

HOLLIS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Public Meeting

July 15, 2020

Approved August 19, 2020

Regular Members: Tom Dufresne, Thomas Davies, Mark Post, Paul Edmunds, Jonathan Bruneau;
Alternate Members: Laura Bianco, Cheryl Quaine, Karen Bridgeo, David Werner
BOS Ex-Officio: Peter Band
Staff: Connie Cain
Guests: Helen Homola

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. T. Dufresne introduced D. Werner as the newest member of the HCC.

LUDWIG SIERGIEWICZ FARM INVASIVE SPECIES STUDY – Helen Homola

T. Dufresne introduced Helen Homola, town resident and a senior at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. H. Homola is majoring in Geospatial Science. She volunteered to create a map to geo-reference invasive plant species, specifically Oriental Bittersweet, Multiflora Rose, and Burning Bush, and to plot and transpose these areas on the Ludwig Siergiewicz Farm, MBLU 046-051, on the north end of the discontinued Mooar Hill Rd.

H. Homola explained the study, which involved surveying the property by foot. Each time a species was found, she used ArcGIS's collector app to mark the location with a GPS coordinate, with most of the points being a positive result for an invasive. As expected, most of the invasive species are clustered in certain areas, such as the seasonal stream, and of the 80 +/- acres, approximately 12 acres contain invasive species. The accuracy of the point marking is about 4 -5 feet from the location, or better.

T. Davies asked if it was possible to target the invasives to allow for minimum pesticide use with maximum results; yes, and that's what the study was to do. The location accuracy of the point marking is about 4 -5 feet. The other locations with high amounts were the log landing and the former agricultural field, with Oriental bittersweet being the primary invasive found. P. Band asked about the best way to mitigate the invasive species, hand-pulling is always best but not always practical and can be time-consuming. T. Dufresne noted that when bids are sought for the remediation project, the coordinates can be provided to the company. J. Bruneau suggested creating a CMZ file as those points can be loaded and accessed via Google maps.

H. Homola stated that the data is available and if members needed anything further from her to let her know. Members thanked her for creating the study as it will be invaluable when mitigation begins.

(Helen Homola left the meeting at 7:11 pm.)

T. Davies asked if the HCC were to contract with a company to chemically address the invasives, would the Town be liable for any future illness suffered by the public. T. Dufresne answered that any potential vendor would need to have insurance and would be required to follow State practices for the application of any such chemical. There is a State certification and license program, about 12 vendors are licensed to do this type of work at the present. T. Davies asked is the benefit of chemically eradicating the invasives would outweigh the risk. T. Dufresne noted there are two options available, either leave them alone and they will continue to take over the property, or reclaim as per the management plan. J. Bruneau suggest that the plant growth be removed first, then the chemical application can occur where needed. T. Dufresne stated that this would be done regardless, and also stumps and rocks also need to be removed before the growth can be addressed. Oriental bittersweet seeds remain viable for up to 7 years, and just removing the plants will not solve the problem. D. Werner stated that he was involved in the Monsanto case, most of the people who became ill after using their product were those who used it frequently. He felt that an indemnification policy should be required from any vendor.

L. Bianco asked what other countries do to remove invasive species, as the chemical used for remediation is banned in those countries. She felt that remediation is not intensive once the initial work was done to remove and control. P. Band reiterated T. Dufresne's comment that the stumps, boulders, rocks and other material must be removed before any hand or mechanical removal process can begin. C. Quaine noted that on the stream, the Dept. of Environmental Services (NHDES) would not approve a chemical application near water bodies; T. Dufresne felt as the stream is seasonal, may be approved. K. Bridgeo asked when the stumps and other items are removed, and the mechanical remediation is completed, then how will the property be maintained; T. Dufresne stated that it would be mowed at least every other year. K. Bridgeo asked if the mowing would address the invasives as well; yes. L. Bianco felt this would be the next best option to hand pulling. Discussion of remedies continued for a brief time. T. Dufresne stated that Craig Birch will be finalizing the timber cut on the property within the next 6 months. If remediation to be done by a vendor, would probably cost more than

\$5000, and if so, then a Request for Bid/Proposal would be necessary. While the process should not take long, it is a legal requirement. Another site walk would probably be necessary before winter. T. Dufresne asked members to review their schedules, and be ready to set the date for the site walk at the next meeting on August 19, 2020.

BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

BOARD OF SELECTMEN – Peter Band

The Selectboard working through the Rocky Pond Boat Launch license issues at their last meeting. There are 5 keys available to Hollis residents at the Communication Center. The new guidelines are available on the Town website.

There were no updates for the Planning Board, as their next meeting is on Tuesday, July 21, 2020. The HCC-Ag Workgroup will be meeting after the HCC meeting to do the initial review of Stefanowicz Farm bids received, and no Treasurer's Report was available at meeting time.

NEW/CONTINUING BUSINESS

Nashua River Watershed Association

T. Dufresne stated that while he and LeeAnn Wolff have been the Hollis representatives for the Association, he has too many other commitments to continue to serve as one of the two representatives required. Hollis and Brookline are the only NH representatives, the rest are Massachusetts communities. The meetings are generally once a month at their office in Groton, MA. He asked members to consider serving on the Association, and he will need someone to volunteer within in the next month or two.

Annual Monitoring Reports

T. Dufresne received the monitoring reports from Chris Kane earlier this year, but due to the COVID-19 outbreak, this is the first opportunity to discuss them as a group.

- 1.) Rideout Properties. Some invasives found but should be able to be removed easily at this time. T. Dufresne asked C. Quaine if the Boy Scouts were looking for projects; the Boy Scouts have temporarily disbanded due to COVID-19. C. Quaine knows some of the families in the Rideout Rd/Milton Pl area and she will contact them to see if any of them could help the HCC with this project in the fall.
- 2.) The HBHS Conservation Easement continues to be an issue. As the NHDES did not enforce their own conditions during the period of the Turf Field construction, T. Dufresne did not think anything would be done.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

T. Dufresne motioned to enter into Non-Public session to discuss potential land acquisition under RSA 91-A:3, II (d); seconded by J. Bruneau. T. Dufresne polled the members, all those present voted to enter into Non-Public session by a vote of 9-0-0. The HCC entered into Non-Public Session at 7:35 pm.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

T. Dufresne motioned to conclude the Non-Public session and to keep the minutes sealed until voted by the HCC to release, seconded by P. Edmunds. T. Dufresne polled the members, all members voted to conclude the Non-Public session and keep the minutes sealed by a vote of 9-0-0. The HCC concluded Non-Public Session at 8:10 pm.

Based on discussion during non-public session, the following items were voted on.

- 1.) For the first property discussed, it will be necessary to have studies and plans completed, including a Baseline Report, Title Search, Phase 1 Environmental Study and a Management Plan. Additionally, quotes for a survey may be needed.

T. Dufresne motioned to authorize expenditures of up to \$5000 for the studies and plans referenced, seconded by M. Post. All members in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the motion carried by a vote of 9-0-0.

T. Dufresne stated that a Public Hearing is required prior to any expenditure. After discussion of legal requirements, the Public Hearing will be tentatively held on September 2, 2020; C. Cain will investigate publishing requirements now that the Nashua Telegram has gone to a once-a-week publication.

- 2.) For the second property discussed, the Public Hearing is anticipated to take place in October, but will be after the first property.

T. Dufresne motioned to authorize an expenditure of \$300,000 pending a Public Hearing and Board of Selectmen approval, seconded by M. Post. All members in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the motion carried by a vote of 9-0-0.

121 **MINUTES**

122 *T. Dufresne made the motion to accept the minutes of the June 17, 2020 meeting as written; seconded by J. Bruneau.*
123 *All members voted in favor, none opposed or abstained, and the minutes were approved by a vote of 9-0-0.*
124

125 The non-public minutes of June 17, 2020 will be voted on at the next meeting.
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127 **ADJOURNMENT**

128 *J. Bruneau motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by T. Dufresne. All members in favor, none opposed, and the*
129 *motion carried by a vote of 9-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.*
130

131 Respectfully submitted,
132 Connie Cain
133 Staff