

Nagog Orchard Working Group - March 27th, 2024

Meeting called to order at 7:15pm

Present: Sarah Seaward, Jen Clancy, Amy Tarlow Lewis, Matthew Nordhaus, Karen Morrison

Absent: Brad Mitchell

Attending Remotely: Will Pickard

Minutes of the 3/13/24 Meeting

Sarah Seaward made the motion to accept the minutes with minor changes, Jen Clancy seconded. Motion passed 5--0, Will Pickard abstained.

Discussion/Planning/Update – Public Listening Session

Amy Tarlow Lewis has reserved the Sturtz room at the Rueben Hoar library for April 25th, the last Thursday of the month, from 6-8pm. LCTV will be broadcasting the meeting. Amy shared a preliminary presentation based on last Winter's presentation. Sarah Seaward suggested adding information about the funds that the Town got from Federal and Self Help programs to purchase the orchard originally. Matthew Nordhaus suggested adding that it would require a bill approved by the State Legislature to change the use of the APR land.

Amy Tarlow Lewis asked whether we want to include orchard access as part of the RFP criteria. Sarah Seaward pointed out that no one has access now. Will Pickard pointed out that access is congruent with a benefit to the owner, and that there should not be deed restrictions requiring access.

Matthew suggested that the presentation was conflating RFP requirements with a request for info from the public. Sarah Seaward suggested the whole list of requirements should be removed, and rather just ask "what do you, as a resident, want?"

The group agreed on publicizing the meeting via a Town email blast, adding an announcement to the Town Website home page as well as the Working Group page, and submitting a slide to LCTV

RFI Respondents

The group discussed how many RFI respondents who wanted to lease vs. purchase. Final numbers according to Matthew Nordhaus were 5 for lease or lease to purchase, 2 unknown or other, and 8 for purchase.

RFP Development

Karen Morrison has asked Town Counsel to clarify the process for declaring the property surplus and what steps will need to be taken at Town Meeting, but there has been no response. The Select Board may be allowed to declare it surplus. It is expected that at the next Working Group meeting there will be more clarity on the timeframe for RFP drafting and issue.

Sarah Seaward suggested that we prepare RFP criteria prior to our next meeting. Karen

Morrison suggested that everyone come up with their own list for criteria, and that we place that list on the next meeting agenda as a draft initial discussion.

Karen Morrison updated the group on the contractor to assist with drafting, Ray Santilli. At this time there is progress and the assumption is that there will be a contract with Mr. Santilli.

House/Upper Barn and APR

Sen. Jamie Eldridge met with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Commissioner, and following that conversation indications are that MDAR is willing to move the Upper Barn into the APR, but not the house. The group agreed to begin concrete discussions with the Littleton Historical Commission to pursue a historical preservation restriction or deed restriction on the house. The group also agreed that any Historical restriction will shape the criteria of the RFP.

Other Business

Sarah Seaward asked for access to the Upper Barn in order to inventory prior to sale. Matthew Nordhaus confirmed that we are going to present to Town Meeting prior to the warrant article about the Orchard in May..

Next Meeting

The group agreed that it's next meeting would be on April 10th

Adjournment

Sarah Seaward moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20pm Karen Morrison seconded, and the motion passed 6-0