

TOWN OF MILLIS

OAK GROVE FARM COMMISSION

A meeting of the Commissioners of Oak Grove Farm was held on Tuesday, May 6, 2014, at 5:00 p.m., at Oak Grove Farm.

Present were: Nancy Ciesluk, John McAvoy, Julio Fontecchio, and Steve MacInnes.

The agenda item was a discussion of that portion of Article 23 of the 2014 Annual Spring Town Meeting Report/Warrant that requests funding for new field construction, including preliminary soil testing and site elevation, at Oak Grove Farm (OGF).

Commissioner John McAvoy distributed a photograph that was prepared for the Fields Committee by its consulting engineer, showing the proposed location of two fields (one 11 on 11 and one 8 on 8) that the Fields Committee has proposed for an area at OGF known as the farmhouse field. The Commissioners have seen the enlarged plans that were on display at the Town Hall, but this plan was never formally presented at any meeting of OGF that would have allowed the Commissioners to discuss with the Fields Committee the field situation in Millis and any proposed location of fields within OGF.

As the result of comments the Commissioners received at its public meetings from the soccer club users of OGF, they agree that there is a need for additional fields at OGF. An 8 on 8

field with two 6 on 6 fields overlaying the 8 on 8 field was felt to sufficiently meet the needs of the present users of OGF, and to allow for additional users such as the Millis Recreation Department and others to use OGF. Chairman MacInnes told the Commissioners that at the May 1, 2014, Fields Committee meeting he attended, Chairman Wagner and Member Sean Doherty stated that Steve Cassidy, head of the Millis Soccer Club and Millis Youth Baseball, thinks it would be a great idea to "get the biggest bang for our buck." After hearing this, the Commissioners determined that the most "bang for our buck" does not mean the biggest field that can be located at OGF but rather the size of the fields most useful and responsibly affordable.

The Commissioners stated that they did not disagree with the proposal of an 11 on 11 field. However, they believe that both one 11 on 11 field with one 8 on 8 field next to it is not in the best interests of OGF. Some of the Commissioners concerns include: The direction of the field in an east/west direction vs. a north/south direction; who will be responsible for the maintenance of this field; the large amount of parking immediately needed to accommodate users of the field (the Commissioners noted that vehicles were parked along Exchange Street and Island Road during the recent Millis Recreation Department Easter egg hunt held at OGF). Further discussion by the Commissioners concluded that it would be more desirable to

have smaller fields overlaying a larger field which would allow for greater flexibility, and as a result will have the least impact to the surrounding landscape - wetlands, trees, and the historical farmhouse. The Commissioners agreed that the large number of mature Oak trees that are proposed to be removed is neither desirable nor in the best interests of the users of OGF.

On motion of Mr. Fontecchio, and seconded by Mr. McAvoy, it was unanimously voted that the Commissioners of Oak Grove Farm, as it is required to do, and in cooperation with the Fields Committee and the Board of Selectmen, will allow the following work to be performed at OGF, with the condition that there shall be no disturbance of those trees located between Exchange Street and the cleared areas: surveying for topographical information, soil testing, mapping, and engineering information. All disturbances to the land will be immediately remediated. All plans supporting documents will be provided to the OGF Commission as the work is completed. The Commissioners expect to be informed of any Board of Selectmen, Fields Committee, School Committee, or Finance Committee meeting where Oak Grove Farm is to be discussed.

VOTING IN FAVOR OF THIS MOTION: Ciesluk, McAvoy, Fontecchio, and MacInnes. VOTING TO OPPOSE THIS MOTION: No one

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen G. MacInnes, Chairman, OGF
Dated: May 6, 2014