

HOLLIS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

June 18, 2008

Approved 7-16-08

Present: Tom Dufresne, Richard Brown, Gary Flaherty, Raymond Lindsay, Thomas Davies, Lloyd Deenik, Mark Johnson, Connie Cain-Staff

Also Present: Jennifer Podhajski & James Jackson – Maguire Group Inc., Foxborough MA

Meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm. T. Dufresne appointed G. Flaherty to vote in the absence of Cathy Hoffman; R. Lindsay appointed to vote in the absence of Lynne Simonfy.

MAGUIRE GROUP INC. – Hollis USPS Addition and Parking Lot Expansion

Jennifer Podhajski, Environmental Scientist & James Jackson, Project Manager/Engineer for the Maguire Group Inc. presented plans to the HCC regarding the proposed addition and expansion of the existing paved parking lot. Virginia Mills, Planning Board Secretary, recommended that the plan be reviewed by the HCC prior to submittal to the Planning Board, since the parking lot expansion will be in the wetland buffer. The Planning Board would like the input of the HCC in this case.

J. Podhajski and J. Jackson explained that the USPS wished to expand the building to the rear, to add additional workspace and a new loading dock. Due to this expansion, some of the existing paved parking area will be lost and they wish to extend the parking area to the back and side. The side parking area will add approximately 5-6 space in the area currently grassed over, and the existing mailboxes at the end of the grassed area will be moved as to not impede traffic flow.

J. Podhajski explained that in order to maintain the current traffic flow, the addition could not be placed on the west side of the building, and there isn't the ability to add to other areas of the building without impacting the wetland. This plan was the best solution to maintain minimal impact. The plan shows the area of impact will be contained within the buffer.

M. Johnson questioned the proposed location of the drive-up mailboxes; he felt that the location would impede traffic flow and potentially cause a bottleneck situation at the Ash Street entrance. J. Jackson stated that those mailboxes can be moved to another location, they are portable and could be placed anywhere. Some discussion of the current employee and USPS vehicle parking; most employees and USPS vehicles are parked in the back of the building. Expansion of the paved area would allow this to continue, while providing new parking spaces and still allow rear access to the other business that utilize the remainder of the building. R. Brown asked about the impervious surface areas; M. Johnson thought that it was a question for the Planning Board. L. Deenik asked about the use of gravel in certain areas; J. Podhajski explained use in those particular areas versus paving (such as in new dumpster location).

Consensus of the HCC is that they have no issues with the plan as presented; T. Dufresne will write a letter to the Planning Board stating the same. M. Johnson suggested that staff forward meeting minutes to Virginia Mills so that the Planning Board has record of discussion.

(Jennifer Podhajski & James Jackson left at approximately 7:20 pm.)

COMMITTEE AND BOARD UPDATES

Planning Board – in the absence of Cathy Hoffman, no update available. T. Dufresne will contact Virginia Mills regarding the Hollis Hills subdivision on South Merrimack Road. There is some concern over wetlands on the project.

LPSC – Thom Davies – no update at meeting time

Treasurer's Report – Thom Davies – no update at meeting time.

Board of Selectmen – Mark Johnson

M. Johnson notified the HCC that “Hilda’s Walk” had been dedicated on Monday, June 16, 2008, and Hilda Hildreth was also presented with Boston Post Cane as the oldest citizen in Hollis.

M. Johnson asked if HCC members or staff had heard from members of the Flint Pond Improvement Association (FPIA). Other than notice of the Annual Meeting to take place on Saturday, June 21, 2008, staff has not. T. Dufresne has received an email from the State regarding arsenic testing. M. Johnson noted that the BOS had established a 2-year commitment to reserve funds for the clean up of Flint Pond, and 18 months has lapsed. He would like to see the FPIA move forward with the project or release the funding back to the taxpayers. \$100,000 was put into reserve after warrant article was approved 10 –15 years ago. M. Johnson suggested that staff obtain from the Finance Office the amount of the reserve account to include interest. (As of 6-19-08, amount held in Flint Pond reserve is \$128,144.12. CC) The HCC also has \$30,000 currently held in reserve for the project. M. Johnson did not feel that arsenic in the pond or bed was the sole issue; there are other issues to be addressed, and he did not feel it was the Town’s responsibility to remediate weed control on the pond.

