

Rockland Open Space Committee Meeting 10/3/2023, Chaffee Meeting Room, Town Offices

Attending: Donald Cann, Chair; Mike Bromberg, Vice-Chair, Joanne Donnelly, Kathy Kirby

Joe Reiss, Community Preservation Committee

Jess Caamano, Goulston & Storrs, Counsel for BPD

A motion was made by Mr. Bromberg, seconded by Ms. Kirby, to delete Exhibit "C" from the draft minutes of the meeting of 9/25/2023 and include the 9/27/2023 letter from the committee to the Select Board, voted unanimously. The minutes, as amended, were unanimously approved.

Mr. Cann introduced Eric Joubert from Whitman who discussed the former Girl Scout Camp property owned by Whitman in Rockland. Whitman voted to accept the property in May and Select Soccer has proposed development of the area as playing fields, while Mr. Joubert and others would like it to be turned over to conservation with the hope of the entire north corridor of Whitman being a green space connecting with Rockland green space. The question arose as to whether Whitman can issue a conservation restriction on land in Rockland. There was discussion of taxes collected by Rockland from Whitman and possible cessation and return should the land change ownership between the towns.

The 9/26/2023 Planning Board meeting to vote on the BPD rezoning proposal was discussed. Mr. Bromberg made it clear when he spoke there that most of the MUDD would be available for development should off-site mitigation of grasslands currently protected be approved by Natural Heritage. While BPD has moved forward quickly with water, sewer, storm water and financial planning projects it has not completed work having to do with the NHESP process. Mr. Reiss asked how zoning in Rockland could be changed by the developer and Mr. Bromberg provided a history of the creation and legislation of the base property.

Mr. Cann suggested creating a power point presentation and there was discussion as to what should be included. It was agreed that a public meeting such as was done with the McCarthy Farm would be a good idea. Mr. Bromberg noted that entering into an MOU with BPD might require their ownership of the property which currently is not the case. The committee agreed that it needs the advice of independent legal counsel not associated with any other entity at the base to provide guidance in this process. Ms. Kirby moved that she be authorized by the committee to ask Mr. O'Loughlin and Mr Lapp about communicating with town counsel regarding this matter, seconded by Ms Donnelly, voted unanimously. Mr. Bromberg moved seconded by Ms. Kirby that he contact Mr Twohig for a definite response as to the developer's seeking off-site mitigation for MUDD property, voted unanimously. Ms. Kirby moved, seconded by Ms Donnelly, that Mr. Cann ask that the committee appear on the agenda of the next Select Board meeting, voted unanimously. Mr. Bromberg reviewed an 8/4/2023 letter to Natural Heritage from Ms. Barnicle, consultant to the developer, making reference to off-site mitigation.

Next meeting 10/10/2023.