

To: The Conservation Commission of the Town of Acton

From: Magdalena Blosil

On behalf of the Hybid Farm

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you to tell you how important Hybid Farm has been to us and to the community. We have been greatly blessed by Rita and her staff. My family has been to Hybid Farm many times and absolutely loved our close up experience with the horses there. They are very well taken care of and the spark in my young children's eyes when they rode the ponies was priceless. I can't imagine not having this opportunity. Other farms are so much more expensive that we would not be able to have our children enjoy the close up experience.

Rita cares for children's needs – all children's. She is the most caring, sharing and honorable person I know. She will go out of her way to help a horse in need and child. There are so many children in the area who benefit from her support. She provides more than just horses. She provides knowledge and helps children to overcome their attitude issues by teaching them how to be calm, respectful and responsible. She provides the best medicine – love! Rita has also been able to meet a need that many in our community overlook and that is the need of children with learning disabilities. Like these horses that have been displaced, there are children of less fortunate circumstances or those that come from loving homes, but they too have some form of disability. The bond between those children and the Hybid's horses is lasting. It would be tragic to cut this bond.

Please, do not take this opportunity away from the community and from us. Hybid Farm is greatly needed! This is the therapy that my children respond to best! Our children's and the Farm's horses wellbeing are in your hands. I plead with you to please let the Hybid Farm continue their operation. I am sure that a positive solution can be reached without sacrificing horses or programs offered by Hybid Farm.

Respectfully,

Magdalena Blosil

22 November 2011

To Acton's Conservation Commission,

I am writing on behalf of Hybrid Farm. My daughter attended a week of summer camp at Hybrid Farm and had the most wonderful time. Rita was holding a session of summer camp that only had one younger girl enrolled in the class. Rita approached me to ask if my 7-year-old daughter could attend that week of summer camp for free so the girl would not be alone with a bunch of older kids. My daughter attended that week and she and the girl had a fabulous time together.

Unfortunately, we do not have the means to regularly attend classes or camps at Hybrid Farm but that one week made a great impression on my daughter. I was very impressed with Rita and Hybrid Farm that they are so concerned that those attending have a good experience that they were willing to offer free summer camp to my daughter. It shows a dedication and of love of what they are doing there that transcends just doing a job to make money. If their license agreement were not renewed, Hybrid Farm would not have been able to offer a scholarship to my daughter for camp.

I strongly urge you to renew your license agreement with Hybrid Farm. This is a wonderful business that clearly loves what they are doing. It would be a great loss for the community if they had to cut back on their programs, many of which directly benefit community programs such as Girl Scouts, local school fundraisers and helping at-risk youth to name a few. Please help them continue the wonderful work that they are doing by renewing your license agreement with them. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrea Bleak

91 A Harbor Street
Pepperell, MA 01463

Acton Conservation Committee
Acton, Ma

In reference to Hybid Farm

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter in support of the renewal on the license agreement that the Town of Acton currently has with Hybid Farm. I believe that it would be a grave injustice for the Town to cancel or not renew this agreement.

As a parent of a daughter who spent many hours each week at Hybid, I can honestly say that Rita McConnon does so much more for the youth who pass through the riding program in whatever way they come to her. It can be a series of basic lessons or those who develop a passion for riding and horsemanship such as my youngest daughter. A youth who takes lessons, attends a camp program or volunteers at Hybid does not simply learn about how to get on and off a horse and ride in a ring but learns how to care for that horse and it's tack. They learn that a horse is a living being that needs to be treated with love and respect.

Every youth who participates at Hybid also learns respect and caring for each other. No one is permitted to mistreat an animal or another person at Hybid. I do not know how to express how much spending time learning at Hybid Farm did for my daughter. It not only provided a positive outlet for her energy but set her on a lifelong path of involvement with horses.

