



**AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2015 MEETING**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** George Mason, Kevin Nelson, Martha Neale, Everett Stuart, Dave Wallace

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:** Fay Strongin, Will Wright, Ken Ayars, Jon Reiner

**STAFF:** Michelle Sheehan – DEM, Lauren Farley – DEM, Joe Bachand – USDA / NRCS

The meeting was called to order at 4:09 pm at USDA, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick, RI by G. Mason, Chair.

**On a motion by K. Nelson and a second by D. Wallace, the Commission voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the July 23, 2015 meeting.**

**ALPC budget**

M. Sheehan gave an update on the ALPC budget. The current balance is \$5,057,500. Current project commitments are \$150,000 to Rippin in N. Kingstown, \$550,000 to Bailey, \$185,000 to Regnier/Fletcher Road, \$70,000 to Gordon in S. Kingstown and \$200,000 to Whaley Farm in South Kingstown. Current overhead commitments (appraisals and survey) total \$85,000.

**Status update of farms in negotiation:**

**Hibbad: 273 Puncateest Neck Road, Tiverton (20 ac.)** – The property most recently appraised at 670K. M. Sheehan reported that potential partner organizations including the town and Tiverton Land Trust indicated they do not have funds to contribute to this project. The only available partner funding match may be NRCS. Commission members noted that the price per acre is very significant in comparison to other farms, but also scored well at 49.5 points. **M. Neale made a motion seconded by E. Stuart to contribute up to 1/3 of appraised value. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Adams: Hog Hill Road, Exeter (500 ac.)** - M. Sheehan presented. The farm most recently appraised for a total of \$4.48M. The farm lies in the Queen's River watershed and is eligible for Federal Highway Funding. Available FHA funding is currently \$1.2M. DEM is comfortable exhausting it on this farm. NRCS funding can be used as match on farm portion in hay not planted with ball and burlap trees. The Nature Conservancy may contribute \$500K if the Champlin Foundation participates. A \$1M ALPC contribution will leave a \$250K budget shortfall. **K. Nelson made a motion seconded by E. Stuart to commit up to \$1M for protection of entire acreage. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Ferguson (Broadwall): 811 Sisson Road, Coventry (224 ac.)** - Appraised at \$1.23M, negotiated purchase price \$660K. TNC will likely contribute 50% if Champlin Foundation is

responsive to request. **M. Neale made a motion seconded by D. Wallace to contribute remaining \$330K. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Cesario: 111 Pond House Road, North Smithfield (15 ac.)** – Development rights appraised at \$160K. L. Farley presented that transition plan is in place for dairy farm to purchase restricted property soon after development rights are sold. Current landowner is elderly and expedited closing is prudent. DEM would like to partner with NRCS but as negotiations progress ALPC contribution of full purchase price may facilitate closing process. **K. Nelson made a motion seconded by E. Stuart to contribute up to \$160K. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Dimeo: 396 Greenville Avenue, Johnston. (32 ac.)** - Appraised at \$470K. Currently under negotiations. Partner funding match is unknown.

**Whaley: 2 Jerry Brown Farm Road, South Kingstown (40 ac.)** - This is a SKLT led project that was stalled for a while and is now active again. ALPC has committed \$200K. New appraisal is \$890K. SKLT fundraising for additional funds.

**Andrews: 99 Ten Rod Road, Exeter (45 ac.)** Appraised at \$265K - currently being updated.

**Request from SKLT to increase funding commitment for Gordon Farm, Liberty Lane, South Kingston** – At July 23, 2015 meeting ALPC voted to contribute \$70K. to this project. SKLT has requested additional \$30K. **M. Neale made a motion seconded by E. Stuart to contribute \$100K to project. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Request for ALPC to hold the Development Rights to the Hayward Street Garden, funded by DEM Open Space Bond and owned by Southside Community Land Trust in Providence.** This property was purchased by SCLT for \$25K. SCLT will be developing the property into a community garden and will add infrastructure like fencing and irrigation. **K. Nelson made a motion seconded by M. Neale for ALPC to hold the development rights on the Open Space bond funded purchase price of \$25K. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Farmland Acquisition Program – invitation to join steering committee** DEM staff has been working to create the rules and regulations for this program. Some legislative changes are needed and will hopefully be introduced this session. The first meeting of the steering committee will likely be held in December. Groups that were also invited include the Farm Bureau, Farm Credit East, the Young Farmers Network, among others. ALPC Chair requested drafts of proposed rules prior to first steering committee meeting.

**NRCS Agricultural Conservation Easement Program** – J. Bachand provided update to Commission. NRCS fiscal years is coming to a close at the end of September. Two projects were obligated this year for funding totaling \$350K. Issues with the National Easement Staging Tool (NEST) are currently being addressed. It is anticipated national office will designate more funding for RI once NEST issues are rectified.

**There being no further business, on a motion by D. Wallace and a second by E. Stuart, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Farley, Division of Planning and Development, RIDEM