

## Tucker Estate Advisory Opinion of the Charlestown Conservation Commission Submitted for consideration on April 2, 2021

The Charlestown Conservation Commission visited the Tucker estate on several occasions to assess the property. The following chart list the pros and cons, our criteria ratings, and final recommendations.

Criteria	Pros	Cons	Final Rating
<b>Size of Property</b>	Listed as 66.52 acres, features varied terrain, would allow for diversity in hiking trails, could potentially fit up to 4 miles of trail on this property	Currently, there is only a short trail in place so it would require significant time to map and develop new trails	3, the property is listed as 66.52 acres.
<b>Proximity to other protected land or to ponds or barrier beaches</b>	It abuts the Francis C Carter Memorial Preserve	The short connecting point is separated by railroad tracks. Animals can cross but people cannot cross safely. There is no human crossing available that connects the two properties for continuous trail extension.	3, the property does abut existing protected land.
<b>Ecologically significant habitat</b>	There are rare species on the property; two different people have found rare plants on the property; pitch pine forest on property with lots of young saplings. Pitch being threatened by southern pine beetle infestation. Protecting this property's young growth allows for preservation of these trees.		2, rare but not endangered species found on the property
<b>Farmland Preservation</b>	historic farmland		1, according to the application the field is not an active farm but at one point it was

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<b>Potential to offset impact of development. # of housing units possible</b>			3, assessment values the property under the hypothetical condition that the 22-lots have been approved, conforms to zoning and that the wetlands do not impact the development of the subdivision.
<b>Protects rural character</b>	We do not know what a developer has in mind or where they would place the houses. We agree that the property offers real challenges for a developer to build so it would be an expensive project which means this property wouldn't offer options for low income housing. Therefore, any housing development would be extensive and costly and disrupt the rural character. Preserving this land would preserve the rural character of this area,		2
<b>Scenic value</b>	Lowlands and highlands offer beautiful views, waterways on the property, pitch pine forests in several locations,	Intermittent stream would require fix for crossing which would then require upkeep	2
<b>Historic value, # of buildings, structures, objects</b>	old stone walls on the site, historic farmlands	not significant but still present	1, historic stone walls cross the property in multiple places
<b>Price</b>			0, assessment price
<b>Final Rating Total</b>			<b>17/27</b>

### **Final Recommendation:**

The Charlestown Conservation Commission unanimously agreed in our March 23, 2021 meeting that we are in favor of the preserving this property. We agreed that the property

will allow for extensive hiking trails composed of varied landscape with scenic views of waterways, pitch pine forests, huckleberry patches, and deer runs throughout. Preserving this property that abuts the Francis Carter preserve will allow for woodland animals to continue crossing between the two properties, despite railroad interference. There was considerable evidence of wildlife on the property. Vernal pools on the property will be preserved as well as several threatened plant species. We would however like to note that development of trails on this property would be a large undertaking and something that we feel would need extended time to plan and complete. The current load of monitoring and maintaining existing properties is significant and there is concern that a new property would require additional support.

Lynn Macalister, Chair

Shirley Griffin, Vice Chair

Silvermoon LaRose, Secretary

Gary Gardiner

Charlie Connery

Anthony Feisthamel