  
172 Respectfully submitted,  
173 Connie Cain  
174 Staff