

ATM 16E – CPC – Hedges Pond Road

draft minutes from 3/3/16 A&F meeting

Bill Keohan, CPC Chair, presented Article 16E. CPC is recommending the purchase of 7.8 acres off Hedges Pond Road. This \$45,000 purchase would increase the size and amenities of the Hedges Pond Recreation Area and Preserve (purchased by the CPC in 2007). This parcel appraised for \$46,000. The CPC owns land surrounding the entire lake and has a series of trails throughout the property. The property is also entirely within the Herring River Watershed Area which is land recognized as an area of Critical Environmental Concern and is in close proximity to areas designated by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program as an important wildlife habitat. This 7.8 acres would add additional trails and stretch the CPC land toward Elmer Raymond Park. Some already utilize trails on this property which is currently private property. The CPC hopes to acquire additional lots in the future maybe connecting the two parks someday.

Questions:

- There were several questions about the additional landlocked lots and whether or not it makes sense to buy this lot now or wait and buy them all at once achieving the connection of Hedges to Elmer Raymond. Bill Keohan explained that this lot is worth buying regardless of whether or not CPC is able to buy the other parcels in the future. This lot is adjacent to the existing Hedges Pond Park & Preserve allowing us to expand the park and preserve. There are already trails on the parcel that tie into our trails. The purchase of this one lot will directly enhance the park. The CPC will not piecemeal the rest of the parcels extending to Elmer Raymond, they will purchase all or none.
- Are there any watershed benefits to purchasing this parcel? (K Canty) Hedges Pond is a pristine 38 acre pond. Anything we can do to minimize septic additions in the area will help protect the pond. This parcel is in a high priority area of critical environmental concern.
- What did owner pay for the parcel? Are taxes paid to date? (S Joyce) Not sure of purchase price it was a long time ago. Taxes are paid up but if there are ever back taxes due on any parcels that we purchase, we collect the taxes at closing.
- What is the overall trail plan? (K Canty) In the 1990s talk began about a wish to create a trail network system connecting downtown to Myles Standish Forest and from there down to Ellisville. Plymouth is underserved when it comes to recreation space. The trail strategy is on-going. Just want to add that Hedges Pond is the only pond that the town owns entirely.

Public Comment:

Steve Striar said that this is a land locked parcel with no frontage, no access, no development to impact the environment and that there are a lot of properties between this parcel and Elmer Raymond. As much as this would add value to Hedges Pond Recreation area there is no other value and he would rather see the \$45,000 spent elsewhere.

Patrick O'Brien made a motion to recommend ATM Article 16E to Town Meeting. Harry Salerno, second.

Harry Salerno said that the public is currently using trails on this private land and to avoid conflict and to help complete the circumference of the outer trails around the pond, it makes sense to purchase this lot particularly because it is not very expensive. He supports this article.

The motion carries (8-3-0). Harry Helm, Kevin Canty, Robert Cote, opposed.