OLD HOME DAYS – September 13, 2008

T. Davies has received an application for Old Home Days, consensus of members to participate. T. Dufresne suggested that Sherry Wyskiel of the Trails Committee be contacted to see if the Trails Committee wished to have a joint presentation booth, as in the past. T. Davies asked about a theme for this year’s display; M. Johnson suggested Taxpayer advantages in land protection; felt this would be a key time to step up awareness, with the potential warrant article proposed for the 2009 Town Meeting. He is still doubtful that taxpayers will approve it. L. Deenik asked about updated analysis figures, last available are approximately 5 years old.

FINANCIAL ITEMS

T. Dufresne presented two bills to be paid:

- 1.) 2008 State Conservation Commission dues in the amount of \$318.00. T. Davies motioned to approve payment; seconded by R. Lindsay. All members in favor, none opposed. Motion carried; staff to submit bill to Finance Office for payment.
- 2.) Jim Oehler, for yearly website maintenance, in the amount of \$35.00. T. Dufresne stated that any bill under \$100 does not need a vote, however, would like consensus. All members in approval; staff to submit bill to Finance for payment.

HCC RECORDS

T. Dufresne stated that it has been brought to his attention that records are not making it to Town Hall for retention in the HCC files, and items are missing. This caused an issue recently with DES. He wished to remind HCC members that official documents, reports, etc. must be kept at on file at Town Hall. Cathy Hoffman has volunteered to go through and clean up the existing files, but anything anyone may have in their possession should be brought into Town Hall as soon as possible.

OTHER BUSINESS

R. Brown stated that he had read a letter to the Editor by Sue Birch, Hilda Hildreth’s daughter, regarding the use of mulch around trees; in which she referred to them as “mulch volcanoes.” He felt that this was something the HCC should address, as the use of mulch as Sue Birch stated does kill trees, and it was becoming a common issue. R. Brown thought that addressing in a public forum might be beneficial, as he had witnessed a landscaper applying “Round-up” pesticide into the mulch surrounding a tree. M. Johnson stated that he had spoken to Sue Birch regarding her letter, and commended her for bringing it to the forefront. M. Johnson explained that landscaping at Town Hall, Monument Square and other Town properties are overseen by other community organizations, which have agreements and funding to oversee landscaping at these properties. M. Johnson felt that landscaping of the properties should be under the auspices of the BOS. He further stated that the BOS and DPW director, Jeff Babel, are in negotiations with these organizations to have the DPW take over landscaping and maintenance of the properties. He felt that this way, the landscaping and maintenance of the properties could be done in the

most eco-friendly and cost effective manner. T. Davies felt that the HCC should speak with the organizations and the current landscape contractor about the environmental concerns that HCC members have; this could be beneficial in addressing issues. M. Johnson asked that staff forward minutes of meeting to Troy Brown, Town Administrator, and Jeff Babel, DPW Director, so that they have record of discussion.

G. Flaherty stated that he has received the \$400.00 check for the Conservation Wetland Buffer signs, as approved at the June 4th meeting, and will order them by the end of the week.

G. Flaherty also wished to notify members that the EPA has spoken to various groups on stream rules. New Hampshire has the strictest wetland buffer regulations in the nation. They would like to curtail growth in New Hampshire, since New Hampshire is growing faster than previously anticipated. The EPA would like to see some of the growth moving towards Vermont and Maine, which have the slowest economic growth in the region. G. Flaherty stated that EPA regulations will be tightened up in New Hampshire, and wanted members to be aware.

MINUTES

Motion made by R. Lindsay to approve both the public and non-public minutes of the meeting on June 4, 2008, and to keep the non-public records sealed; seconded by T. Davies. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made to adjourn by T. Davies, seconded by T. Dufresne. All in favor, none opposed. Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Cain
Staff