

# HOLLIS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

February 21, 2018

Rough Draft

Members Present: Tom Dufresne, David Connor, Thomas Davies, LeeAnn Wolff, Cathy Hoffman, Mark Post, Jonathan Bruneau;  
Alternate Members: Laura Bianco, Joseph Connelly, Paul Edmunds  
Board of Selectmen: Peter Band, BOS Liaison;  
Staff: Connie Cain  
Guests & Attendees: David Belanger, Recreation Commission; Peter Baker, Joseph Garruba, Karen Bridgeo-Buttonwood-Meadow Neighborhood Group; Elizabeth & Forest Wright; other public members.

T. Dufresne called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

## **BUTTONWOOD-MEADOW NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP**

T. Dufresne informed members and the attending public that the Neighborhood Group (Group) had requested to give a presentation at tonight's meeting. He clarified that it is a presentation, not a public hearing, as erroneously stated in social media. While HCC members may ask questions or comment, it is not open to public input. As the Group did not request to be on the agenda until Monday, February 19<sup>th</sup> via email, the HCC's agenda had been revised to accommodate their request. Due to this, the presentation will be limited to 30 minutes to allow the previously scheduled agenda items to be addressed. With this, T. Dufresne invited the Group to begin their presentation at 7:02 pm.

P. Baker, as a Group member, stated that the Group wished to present concerns they had in regards to the proposed Siergiewicz Lot Purchase, given in 2018 Town Meeting Warrant Articles as #2. He then introduced tonight's presenter, Joseph Garruba of 28 Winchester Drive, Hollis.

J. Garruba began the PowerPoint presentation, stating that the group has several concerns, one of which is the Conservation qualities of the Siergiewicz Lot. Slide #2 gave cost implications. He noted that, per the Budget Committee information available on the Town's website, the purchase cost of the property and construction of 2 playing fields, as proposed, will be mainly coming from the Town's unexpended fund balance, and \$100,000 from the Conservation Commission fund balance. Per the Budget Committee information, the total projected cost for the purchase and construction is \$860,000 total.

Slide 3 presented the conceptual plan proposed for the playing fields, and J. Garruba stated that the "hatched line" area is an existing Conservation Easement area. The Conservation Easement appears to be a total of 14.746 acres. J. Garruba stated that another major concern of the Group is the traffic impact to the immediate area; he stated that both the entrance and exit are in the wetlands buffer (buffer). The Group felt that this layout is confusing, and may create traffic issues when teams are entering and exiting. This slide also delineated the buffer; with J. Garruba stating that Town & State regulations prevent building in the buffer area. The Group felt the plan did not address other potential improvements to the property, such as benches, restrooms, or a walking path on the perimeter of the fields.

J. Bruneau asked how a potentially confusing traffic pattern is applicable to the conservation qualities of the property; J. Garruba responded that because the entrances and exits are in the buffer, it is applicable. T. Dufresne clarified that there is no conservation easement on the property at present, the plan shown in the presentation is a conceptual plan that is proposed if the Town purchases the property; changes may still occur. J. Garruba stated that he thought it was already in effect, and will make sure that this is clarified in any future presentations.

Slide 4 showed a conceptual subdivision, ca 2008, showing a 3-lot subdivision on the lot, and a "required" conservation easement area of 10.618 acres. He noted that the red line shown on this slide delineated the buffer. He stated that the Group would rather see 3 houses built than the 2 playing fields. It was also felt this would be less impact than the fields, and would be less harmful to the wetlands than chemical or fertilizer run-off from field maintenance. He also stated that the plan showed that the proposed conserved easement area was not the 14.746 acres as shown on the conceptual plan.

Slide 5 presented "Problems with the Athletic Fields Proposal." J. Garruba stated that he had added an estimated spectator area and 15 foot wide walking path on to the proposed field perimeters. It was estimated that within the buffer, the field development area was approximately 0.5 acres with these items included.

