



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: February 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Resolution approving the acquisition of land south of District No. 5 Road for conservation purposes, and authorizing the expenditure of up to \$12,000 from the Conservation Fund for this purpose, as recommended by the Conservation Commission.

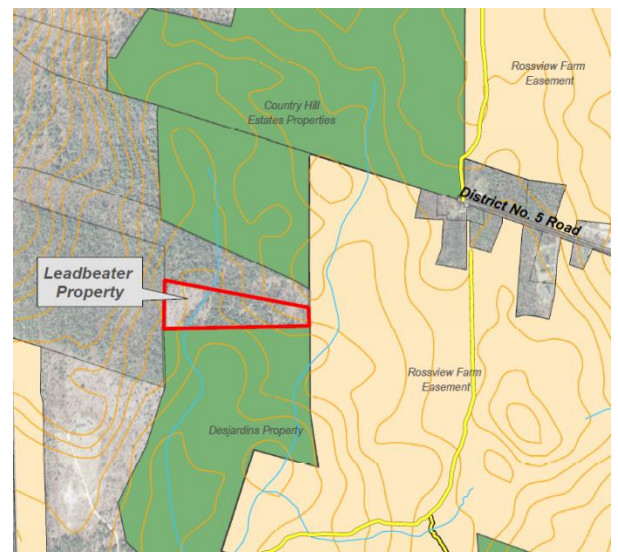
Recommendation

Approve a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to acquire land south of District No. 5 Road for conservation purposes, and appropriate \$12,000 from the Conservation Fund for the acquisition of said parcel.

Background

In December 2019, the City of Concord Conservation Commission approached Erick Leadbeater regarding the possibility of the City purchasing a parcel identified by the City of Concord Assessor as Tax Map 68Z Lot 1, consisting of approximately 11.1 acres, located south of District No. 5 Road.

The subject property is located within the Conservation Focus Area identified as “Beech Hill” in the 2017 Conservation Open Space Plan. The area was identified as a priority for acquisition because it is part of a large unfragmented forest; has moderately high resilience value due to habitat connectivity and ecological integrity; contains productive forest land; is identified as high priority in the Merrimack River Conservation Plan; and is identified as Highest Ranked Habitat in NH in the State of NH Fish & Game Wildlife Action Plan (WAP). The property adds to a large contiguous block of conservation land totaling over 1900 acres. Rossvie Farm, a 546.5± acre property under conservation easement with the NH Division of Forest and Lands, is located adjacent to the east of the parcel. Other adjacent conservation land



includes the Desjardins Property, an 86 acre City-owned parcel of conservation land to the south. The newly acquired city-owned Country Hill Estates conservation land is located to the north. These conservation properties link the property to other conservation land in the area, including Carter Hill Orchard, Dimond Hill Farm, and the Penacook Watershed conservation properties. Acquisition of the land will provide permanent protection of the natural resources. Further, by protecting these unfragmented lands in perpetuity, this area will continue to support a greater diversity of habitats and species.

Discussion

An appraisal was completed utilizing funds from the Commission's FY 2020 operating budget. The property was appraised at \$12,000 as of January 6, 2020. Mr. Leadbeater agreed to sell the property at the appraised value. The Commission anticipates providing the purchase price from the City's Conservation Trust Fund, contingent on a City Council approval.

The Conservation Commission voted unanimously, at a public hearing on February 12, 2020, in favor of the acquisition of the ±11.1 acre parcel, allocating \$12,000 from the Conservation Fund for said purpose. Upon acquisition, the Commission will manage the property to protect the natural resources; maintain, improve, protect, limit the future use of, and otherwise conserve and properly utilize this property as open space together with other land and water resources within the City.

BAF