

Atkinson Conservation Commission Minutes
Monday, February 3, 2020
Atkinson Town Hall

Non-Public Session

A motion in public session to seal these minutes passed on February 3, 2020

Approved March 2, 2020

Unsealed September 28, 2022

Members Present:

Paul Wainwright, Chair
Denise Legault, Vice Chair
Jeff Nenart
Dan Kimball
Dennis Krause
Pete McVay
Scott Kukshtel
Bill Steele (Alternate)

Others Present:

Sue Killam, Chair, Atkinson Planning Board
Phil Sansone, Abutter
Shane Keating, Abutter

Possible purchase of Map 18 Lot 40

Chair Wainwright began by saying that Map 18 Lot 40, off Knightland Road, has been under consideration for purchase for a number of years. A copy of the tax map with the parcel highlighted is attached. This land is owned by Deborah Lang of Sutton, who is a UNH Coverts graduate and is on the Sutton Conservation Commission.

The land would be an ideal addition to the adjacent conservation lands that abut the West Sawmill Swamp Prime Wetland. The land would provide additional upland buffer for the Prime Wetland, and contain excellent habitat for wildlife, including Spotted and Blanding turtles, which are on the state's threatened and Endangered list. Also, part of the town's Sawmill North trail system crosses Ms. Lang's land.

A developer has made an offer of apparently \$250,000 to Ms. Lang for the property.

Member Krause and Chair Wainwright met with Ms. Lang on February 2, 2020, to discuss the land status and possibilities. The developer's offer is only in the negotiating stage, and Ms. Lang would like to have a "plan B" and is interested in a possible sale to the town. Chair Wainwright told her he did not want to intervene until the talks with the developer are finished.

Discussion: What is the tax benefit? Ms. Killam said there is none, since it is an inheritance and therefore is completely profit (capital gains) for Ms. Lang.

Several conditions are unknown that can have an influence on the sale: (1) it isn't known if the developer who made the offer is the one that abuts the parcel, (2) at 15 acres, only five lots could be built, and (3) there are a number of wetland areas on the land. The commission concluded that it would be a very difficult parcel to develop.

Chair Wainwright researched the tax assessor's fair market value of \$187,400 (which may be out of date), well below the rumored offer of \$250,000.

Chair Wainwright asked the abutters present if they would support the sale of the parcel to the town and both said yes. They also indicated a possible willingness to help with a survey and other closing costs.

Both Chair Wainwright and Member Krause shared their opinion that Ms. Lang does not want to get locked into a deal with a long-term contingency by a developer to first obtain Planning Board approval for a subdivision. During the meeting on February 2, Ms. Lang indicated she might be willing to sell the land to the Town for \$200,000 since the sale would likely be faster, and since she would prefer to see the land stay undeveloped.

No further action will be done until Ms. Lang concludes her negotiations with the developer, and turns down the developer's offer.

Member Krause made a motion to authorize Chair Wainwright to negotiate with Ms. Lang pending the outcome of developer negotiations. Member Kimball seconded. The motion passed, 7/0/0

Member Nenart made a motion exit the non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (d). Member Kimball seconded. The motion passed, 7/0/0.

The meeting continued in public session as documented in the regular minutes.

Respectfully submitted,
Pete McVay, Secretary

Attachment:

- a. Tax Map showing the proposed purchase in purple. Existing conservation land is shown in green.

