Franconia Conservation Commission (FCC)

Meeting: March 17, 2022, 4:30 pm, Town Hall

Members present: Chris Nicodemus (Chair), Ginny Jeffryes, Mark Ober, Jill Brewer, Mary Grote, Red McCarthy

Guests: Melinda Richmond, Sharon Penney

Draft minutes of meeting 2-16-2022 reviewed. Jill moves to accept minutes as written. Mary seconds. Unanimous vote in favor.

Tax map lot 17-3 potential conservation purchase

Chris: Today’s meeting can’t be the originally intended public hearing because it wasn’t noticed 10 days in advance. [RSA 36 A:5 refers to RSA 675.7 – which requires 10 day notice.] The Town’s lawyer apologized for giving us wrong information about that. Chris passes out a handout he made about the proposal which includes photos from his site visit. Marianne Fini (Trustee of Fini Realty Trust) agreed to negotiate directly with us, assuming the parcel is not sold by her agent, SnowLands LLC, first. She is interested in selling to the town for conservation, but she needs to look out for her financial interests and timing interests, thus it’s still on the market. There has been a recent offer but no contract. Chris mentioned to her the problem with Grafton Co deeds still showing it as 6.7 acres, even though it was subdivided into the 4.2 acre and the other smaller lot [owned by Stonybrook] many years ago. Technically, it should be lot 17-3.0, as tax map shows, she said. She has contacted the past lawyers involved to correct the deed filings.

We need to act quickly. The 670 foot waterfront will secure both sides of the river in the center of the Town Forest. Multiple conservation benefits: wetland conservation, watershed, wildlife corridors, access, among others; and avoiding a home site that could threaten those things. Tax assessed value $53,800, on market at $89,900. Our appraisal is in process right now, with goal of April 1 completion. If it comes in lower than our offer, it’s still ok because the presence of our matching conservation-minded donor enables us to be more flexible. Our donor will be gifting via NH Charitable Trust, and is prepared to act quickly. Offer of $75,000 is what Chris is thinking, a little above their existing offer.

Chris will work with Jenny to get a blank copy of a Purchase and Sales agreement that town lawyer mentioned using, so Chris can be ready to make an offer after the public hearing and subsequent SB meeting authorizing it.

Discussion – everyone present supportive of plan, and all agree we need to proceed ASAP.

We agreed to set up the public hearing about purchase of lot at 4 pm Monday March 28, 11 days from now, with a short Conservation Commission meeting after that to vote on specifics. Jill will present to the 3/28 Select Board meeting at 6 pm.

Red moves that we authorize Chris to make an offer up to $75,000, contingent on an acceptable P&S agreement. Mary seconds. Unanimously approved.

McKenzie Woods conservation easement boundary walk: 4 of us plan to walk the easement Thursday March 24 8:15 a.m. Bushwhacking often involved.

Other: Ginny suggests at a future meeting within the next year that we review the conservation status of the Town Forest parcel in conjunction with looking into an easement for the 4.2 acre parcel.

Next meeting: Monday March 28, 2022, immediately following closure of the 4 pm Public Hearing.

Minutes by Ginny Jeffryes