So many other programs that the Farm is involved in are so worthwhile. A few that I have been aware of are Girl Scouts, 4H, involvement with local schools as well as at risk youth. The involvement with animals is a very positive aspect for some children who don't have many positives in their lives. No matter what happens in their lives outside the barn, every child who has ever been to Hybid knows that they are safe and cared for while they are at the Farm. No one will call names, fight or swear. It is just not tolerated.

Another part of what Rita has done is to take in horses that their previous owners can no longer care for. In the current economy this is happening more and more. There are rescue organizations but they cannot handle the numbers that are currently needing help. I have heard of horses being just set loose to fend for themselves which they cannot do. Rita helps those that she can in a totally unselfish way. The extra land that she uses is needed for pasturing the horses and cannot be removed from use if she is going to continue to have a viable program of instruction and rescue.

I for one would not want to be responsible for cutting back on all the good that Hybid Farm currently is doing for the community. Those of us who have so richly benefited from association with Hybid Farm in helping to raise our children would hate to see those who have not had this experience to miss it. Please reconsider and renew the license for use of the conservation land surrounding Hybid Farm to remain as it is currently written and do not deny the future youth an exceptional experience.

Sincerely,

Denise Temple (parent of past Hybid Farm student and
volunteer)

Andrea Ristine

From: ritamcconnon@gmail.com on behalf of Rita-Marie McConnon [rita@hybidfarm.com]
Sent: Friday, December 02, 2011 10:57 AM
To: Natural Resources Department
Subject: Letter of support for Hybid

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Alexia Duc** <aducganis@comcast.net>
Date: Tue, Nov 22, 2011 at 5:33 PM
Subject: Re: Letter of support for Hybid
To: "Rita McConnon (Hybid)" <rita@hybidfarm.com>

To Whom it may concern

I am writing to let you know how much Hybid Farm means for my family and why, despite the fact that we live in Cambridge, 30 to 45 minutes away (one hour with traffic!), my children have been riding at Hybid every week of Fall and Spring of every year for the past 4 years. We have celebrated birthday parties there, have done weeks of April and Summer camps and when our school is out, have begged Rita to open the barn for more time and more lessons and more camp there.

Hybid is unique and so much more than a horseback riding barn. As you know, there are many stables and equestrian facilities located much closer to Cambridge and if we were only looking for a facility where to ride, we wouldn't need to drive out to Acton. But we love Hybid and would do anything to keep it running because thanks to Rita and her team of devoted and skilled teachers and counselors, it is a magical place where children learn physical skills but most of all grow by developing a caring and knowledgeable relationship with an animal in a warm and compassionate environment. The fact that a lot of these horses and ponies have been rescued and are being nurtured back to health has a tremendous impact on the children's learning. They understand that they are part of this process which teaches them patience, respect and love for nature and the world around them.

Unlike most equestrian facilities focused on riding and training, Hybid is a place to live, where you are always welcome, where teenagers rush to after school and linger until past daylight. I know my daughter can't wait to be old enough to be a counselor and spend her afternoons there. My children have already begged me and their father to move to Acton so as to get closer to Hybid... It is a special place where children learn how to be considerate and thoughtful because they understand that they are part of a bigger purpose. Rita is one of these rare teachers who has a tremendous impact on her students and fills the place with warmth and excitement. My daughter described her as her hero in her first essay of 3rd grade last year and explained that Rita was a hero because she had made her understand horses and taught her to love and respect nature.

Frankly, I don't see any better use one could have of conservation land.

Thank you for your consideration,

Alexia Duc
53 Upland rd
Cambridge, MA, 02140

Town of Acton
Conservation Commission
472 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720

November 19, 2011

Dear Members of the Conservation Commission,

If you drive down Nagog Hill Road, you will see that Hybid Farm is a horse farm because you will see horses residing there and you will see children riding there. What you can not see from the road is that Hybid Farm is a haven.

I am a resident of Sudbury, MA and the parent of a child who has been riding at Hybid Farm for 9 years. As a former equestrian, I put a great deal of time and thought into choosing the place where I wanted my daughter to learn to ride, and far more importantly, to learn the joy, passion and responsibility of taking care of horses in a safe and nurturing environment. Hybid Farm stood out from a multitude of choices in the surrounding area as the clear winner and has continued to be the right choice for every one of the last nine years.