J. Bruneau felt that the walking path on the field perimeter was exaggerated. J. Connelly asked if the Group's proposed fields already included walking path and spectator areas; J. Garruba did not know. J. Connelly asked if the group had consulted with the Recreation Commission when creating their plan; no. P. Band asked if walking in the buffer was a problem; members stated that present laws do not restrict walking or hiking in the buffers. Both J. Bruneau and M. Post asked if the Group's plan had been engineered or if they were just estimated; J. Garruba stated that no engineering had been done, just projected or assumed would be needed shown on the plan. J. Bruneau asked what J. Garruba's experience was. J. Garruba stated that he was an engineer; when asked for specific type, he stated that he wished to clarify for the record that he was an electrical engineer and did not deal with these types of plans professionally.

T. Davies asked about the existing building on the property. J. Garruba stated that the barn had been the former machine shop, there is a well and other equipment. T. Davies asked if it was completely in the buffer; J. Garruba responded that the building site is mostly in the buffer. M. Post asked if any agricultural soils had been mapped for quality or designations, J. Garruba felt that it had been addressed via the appraisal, the property has been used as an agricultural field for approximately 50 years.

P. Band asked if a building box would be required for this plan; C. Hoffman stated no, because there are no dwellings proposed. C. Cain asked J. Garruba to clarify the zone. J. Garruba stated that the zone is Residential & Agriculture, but the WCO is the "Wetlands Conservation Overlay", and stated that the proposed use is subject to obtaining a Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) waiver prior to any construction start. C. Hoffman clarified that the use of the property as "playing fields" is listed in the zoning ordinance as needing a special exception from the ZBA. P. Band stated that using port-a-potties would probably be the most beneficial way of addressing restroom needs. It is removed from the site and disposed of elsewhere. Did the Group have an issue with this?

P. Edmunds stated that the Highway Safety Committee would be holding a public meeting to address some of the traffic concerns that have been brought up by the Town's use of the property as playing fields, with the meeting to take place on Friday, February 23, 2018 at 3:00 pm in the Community Room. Hollis Police Chief Joseph Hoebeke will be presenting information to the Committee. The Board of Selectmen will also have information presented to them at their public meeting on Monday, February 26, 2018. HCC members are encouraged to attend both meetings.

T. Dufresne thanked J. Garruba and the Group for their presentation, which ended at 7:40 pm.

## **BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### *Planning Board – Cathy Hoffman*

The Planning Board held their most recent meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2018. During this meeting, 3 applications were reviewed, along with the draft Master Plan section dealing with Transportation.

- 1.) Proctor Hill Rd near the Brookline Boundary, proposed Storage Buildings. The properties recently sold, and the new owner wished to make some modifications to the previously approved plan. These were approved.
- 2.) Bank of America building, Market Place. Michael Buckley has recently purchased the property, and presented plans to convert the building into a café/bakery similar to the one in Merrimack. He has also applied for a State liquor license.
- 3.) Love Lane, Lot Line Relocation plan between Post, Beaver Brook Association, and the Fimbel Estate. This was approved and a waiver was granted to allow 3 houses on an existing driveway along the Proctor Hill Rd side of the property. This plan included the transfer of approximately 20 acres to Beaver Brook Association.

### *Wild & Scenic Rivers Study Committee – LeeAnn Wolff and Laura Bianco*

L. Wolff and Al Futterman presented the draft Stewardship Plan to the Planning Board at the February 20, 2018 meeting. The Study Committee has approved the stewardship draft plan and has just finalized. Brookline Conservation Commission had also had a meeting and site walk on February 19, 2018. L. Wolff believes it is now available online, and 2 hard copies will be sent to the Board of Selectmen for review. Text only copies of the plan will also be made available to the public, without any of the appendices. L. Bianco has secured the Library's meeting room for a public informational session, date has yet to be established, but will be in the next week or two. L. Wolff asked if members had any suggestions for this session. P. Band felt that representatives from the Committee who can answer specific questions about the goals should be available. P. Band can present the Warrant Article at Town Meeting. T. Davies asked if the BOS or Budget Committee had made any recommendations to support or not; as there is no financial impact to the Town, neither made a recommendation. L. Bianco will also be making a presentation to the Hollis Democrats, and Drew Kellner has made a presentation to the Hollis Woman's Club. T. Davies mentioned that it might be a good idea to coordinate a Community Outreach effort by setting up the tent at the Transfer Station publicizing the information meeting.

