

Hopkinton Conservation Commission
September 9, 2019 Meeting
Held at Kimball Cabin

9/9/19 Non-Public Session Minutes – Accepted 9/24/19

Present: Lee Wilder, Rob Knight, Cleve Kapala, and Bob Lapree
Alternatives present: Jonathan Bradstreet, James Newsom
Meeting went into non-public session to discuss a possible real estate transaction at 7:48, by unanimous vote of the commission.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Acquisition of the Cameron lot (Map 251 Lot 8.1), abutting the New Cemetery and Kimball Lake: The lot has been on the market for several years at \$110,000. It was recently reduced to \$89,500 and is assessed at \$83,500. At the HCC August meeting, it was voted to offer \$75,000 for the lot. Lee Wilder reported that the offer was not accepted, but the seller counteroffered \$83,500 (the assessed value). Lee counter offered \$80,000, conditional on HCC and Select Board approval, and this offer was accepted by the Cameron's. Lee Wilder has an anonymous donor who will cover the \$5,000 additional funds, if drawing HCC funds down this low does not allow the HCC to have enough money for the Chesley lot. The Purchase and Sale agreement is good until 10/9/19. A \$1,000 deposit for same has been received by the realtor.

The Select Board has scheduled a public hearing on the real estate acquisition for 9/16/19 at 6:30 at Town Hall.

Lee explained the lot would be encumbered by a view easement from the Pappas lot (Map 251 Lot 8) and that the Burns lot (Map 106 Lot 1) on the other side has the right to cross the Cameron lot to access the Burns' lot septic system.

Rob Knight asked about financial participation in the purchase by the abutter and the Cemetery Committee. Lee explained that the neighbor was very interested but has no available funds and the Cemetery funds are all tied up as a trust fund.

Cleve Kapala spoke against the acquisition, saying that it would be a lot of money for something we may not need to buy. The lot would need a 1,000' driveway and may never be developed. The lake already has lots of development along the Main Street side and this lot would be shielded by the town land along the shore of the lake. Lee pointed out that the town land is very steep and so trees on it would not completely shield the buildable land on the Cameron lot. Lee also said that purchase of the Cameron lot would not only provide additional land around Kimball Lake but would protect the viewshed from the lake and the Greenway trail.

General concern was expressed that this purchase would use up almost all the current HCC funds, precluding any other purchases until the funds are replenished. The HCC's future income from the HCC's 35% share of Land Change of Use Tax income cannot be predicted.

Discussed the possibility of having the funds reimbursed by an article at the annual town meeting. Agreed that would be a possibility only with Select Board support of such an article.

It was moved to authorize the HCC Chair to sign on or before October 9, 2019 a P&S for the purchase of Lot 251-8.1 (Cameron lot) for \$80,000, contingent upon the Select Board agreeing to support a town meeting warrant article to reimburse the HCC for the funds expended for the purchase. The motion passed, five votes in favor, one vote against.

At 8:38 the commission voted to return to public session.
Minutes submitted by Rob Knight, Secretary.