



# CITY OF CONCORD

*New Hampshire's Main Street™*

## REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Beth Fenstermacher, Assistant City Planner, on behalf of the Conservation Commission

**DATE:** December 24, 2018

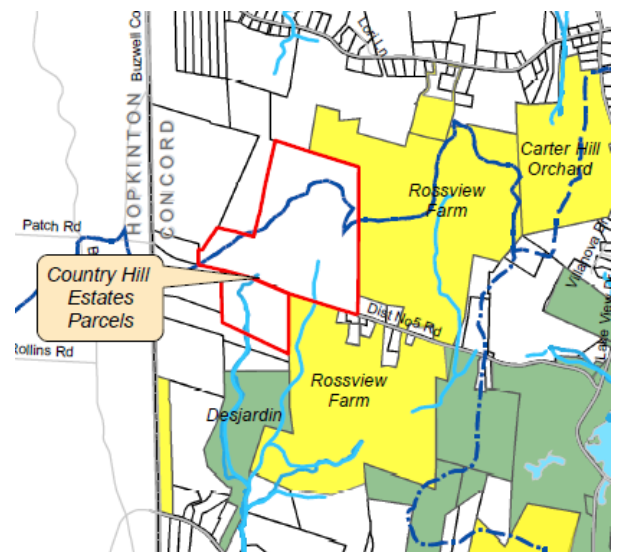
**SUBJECT:** Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a grant agreement with the State of NH Department of Environmental Services for the Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund Grant which the City has been awarded in the amount of \$350,000, to be used towards the purchase of two parcels of land located off of District No. 5 Road for conservation purposes.

### Recommendation

Authorize the City Manager to enter into a grant agreement with the State of NH Department of Environmental Services for the Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund Grant which the City has been awarded in the amount of \$350,000, to be used towards the purchase of two parcels of land located off of District No. 5 Road for conservation purposes.

### Background

In 2017, the property owners approached the City of Concord regarding the possibility of the City purchasing two lots identified as 55/Z 1 and 55/Z 17 located off of District 5 Road, totaling 234 acres. The Commission's 2017 Conservation Open Space Plan identified the Country Hill Estate parcels as priority land to be conserved. The project area links other protected land in the area, adding to a large contiguous block of conservation land totaling over 1700 acres. Rossvie Farm, which is a 546.5± acre property under conservation easement with the NH Division of Forest and Lands, is located adjacent to the northeast, east, and southeast of the parcel. Other adjacent conservation land includes the Desjardins Property, an 86 acre City-owned parcel of conservation land to the south. These conservation properties link the property to other conservation land in the area, such as Carter Hill Orchard,



Dimond Hill Farm, and the Penacook Watershed conservation properties.

Acquisition of the Country Hill Estates land will provide permanent protection for the property, which includes intermittent and perennial streams as well as palustrine wetlands and vernal pools. The ARM Fund grant program is aimed at protecting or restoring lands within the Merrimack River watershed to mitigate the loss of aquatic resources in the watershed. The grant utilizes compensatory funds that were collected in lieu of other forms of wetland mitigation. As a recipient of the grant, the City will be obligated to protect the upland and wetland functions on the property.

**Discussion**

The City Council authorized the submittal of the grant application at their July 9, 2018, meeting. NHDES sent an award letter on November 28, 2018 recommended funding through the ARM fund grant program. The Conservation Commission requested and was awarded \$350,000, and anticipates providing the remainder of the purchase price from the City's Conservation Trust Fund, contingent on a public hearing and vote of the Conservation Commission and City Council.

BAF