119 (Staff Note: The information meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, at the Hollis Library and weather  
120 dependent, HCC members will be at the Transfer Station on Saturday, March 3rd from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. CC)  
121

122 *Board of Selectmen – Peter Band*

123 The Budget Committee voted to not recommend the proposed purchase of the Siergiewicz Lot at their last meeting.  
124 The Town Warrant has been finalized and is in the process of being printed prior to public posting. P. Band stated that  
125 the BOS' main concern with the Siergiewicz Lot is traffic and safety, with some further discussion and presentation to  
126 be made to the BOS at their next meeting, as previously stated.  
127

128 The Howe Conservation Easement is in the final stages of completion, and should be finalized in the near future.  
129

130 There were no Workgroup updates or Treasurer's Report available at meeting time.  
131

132 **HOWE CONSERVATION EASEMENT - SIGNATORY AUTHORIZATION**

133 As part of the Howe Conservation Easement transfer, the HCC must approve a member to serve as the signatory on  
134 behalf of the HCC at the closing of the easement. Generally, this is the Chair, but can be someone else.  
135

136 M. Post motioned, seconded by T. Davies, to delegate HCC Chair T. Dufresne as the authorized signer for documents  
137 related to the purchase of the Howe Property. All members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried by  
138 a vote of 10-0-0.  
139

140 **NEW & CONTINUING BUSINESS**

141 *Woods Forum*

142 UNH Extension for Hillsborough County is holding a "Woods Forum" with presentations by Ethan Belair, UNH Coop  
143 Extension Forester, on 3 dates in March, as follows:  
144

- 145 1.) March 3, 2018 at the Peabody Mill Environmental Center at Joe England Conservation Area, in Amherst NH. The  
146 forum will begin at 9:00 am and is expected to run until 1:00 pm. Please register for this forum at  
147 <http://bit.ly/WoodsForumAmherst>  
148 2.) March 17, 2018, this 2-part forum begins with a Field Tour at High Ridge Tree Farm in Lyndeborough, NH from  
149 10:00 am to noon; please register for this forum at <http://bit.ly/WoodsForumLyndeboro> ; and  
150 March 20, 2018 the Presentation & Discussion section of the forum will be held at Greenfield Town Meeting House  
151 in Greenfield, NH from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Please register for this forum at <http://bit.ly/WoodsForumGreenfield>  
152

153 *Timber Harvesting*

154 T. Dufresne has spoken to Craig Birch in regards to conducting selective cuts on two properties, and recommends  
155 approving selective cuts on the following:

- 156 1.) Lord Lots on Flint Brook, MBLU 014-076 & 014-077. C. Birch is conducting cuts on the abutting Hacker properties,  
157 and felt now would be a good time to cut, as it will mean less disturbance in the future.  
158 2.) Spaulding Lots, Rocky Pond Rd, MBLU 023-055, 023-056, and 055-008. C. Birch would like to remove some  
159 additional timber from the property left over from the 2016 cut.  
160

161 J. Connelly motioned, seconded by P. Edmunds, to approve the Notices of Intent to Cut and Timber Sale Agreements  
162 for the properties identified above. All members voted in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried by a vote of 10-  
163 0-0.  
164

165 *Siergiewicz Lot, South Merrimack Rd*

166 Members agreed that most people do not read the minutes available to the public, which creates misunderstandings  
167 about property purchases. T. Davies noted that in larger communities, they have specific departments that deal with  
168 such items, like Boston MA, which has created the Department of Conservation and Recreation specifically set up to  
169 address these type of purchases.  
170

171 T. Dufresne stated that the Recreation Commission had been in the final stages of completing a plan for the proposed  
172 playing fields to be constructed at the Stefanowicz Farm property, and had backed off finalizing these plans due to the  
173 proposed Siergiewicz Lot purchase. J. Bruneau asked if enough time had been given for the Recreation Commission to  
174 prepare a comprehensive plan for the Siergiewicz Lot. He felt both the HCC and the Recreation Commission should  
175 have a united voice and common message for this purchase. T. Davies agreed, and stated that it was important that  
176 the public know how important it is to have official protection of wetlands in place. These particular wetlands are not  
177 protected by any legal authority at this time. P. Edmunds felt that the Recreation Commission knew the importance of  
178 the wetland protection, and this should be publicly addressed as well. C. Hoffman noted that the fields were former

