



## KOULAS FARM TASK FORCE

Filed with Town Clerk:

*DATE:* Friday, April 26, 2024

*TIME:* 5:00 p.m.

*PLACE:* Chelmsford Town Hall  
*ADDRESS:* 50 Billerica Road  
Chelmsford, MA 01824

*ROOM:* Conference Room 204

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### MEETING MINUTES

#### Attendees

Town Manager Paul Cohen	present
Michael Raisbeck	present
Phil Stanway	present
John Swenson	present
Sue Obendorf	present
John Ray	present
Michael Chludzinski	present
James Dowd	not present

#### 1. Meeting Minute Approval

- Meeting Minutes from 2/7/24 were approved by unanimous vote.

#### 2. Updates

- Mike Raisbeck noted that DPW has done an excellent job and is complete with their work. Task Force members concurred with great work by DPW.
- Town Manager Cohen provided following update:
  - DPW will perform final grading once demolition is completed
  - Fire and Police will complete training in the house over the next few days
  - DPW will be burning brush on the property in the next few weeks

- Select Board will be updated on progress next week.
- Phil Stanway provided update that 0.6 to 0.7 mile of trail has been installed including a temporary bridge. The left hand meadow will be good for a HC access trail. Trails are designed for emergency access via “gator” type vehicle. Conservation Commission has declined to inspect the trails as they are not near the vernal pool. Town Manager Cohen inquired if Phil can layout a ADA trail on left side meadow, which Phil will do.
- Task Force voted in approval of DPW establishing a temporary parking lot.

### 3. Discussion

- *Pollinator Garden* – Area
- *Community Garden* – Groups discussed that a space shall be allocated for future use by Community Garden. It was noted that it would need to be located near water. Size will be ½ acre for 40 plots. Final documents will reflect ½ acre set aside for a Community Garden
- *Newhouse Wildlife Center* – Update from Manager Cohen, Newhouse is also looking at Misty Meadows owned by the water district but not being utilized. Conversations are being explored. One reason for looking at Misty Meadows is the secluded area that is a better location out of the way from public activity which is better for all parties. There are unknowns with state approval of wildlife center while Misty Meadows may not have the safe required approvals. Task Force recommendation will reflect recommendation of wildlife center, albeit with numerous other town and state approvals required. Task Force supports the concept of a wildlife center on Koulas site.
- *Weston Nurseries* – Weston Nurseries representatives spoke that they met with Newhouse and parties the two facilities won’t fit on the allocated land in the South East corner of the main lot. Proposal would include storage of materials and possibly a 1,000 sf. Henry Parlee noted that a greenhouse is not considered a permanent structure. Weston stated they would propose a lease agreement with reimbursement to the Town. Weston stated they can utilize as many acres as provided. Phil Stanway stated the land would need to go out to a general public lease request for bid.
- *Parlee Farm Haying* – Task Force discussed proposal for 5 year lease for haying as an appropriate use of the 6 acre parcel. Land could be mowed this July for mulch hay. Task Force approved recommending Parlee proposal for haying.
- *BitzNPeace Farm Agricultural Use* – Task Force discussed BitzNPeace proposal as an appropriate use of farmable 2 acres on Hunt Rd. plot. Although, not having a quorum for this particular vote, Mike Raisbeck recused himself from voting and discussion, Task Force members present endorsed recommending the proposal.

### 4. Next Steps

- Flagging and mapping of wetlands by consultants hire by the Town

- Continued clean up and grading of the property by DPW

5. Set next meeting date(s)

- 5/7 at 7:00 pm (post meeting update)

6. Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:40 pm

Meeting Minutes taken by: James Dowd

## Cohen, Paul

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**From:** Koulas Farm Task Force  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 20, 2024 4:51 PM  
**To:** lowellbrit@comcast.net; Michael Raisbeck; sueobendorf2@gmail.com; mchizel@yahoo.com; rayjg223@gmail.com; Swenson John Jr; Jim Dowd  
**Cc:** Cohen, Paul  
**Subject:** Koulas Farm proposals feedback

**From:** Stephen Gordon <steve@moink.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 20, 2024 2:48 PM  
**To:** Koulas Farm Task Force <KoulasFarm@chelmsfordma.gov>  
**Subject:** [External] Koulas Farm proposals feedback

You don't often get email from [steve@moink.org](mailto:steve@moink.org). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi, I'm Steve Gordon, an occasional volunteer for Koulas Farm as well as living a quarter-mile away from it and I literally drive by it essentially every day.

I want the main body of Koulas Farm (the land north and south of Pine Hill Road) to remain as undeveloped as possible. Ideally, I'd like to see structures on that land max out at a shed and a couple port-a-potties. Chelmsford paid a lot for that land for open space usage, and I do not want to see it used for any new construction. I especially don't want to see any of this very valuable land used for non-town buildings/usage.

I know there is a desire for land for an animal rescue shelter, and if the land off of Hunt Road can be used for that, that sounds like a perfect balance of keeping open space open and utilizing land that isn't ideal for open space purposes for semi-commercial/industrial development.

I also do not want to see any of the Pine Hill Road land rented out/sold to any non-farming commercial entities. Weston Nurseries does try to keep the disruption down, but they still cause a fair amount of dust and gravel on the roadway.

...thanks, Steve Gordon

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Dear residents of Chelmsford,

The Chelmsford Cultural Council is committed to supporting a diverse cross-section of art forms, including works of local artists, environmental education projects, and other collaborative proposals that bring together artists, organizations, and local cultural groups in projects to serve Chelmsford and the surrounding communities.

We believe the addition of a new outdoor space at the Koulas Farm property in Chelmsford could benefit a large number of these initiatives including musical performances, historical and dramatic shows, and outdoor walks and talks, as well as simply providing an unstructured space conducive to the thoughtful reflection so important for creative work.

The Council unanimously supports the proposal presented at our March 13th meeting by the vice chair of the Koulas Farm Task Force, to create East and West Meadows spaces as part of the redevelopment of the Koulas Farm parcels and we look forward to working with the Koulas Farm Task Force as this project moves forward.

Sincerely,  
Barb Reilly, Mike Rigney  
co-chairs, Chelmsford Cultural Council