

**Hamilton Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting of June 24, 2015
Meeting held at Hamilton Town Hall**

Commissioners present:

Richard Luongo, Chair, Virginia Cookson, Bob Cronin, Keith Glidden, George Tarr.

Staff present:

Jim Hankin, Conservation Agent

Others present:

Shawn Farrell, BOS liaison

Mary Rimmer

Zachary Peters

Nancy Baker

Jackie Hodge

Richard Luongo opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. He stated that the meeting was being recorded for the minutes secretary and that anyone in the audience who wanted to make a video or audio recording should state that before the meeting begins.

Jim Hankin noted that the applicant for the Notice of Intent for 470 Essex Street, construction of single family dwelling, had filed a request to continue the public hearing to August 12, 2015, for submittal of septic design. Keith Glidden moved to continue the hearing until August 12, 2015 at 7 p.m. George Tarr seconded the motion. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Discussion on Land Acquisition Policy – draft

Discussion ensued about Board of Selectmen draft Land Acquisition Policy relative to Chapter 61 parcels and/or other parcels becoming available in Town for acquisition. Discussion addressed role of BOS, Town manager and Town Meeting in any land acquisition. Also mentioned was possible creation of list of properties (priority would have to be decided) in Town that might come up for purchase. In addition, that under due diligence parameters in all purchase and sale agreements that Town enters into that a land survey should be done.

Also noted was how the open space plan identifies what parcels Hamilton would like preserved. The proposed list could also include water supply protection properties and other municipal uses. Discussion was on the importance of how properties are identified. The draft policy was based on similar policies found in Ipswich and other communities. All Town boards and committees are reviewing the draft policy. Town officials are trying to be prepared when properties in Hamilton become available for acquisition.

Discussion addressed importance of Town being involved and need for a communicated plan for a property to reach agreement for two thirds vote for bonding at Town Meeting. The public process could consist of a list of properties, who identifies them, and ability for Town official representation with property owners to establish and cultivate relationships. Discussion was on how large estate owners have collaborated on a plan about what will be done with their

properties. Any property in Chapter 61 (i.e., 1,600 acres in Hamilton) will come before the Town with right of first refusal.

Comments from the Commission were it did not have issues with idea of land acquisition policy as well as having Town manager and BOS involved with property owners to understand future plans for parcels. Also, if a separate list keeper should be identified and appointed to manage list of potentially available properties and communicate between land owners, BOS, and land use boards. The Commission will compile comments and discuss at its next meeting on July 15, 2015.

Notice of Intent (Continued from June 10, 2015)

Off Asbury Street, Map 27 Lot 4

Construct boardwalk and observation deck in resource area on Greenbelt land adjacent to 650 Asbury Street former Patton estate.

DEP file #172-0579

Mary Rimmer spoke representing ECGA. The Commission had conducted a site walk. Ms. Rimmer mentioned open water in Ipswich River area for most of the year, where button bush is located and this is where the boardwalk and observation platform is proposed. DEP guidance on small docks and piers was also referenced. Some vegetation might have to be trimmed for boardwalk. The wetland line in this area was previously approved in an ORAD, that is current and that was issued to the Town and the developer of a separate development project at this address. There will not be access to the Ipswich River itself from this location. The National Heritage program was contacted and it has 30 days to comment. DEP has not commented yet. The hearing was continued until July 15, 2015.

Brief interviews with candidates for Open Space subcommittee candidates

Discussion ensued with candidates Nancy Baker, Jackie Hodge, and Zachary Peters for HCC's Open Space subcommittee. The Open Space plan update will be done by Town Hall staff and supervised by Director of Planning and Inspections Patrick Reffett followed by review by Town boards and committees.

Discussion addressed importance of interaction with property owners, the Town, and interest groups with open space focus. The subcommittee can have as many as seven voting members, and activities would be reported to the Commission. Subcommittee member appointments (including others interviewed by the Commission at its next meeting) will be voted on at the Commission's July 15, 2015 meeting.

Also mentioned was how current Open Space plan needs information such as new census data, that subcommittee can look at 2009 plan, and intent is to have plan in place for wide input/comments from stakeholders and community by fall. Virginia Cookson speaking as an individual opined about subcommittee updating Open Space plan rather than Town staff. Shawn Farrell suggested there could be a working session amongst Town staff, subcommittee, and interested parties on the Open Space plan.

Items for July 15, 2015 agenda

Discussion at next meeting will include NOI - 650 Asbury Street boardwalk vote, land acquisition policy, vote on candidates for Open Space subcommittee, Patton estate housing project.

Appointment of Commission member to zoning by-law revision committee

Mr. Glidden noted his legal experience with zoning by-laws, relevance of zoning by-laws to the Commission and regulation of properties. Virginia Cookson moved to appoint Keith Glidden as the Conservation Commission's representative on the zoning by-law revision committee. Bob Cronin seconded the motion. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Vote Minutes of May 20, 2015 and May 27, 2015

Mr. Cronin moved to approve the minutes of May 20, 2015 and May 27, 2015. Mr. Glidden seconded the motion. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Mr. Cronin moved to adjourn. Mr. Tarr seconded the motion. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion. Commission adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Minutes submitted July 17, 2015 by Jane Dooley