179 soccer fields for the Amherst World Cup Soccer team. T. Dufresne will send out the draft BOS presentation to members  
180 for input within the next couple of days. He noted that the HCC, and both Recreation and Agriculture Commissions are  
181 anticipated to be presenting information on both the Siergiewicz Lot and the Stefanowicz Farm properties.  
182

183 *Pitarys Lot, Twiss Lane, MBLU 004-061*

184 T. Dufresne announced that the documentation for the Pitarys Lot donation to the HCC is almost complete. Both the  
185 title and survey are being finalized, and 3 of the 4 boundary markers were found, the other is thought to be under  
186 water. Access to the property is from the end of Lynne Drive, and will also be provided through the Mobile Home Park.  
187 T. Davies felt that both the BOS and the HCC should have a public recognition ceremony or public announcement for  
188 Mr. & Mrs. Pitarys donation of the 45.80 acre parcel. This was not asked of them, they offered the property as a  
189 donation to the Town. Members felt that a brief presentation could be done at the start of Town Meeting. T. Dufresne  
190 will follow up with Town Administrator Kim Galipeau and Town Moderator James Belanger.  
191

192 *Celebration of Life for Kathy Bond*

193 T. Davies noted that a Celebration of Life will be held at Beaver Brook's Maple Hill Farm on Ridge Road, on Monday,  
194 February 26, 2018 from 3:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Mrs. Bond was the first science/environmental teacher at the Hollis  
195 Elementary School, with her salary paid by Hollis Nichols. Many people had their first science experience in her classes  
196 as young children.  
197

198 *Annual Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast*

199 T. Dufresne reminded members that the Annual Town Volunteer Breakfast will be held on Saturday, March 3, 2018 at  
200 the Lawrence Barn, from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. All HCC members are invited to attend; further information can be had  
201 by contacting Assistant Town Administrator Chrissy Herrera at (603) 465-2209 ext. 103.  
202

203 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

204 T. Dufresne motioned to enter into non-public session for the consideration of sale, acquisition, or lease of property  
205 per RSA 91-A:3, II (d); seconded by L. Wolff. All members in favor, none opposed, and the motion carried 10-0-0. The  
206 HCC entered Non-Public session at 8:20 pm.  
207

208 **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

209 T. Dufresne motioned to conclude the Non-Public session and return to Public session, seconded by C. Hoffman. All  
210 members in favor, none opposed, and the Non-Public session concluded at 8:30 pm.  
211

212 **MEETING SCHEDULE & TOWN MEETING/ELECTIONS**

213 The HCC will meeting on their regularly scheduled first and third Wednesday's of the month for March, which are  
214 March 7 and March 21, 2018. The first March meeting will be prior to Town Meeting, which is scheduled for Saturday,  
215 March 17, 2018, starting at 10:00 am, at the HBHS Auditorium. Town Elections will be held on Tuesday, March 13,  
216 2018 at the Lawrence Barn from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm.  
217

218 **MINUTES**

219 T. Dufresne motioned to accept the public minutes of the January 3, 2018 meeting as written; seconded by J. Bruneau.  
220 All members in favor, none opposed, and the minutes were approved by a vote of 10-0-0.  
221

222 T. Dufresne motioned to accept the public minutes of the January 17, 2018 meeting as written; seconded by J. Connelly.  
223 All members in favor, none opposed, and the minutes were approved by a vote of 10-0-0.  
224

225 T. Dufresne motioned to accept the non-public minutes of the January 17, 2008 meeting as written and to keep them  
226 sealed; seconded by T. Davies. All members in favor, none opposed, and the minutes were approved and kept sealed  
227 by a vote of 10-0-0.  
228

229 **ADJOURNMENT**

230 T. Dufresne motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by M. Post. All members in favor, none opposed, and the  
231 meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm by a vote of 10-0-0.  
232

233 Respectfully submitted,  
234 Connie Cain  
235 Staff