

HOLLIS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

November 2, 2016

Approved November 16, 2016

Present: Tom Dufresne, Thomas Davies, LeeAnn Wolff, Mark Post, Peter Baker, Mary Jeffery, Laura Bianco, Peter Band-BOS Ex-Officio, Connie Cain-Staff.

Also Present: Roger Saunders & Sherry Wyskiel, Land Protection Study Committee

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm.

STEFANOWICZ FARM UPDATE, MBLU 032-001 & 032-002, Nartoff Road

T. Dufresne updated members; the signed Purchase & Sales Agreement was received today. The property survey is in the process of being completed, and it is anticipated that closing will occur around the end of the year.

HOWE FIELDS CONSERVATION EASEMENT, MBLU 026-026 & 026-080, Ranger Road

The draft conservation easement (CE) was received from Town Atty. William Drescher last Friday. T. Dufresne noted that the property owner's attorney, along with Ian McSweeney of the Russell Foundation and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have yet to review and submit final edits. P. Baker felt that this draft should be close to the final document, but additional edits could be made. NRCS review will take approximately 90 days, but he would like to move forward with presenting the draft to the Board of Selectmen as soon as possible.

T. Dufresne stated that at the request of Kim Galipeau, Town Administrator, C. Cain has done a review of the draft easement and asked her to speak to this review. C. Cain commented that she had just completed her review and has not presented this to the Town Administrator. There are several repetitive paragraphs that seem to contradict each other, and concerns about the possible uses allowed on the property. She understood that NRCS may require certain language, but did not want to get into an in-depth discussion until she could present her review to the Town Administrator. P. Baker asked to be sent a copy of the "red-lined" review; C. Cain will forward to P. Baker and T. Dufresne after presenting to the Town Administrator.

L. Wolff stated that while she has not thoroughly read the document, she felt that the language contained in the CE is not in keeping with the HCC Charter to protect and conserve property. In her brief review, it appears that the language allows the potential to take away from the Conservation qualities of the property, and is not in keeping with the Town's Rural Character Ordinance. The property is very visible from the road, and if a future owner/lessee is allowed to construct such things as Ground Mounted Solar Panels, she questions whether or not the uses allowed are based on what the townspeople want to preserve. P. Band noted he had the same concern, but the recently approved Ground Mounted Solar Energy Ordinance addresses these issues. L. Wolff asked if a statement, documenting the value that the Town gets in return for its investment and understanding the impact to Town resources, such as for monitoring and enforcement, could be included with the CE. She felt it would go a long way to address any concerns that the Townspeople may have.

T. Dufresne felt that the proposed uses given in the CE are vastly different to those given in the LPSC presentation at Town Meeting earlier this year. There would be a significant of monitoring needed. P. Baker stated that only annual monitoring would be necessary, as on other Town properties. T. Dufresne disagreed, as the draft CE allows for much more uses than any other property which the HCC has been involved in. L. Wolff noted that issues brought up during the monitoring process over the past several years have not been able to be addressed to date. S. Wyskiel stated that she monitors and walks the properties annually. P. Baker stated that the Town hires a professional to conduct the annual monitoring; enforcement of the CE restrictions has been a greater issue. M. Jeffery felt that the CE language gave enough information to move forward.

T. Davies motioned to table any further discussion on the draft CE and property until all members had time to conduct a thorough review of the draft CE; seconded by M. Jeffery. All members in favor, none opposed, the motion passed 7-0-0. Further discussion was tabled until the November 16, 2016 meeting.

ONGOING BUSINESS

NRPC Map Layer

T. Dufresne noted that he had emailed the Chair of the Amherst Conservation Commission about Hollis' interest and willingness to contribute towards the fee to have NRPC create this map layer, as discussed at the October 19th meeting. To date, he has not yet heard back from Amherst.

Wright-Taylor Management Plan

Tabled from the October 19th meeting, T. Dufresne stated that Jim Oehler, who created the plan, had noted that there appeared to be a lack of access to the Wright property. There is access via an old cart path, and this access is noted on the deed and shown on Town Tax Maps. P. Baker asked about the "stone" feature on the Taylor property, after a short discussion of this area, it was felt that the area should be correctly identified as a "drumlin," which is a low oval mound or small hill, typically one of a group, consisting of compacted boulder clay molded by past glacial action. He also asked if a sign and trail/path through the Taylor property was proposed. T. Dufresne stated that Jim Taylor, son of the former owners, was to have the sign created, he will follow up. T. Davies suggested creating a sign template for consistency.

L. Wolff asked about action items brought forward in the plan. The Taylor property will need a timber harvest; Craig Birch recently conducted one on the Wright property. T. Dufresne will speak with Craig Birch regarding conducting a timber harvest.

HBHS Green Group

T. Dufresne has received an official written request for funds to assist with purchasing the recycling bins, as discussed at the October 19, 2016 meeting, for \$209.35. As the HCC had approved, via motion and vote at the same meeting, a donation of \$250.00, T. Dufresne will be sending that amount, all in favor, and a check payable to the HBHS Green Group in the amount of \$250.00 will be authorized and submitted to the Finance Office.

BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

Joint Conservation & Agricultural Commission Work Group – Mark Post

The work group met on October 26 and 31, 2016. The site walk will take place on November 4, 2016 with Heather Foley at 1:00 pm; she will use any findings to create a site assessment report. It is expected that there will be several lessees on the property instead of just 1. An annual review of the leased areas will be done, and language to that effect will be included in the draft. Work on a draft lease is continuing, and hopefully the work group will be able to finalize this and present to the Selectmen in December as part of the bid packet and as a template for the final lease document. P. Baker asked if livestock would be allowed on the property, it has been discussed but no determination has been made to date. The next meeting will be Wednesday, November 9, 2016 at 3:00 pm in the Community Room.

T. Dufresne motioned to approve the appointment of M. Jeffery and Jonathan Bruneau as the HCC representatives to the Joint Conservation and Agricultural Commission Work Group; seconded by M. Post. All in favor, none opposed, and these members were appointed as the HCC representatives by a vote of 7-0-0.

Land Protection Study Committee – Peter Baker

The LPSC will be meeting on Monday, November 7 at 8:00 am in the Community Room.

Treasurer's Report – Thom Davies

As of October 31, 2016, there was \$363,662.97 in the HCC account; \$10,000 of this is held in stewardship reserves, leaving an available balance of \$353,662.97.

Board of Selectmen – Peter Band

P. Band stated that the BOS has been primarily addressing the upcoming 2017 budget items, and nothing of import to the HCC has been ongoing.

In the absence of Cathy Hoffman, there was no Planning Board update. T. Dufresne noted that the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) had approved a variance to allow the removal and replacement of an underground tank on the Morin Landscaping property at 301 Depot Rd. Members are concerned about this item as it is over a major aquifer. The ZBA is requiring monitors and emergency alarms; this approval will go back to the Planning Board as part of the site plan review.

MINUTES

T. Dufresne motioned to approve the minutes of October 19, 2016 as written, seconded by T. Davies. All members in favor, none opposed, and the minutes were approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

T. Dufresne motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by L. Wolff. All members in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried by a vote of 7-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Cain
Staff