

**LAND ACQUISITION AND HISTORIC PROPERTY INVESTMENT COMMITTEE  
DIRECTORS ROOM, LINCOLN CENTER**

**February 26, 2020**

**6:00 P.M.**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bob Kilpatrick, Dennis Schain, Patrick Clancy, Helen Robbins, Jack Prior, Eric Prause, Patrick Kennedy

**STAFF PRESENT:** Kyle Shiel, Senior Planner  
David Laiuppa, Environmental Planner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Malcolm Barlow, Manchester Land Conservation Trust

Approval of Minutes: March 28, 2019 and October 29, 2019

Mr. Clancy moved to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Prior seconded and all members voted in favor.

Presentation from Manchester Land Conservation Trust

Malcolm Barlow from the Manchester Land Conservation Trust (MLCT) thanked the committee and introduced members of the MLCT board who were in attendance. He said the MLCT has secured a \$300,000 state grant towards the acquisition of 871 Hillstown Road (“Property”), commonly referred to as the Lombardo farm. He described the Property as a former pig farm, which was eventually discontinued and cleaned for residential development. He said the housing crash of 2008-2009 put a temporary hold on residential development but said he believes the residential market will eventually rebound and present a risk of losing the open space value of the Property.

Mr. Barlow introduced several Eagle Scouts in attendance who wished to speak in favor of the Town acquiring the Property. Christian (his last name was not identified) said he has completed several scout projects on the Property and that he supports the MLCT application to acquire the Property. Charlie O’Neal, Meg Snyder and Nathan Snyder are members of the Boy Scouts and said they have enjoyed hiking the Property. William Prodeal said he was a local pack leader for the group and said he takes many of the scouts on popular hikes throughout New England and said he believes acquiring a local hiking spot would be beneficial. Tyler Desautels said he has completed many Eagle Scout projects on MLCT-owned property and is very familiar with 871 Hillstown Road. He said the Property would be a beneficial asset for the MLCT to acquire.

Mr. Barlow said if the MLCT were to acquire the Property it would create 177 acres of contiguous open space adjacent to existing properties owned by the MLCT. He said he would like the committee to consider a Town contribution of \$1 million towards purchase of the property. He said with a Town contribution and the state grant, the MLCT would seek to fundraise the remaining balance. Mr. Kennedy asked staff what the remaining balance is in the bond fund. Mr. Shiel said roughly \$2.9 million. Mr. Kilpatrick asked Mr. Barlow if the state grant contains any stipulations. Mr. Barlow said the MLCT would be required to provide conservation easements on the Property. He said he was expecting a larger grant award, but said there were many strong applications competing for a limited amount of funds this cycle.

Mr. Barlow said the Property is in much cleaner condition than the Botti Farm property which was purchased with Town assistance. Frank Belknap of the MLCT said the Property has significant value as an amphibian habitat and preserve, which are declining in number due to climate change. Terry Parla of the MLCT said she recalls initial skepticism about the original decision to acquire Case Mountain beyond an initial few supporters, although the value of that acquisition is now viewed positively by most in the community. Mr. Kilpatrick thanked Mr. Barlow and MLCT members for their presentation and testimonies. He said the committee would consider the request and take an official action at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

#### Review of recommendations to Board of Directors to date and possible future agenda items

Mr. Kilpatrick asked Mr. Shiel to clarify the amount of recommended appropriations to the Board of Directors (Board) and the remaining balance in the bond fund. Mr. Shiel said all the committee recommendations to the Board were approved and appropriated, totaling just over \$1 million. He said that roughly \$2.9 million remains in the bond fund. Mr. Schain asked if there were specific properties being considered for acquisition. Mr. Kilpatrick said the committee has been referring to a map produced by staff and based on prioritization from the previous land acquisition committee. He said it would be appropriate to update the map as necessary and have a discussion at the next regular meeting to review priority properties. Mr. Prause added that while the previous land acquisition committee looked solely at open space, the bond language for the most recent referendum included investing in Town-owned historic properties as well. Mr. Kilpatrick said Cheney Hall renovations were the primary recipient of fund for historic property investment to date, but other Town properties could be potential targets in the future.

Mr. Kilpatrick asked staff if there were other potential acquisition targets in the near future. Mr. Shiel said now that the Board has approved a pre-acquisition account for appraisals, the committee may wish to revisit seeking appraisals for properties on Gardner Street abutting the Case Mountain preserve. He said 213 Greenwood Drive has been considered by Town leadership as appropriate since it abuts MLCT-owned property. Lastly, he said the Old Manchester Museum has had a conditions assessment report completed and the Manchester Historical Society may seek funds for potential renovations. Mr. Kilpatrick said the Property at 871 Hillstown Road seems like the largest and most obvious target for acquisition. He suggested the next regular meeting consist of a review of the priority map, some discussion of how best to allocate the remaining bond fund and a separate agenda item regarding a potential recommendation to financially support MLCT's purchase of 871 Hillstown Road. Other committee members

concurrent. Mr. Shiel said he and Mr. Laiuppa would update the map and put together a brief summary of committee-related appropriations to date.

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Schain seconded and all members voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:13 pm.