

Conservation Commission
North Hampton Forever Subcommittee
Town of North Hampton
Minutes: 17 May 2007

Mr. Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:32AM.

Members present: Robert Field, Chris Ganotis, Stanley Knowles, Peter Simmons, Dick Wollmar, Phil Wilson, Co-chair.

Members absent: Tim Harned, Shep Kroner, Craig Salomon.

In attendance: Michelle Peckham Esq., Counsel to the Subcommittee.

In view of Mr. Kroner's absence, consideration of minutes from the 19 April 2007 meeting was tabled.

The date for the next regular meeting was set for 7:30 AM, Thursday, 21 June in the Mary Herbert Conference Room. Mr. Ganotis and Mr. Wilson indicated that a special meeting before the next regularly scheduled meeting was likely.

The Subcommittee discussed progress on satisfying requirements to complete the CELCP Winnicut Headwaters I grant. Mr. Ganotis reported that the sign was finished. Mr. Wilson said that he would arrange a meeting with Mr. Richard Luff to select the appropriate location for the sign and to take required pictures for submission to the CELCP program officer in the final report. Mr. Wilson also reported that Ms. Peckham was working with the CELCP program officer to resolve problems in adding required language to deeds of matching parcels. Because the D'Ursos are inaccessible, a means must be found to satisfy the CELCP requirement for language in the D'Urso deed without a signature from the D'Ursos themselves. (Because Ms. Peckham had not yet arrived, she was not available to comment on this matter.)

Mr. Wilson informed the Subcommittee that, in cooperation with the Trust for Public Land, and the Town of Greenland, a grant application under the Broad Area Announcement of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration had been submitted. The Board of Selectmen authorized Chair Emily Creighton to sign and submit a supporting letter on behalf of the Town. Mr. Wilson outlined terms of the grant application: 150 acres in North Hampton and 178 acres in Greenland; anticipated purchase price and grant amount requested (\$3.5 million); includes a significant portion of the largest unfragmented oak pine forest in the Coastal Zone, and includes critical land in the headwaters of the Winnicut and Little Rivers, as well as of Berry Brook. Mr. Wilson reminded the Subcommittee that at the last meeting this parcel had been ranked as the second highest priority parcel for conservation among prospective projects.

Mr. Wilson updated the Subcommittee about progress on projects 01-05 (Jenkins) and 03-15 (Robie). With respect to 01-05 the Town was notified of an FRPP award in the amount of \$216,000 to pay a portion of the \$450,000 cost of the 24.8-acres easement on the parcel. Steps that must be completed to proceed to closing include: Securing a "yellow-book standard" appraisal, arranging for BAN or bond funds, execution of the

Cooperative Agreement, and other typical pre-closing steps. Mr. Ganotis said that the issue of how to accept reimbursement for the FRPP share of the cost of the acquisition had been resolved; the Conservation Commission, by RSA, has authority to accept grant funds in the name of the Town of North Hampton. Hence, the Town can follow the preferred FRPP process of reimbursing the Town for its share of the acquisition after closing.

With respect to project 03-15 Mr. Wilson informed the Subcommittee about the unfortunate and untimely death of surveyor Mr. Chris Bofinger while he was completing the survey of the Robie parcels. He also reported that soils scientist Mr. Mike Cuomo, who delineated wetlands on the 13-acres parcel on the south side of Exeter Road, found that the parcel would support only one buildable lot because of wetlands setback requirements. The Subcommittee discussed the potential impact on the appraised value of the parcels, expressed the desire to proceed and believed that, while the value of the parcel would likely be less than it had been in the prior appraisal of three potential lots, the net effect on the price would probably not be great in view of the value of large "estate" lots in the Town.

Mr. Ganotis presented an analysis of expenditures to-date of North Hampton Forever bond funds and prospective expenditures in view of pending projects that are likely to close, including projects 01-05, 03-15 and 04-18. The conclusion was that if these projects close as expected, remaining funds will amount to \$561,489. The Subcommittee decided to continue discussing the impact of this conclusion in the context of prospective projects in executive session.

At 8:04 AM Mr. Field moved that the subcommittee enter into executive session under RSA 91-A: 3(b) for the purpose of discussing currently pending projects to acquire property rights. Stanley Knowles seconded the motion. The members were polled, and the vote was unanimous in favor and so moved.

Project 07-38: Mr. Wilson presented a "Fact Sheet" that contained terms of an offer from the owners of two parcels under consideration in this project. The terms included one 8.8+/- acres lot to be acquired in fee simple absolute and a second 6.0+/- acres lot to be donated by the owners. The offering price for the fee-simple acquisition was \$215,000 with the owners absorbing costs of the requisite appraisal and survey.

Mr. Knowles said that he had done forestry work on the lot to be purchased and recalled that it was virtually all upland and that it was an attractive piece of forested land for the Subcommittee to recommend acquiring. Mr. Wollmar asked whether the parcel might be an appropriate site for a Town forest, and Mr. Knowles said that he believed that it would be. The Subcommittee acknowledged that designation as a Town forest would require a Town vote.

Mr. Field urged the Subcommittee to schedule a site walk on the property and rank it using the Subcommittee's normal process and according to the Subcommittee's standard criteria. The sense of the Subcommittee was that this was a step that should be

completed before executing a purchase and sale agreement. Mr. Ganotis agreed to schedule and post a site walk concurrently with the Conservation Commission at 7:30AM on Monday, 21 May, meeting at the Town Office and then proceeding to the site.

Mr. Field moved that the Subcommittee recommend to the Conservation Commission the acquisition of parcels under project 07-38, as outlined in the “Fact Sheet” presented for review, with the acknowledgement that one of the parcels would be a good potential location for a Town forest and subject to the condition that the parcel to be acquired with North Hampton Forever bond funds receives a satisfactory ranking on inspection according to the Subcommittee’s criteria. Mr. Wollmar seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and so moved.

Projects 02-07, 06-37, and 07-39 were discussed and no action was taken.

Prospective projects were discussed in the context of funds remaining in the North Hampton Forever bond authorization of 2001, and the Subcommittee considered approaches to securing additional funding – including grants, donations, and a second bond authorization -- to complete projects for which funding is not currently available, but which are likely to come to successful conclusion if additional funds were developed.

At 9:12AM Mr. Field moved to exit executive session under RSA 91-A: 3(b) and to report action taken. Mr. Ganotis seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson polled the members present, and the vote was unanimous in favor and so moved.

Actions taken in executive session are noted in the minutes above.

The sense of the Subcommittee was that the an agenda item for the June meeting should be discussion and resolution of the issue with respect to the Subcommittee’s plans to seek additional bond authorization from voters at Town Meeting in 2008.

At 9:21AM Mr. Simmons moved to adjourn. Mr. Knowles seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and so moved.

Respectfully submitted,



Phil Wilson, Co-chair