

Land Acquisition Committee
Minutes of Meeting
May 21, 2015
Lower Level Conference Room
Town Hall – 10 Mudge Way, Bedford, MA

PRESENT: Don Cullis, Chair; Tom Mulligan; William Speciale; Richard Torti
Elizabeth Bagdonas, Conservation Administrator

ABSENT: Lori Eggert; Caroline Fedele; Daniel Puffer

At 7:30 pm Mr. Cullis opened the meeting, summarizing previous analysis of properties that might become available for recreation purchases. He suggested collecting more information on how various properties became included on the lists, and other interests the properties might be associated with, such as historical importance.

Ms. Amy Lloyd, Chair of the Planning Board, was present at the meeting. She mentioned that there was a parcel at Depot Park of some interest, and wondered how it would fit in on the acquisition planning list. Ms. Bagdonas explained that some parcels were pursued directly by the Selectmen, particularly if they were of general municipal interest. A Depot Park parcel might be of recreation interest as well.

Mr. Cullis stated that discussion at the last meeting had centered on techniques of evaluating potential recreation parcels as a way of evaluating parcels in general. He added that this exercise had revealed a few promising parcels, and talked about visiting some of them. H3 and H4 were good spaces, but had very limited access potential, confined to pedestrian and bicycle use, with no parking or potential driveway location. He continued by saying that Parcels Q and S had not been discussed. Mr. Cullis asked how the other members felt about the process, and suggested that the committee reach out to other Town committees.

Regarding other potential recreation parcels, Ms. Bagdonas described the landscape at 145 Davis Road, and the issues of floodplain, wetlands and rare species habitat. Mr. Cullis applied the baseball templates to the GIS map. There might be other uses, such as agriculture and open space. Ms. Bagdonas described the existing community garden areas at the Jordan Conservation Area, and other nearby cleared areas. Mr. Cullis suggested adding potential agricultural properties to the list; it is presently one of the assignable values. The role of Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) was mentioned in assisting individuals and groups in developing a vision for particular lands.

The parcel at 82 Carlisle Road was reviewed. Issues to be considered might be possible contamination, truck parking, and dumping; other nearby parcels were also noted.

Mr. Cullis suggested conducting an exercise to set priorities among the various parcels. In the case of the Old Causeway Road (Concord Field Station) properties, the templates fit well on two of the parcels. A discussion followed on the history of the properties. A question was

raised on the ownership of the strip that leads through these properties into Huckins Farm and on to Dudley Road. A comment was made that acquisition discussion could be started for a possible purchase, with lease arrangements to be considered later. However, the nature of a Town lease should be determined, keeping options open as to why a lease would be a good arrangement for athletic fields.

The use of H3 and H4 as dog parks was discussed; DPW maintenance access was not known, although it was generally agreed that the area would be hard for vehicles to reach. The neighbors would also have concerns about on-street parking, as no parking would be possible at the sites. A better use was seen as a feature of the proposed bikeway, where a rest or picnic area could be established for cyclists and pedestrians. The bikeway planners could be contacted about this.

The committee agreed that the Carlisle Road property would be best used as a purchase; use of appropriate parcels on Old Causeway Road would be better under a lease agreement; H3 was not suitable for a recreational field. However, a nice idea might be developed for the land next to the new easements by Elm and Mongo Brooks, and the Grantor might be contacted to discuss future options.

Mr. Cullis recommended talking to or meeting with the Trails Committee, providing contact information to the members, drafting a letter to approach additional property owners, and contacting Concord Field Station by telephone. He also reported on a call he had made to Larry Smith of Cranberry Hill Associates regarding the potential easement along Elm Brook, after Mr. Smith's attorney did not respond to his calls. Mr. Smith was cordial, but did not seem to be interested in pursuing the subject at this time.

A motion was made by Mr. Cullis and seconded by Mr. Speciale to approve the minutes of April 14, 2015. The motion passed 4-0-0. The committee agreed to meet on Tuesday, June 23rd at 7:30 pm, with a back-up date of Thursday, June 25th. The committee discussed an agenda item for the next meeting, to develop a case-by-case ranking and assigning specific areas. Mr. Cullis suggested an Xcel sheet to pull out possibilities, highlight the candidates and plan for a presentation to the Selectmen.

Mr. Cullis asked Ms. Bagdonas to contact the Selectmen's Office to arrange a 10-15 minute appointment at one of their upcoming meetings, preferably before the meeting of June 23rd.

Minutes prepared by Elizabeth Bagdonas.

Minutes approved at the meeting of August 11, 2015.