Rita McConnon has the biggest heart of any person I know and that single fact is reflected in every aspect of Hybid Farm, from her care and nurturing of the community of riders who participate there to her care and nurturing of the horses who reside there. Hybid Farm is a haven because of Rita's philosophy of running the barn, which is and has always been safety first. What comes second? Joy, passion, love, hard work, responsibility, care, generosity and helping others; these characteristics imbue every aspect of the barn.

I considered reporting a long list of accolades next including riding victories, prizes for both horse management and horsemanship knowledge, and numerous other successes Hybid Farm riders have been awarded, but I assume you have been well informed of these externally recognized measures of success. I wanted to share with you the victories that do not come from performance on a single day at a single event. These are the victories of grooming and tacking up a horse by oneself for the very first time, of learning how to steer, post at the trot and navigate a pony over poles on the ground, of cleaning a stall and scrubbing water buckets, of watching the vet, dentist or farrier administer routine care, and of lending a hand to anyone in need. These are the victories that have made me such a fan of Hybid Farm and these victories will stay with my daughter, and all the other Hybid Farm riders, throughout their lives.

In an age where most parents worry about their children spending too much time in the virtual world, Hybid Farm is very real treasure offering kids an opportunity to immerse themselves in the "old-fashioned" accomplishments that come from hard work and responsibility and because they are at Hybid Farm, it is wrapped in a blanket of nurturing. Hybid Farm is an invaluable asset to the town of Acton.

It is my sincerest hope that each member of the Conservation Commission will consider the issues before them, with regard to Hybrid Farm, in the context of the big picture that this horse farm offers to all of the students who ride there (residents of Acton and of many other locations). These students are future adults who are learning the value of being a good citizen with each day spent at the barn.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Kozol". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrea Kozol
25 Wadsworth Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
978-443-8826
ajkozol@comcast.net

Letter to Conservation regarding hybrid

From: **Anna Stabler** (astabler10@gmail.com)

Sent: Tue 11/15/11 3:04 PM

To: Deborah Disston (deborah_disston@hotmail.com); Lea Stabler (lea.stabler7@gmail.com)

Dear Conservation Commission of the Town of Acton,

My name is Anna Stabler, I am twenty years old and a concord resident. I recently received a letter informing me that my childhood barn is at risk of losing a piece of their business that will ultimately effect everything they are and have achieved. The town of Acton, Concord, Boston and all the small entities within these communities have benefitted tremendously from the hospitality, education and love Hybrid Farm has to provide. I had my first riding lesson at Hybrid Farm twelve years ago. I wouldn't be the person I am today without the compassion, friendship and relationships that Rita McConnen, Hybrid riders, and the horses that surrounded and embraced me as a child. Taking away their access to the trails, fields, and the land which so many of these wonderful rescued horses and ponies live off of, will severely impair their ability to provide the vast array of opportunities they have to offer for the community.

I rode at Hybrid Farm for eight years of my life. As a kid, I had plenty of unhappy days in school. My mom would drive me over to Hybrid even if it wasn't my lesson day. Something about this magical place gave me room to leave my troubles behind and surround myself in a different world. Hybrid isn't only a place to retreat but a place to thrive. Growing up in the stables and fields I was raised by the older riders and instructors who taught me how to care for a horse, the responsibilities of ownership, and the art of horse and rider.

I grew into one of these elders over the years. Being a camp counselor for three summers allowed me to see this experience from another perspective. I wasn't the only kid that saw Hybrid as their second home, almost every child I worked with felt the same as I did in one way or another. We learn lessons here. We learn the value of relationships and responsibility. Hybrid has always been a part of me, even as the year's pass since I had to stop taking lessons it remains in my heart and with every horse I see.

The kid I was and all the youngsters I watched grow shared this magical world together. Hybrid is a therapeutic life. Horses are taken in from abusive homes, riders retreat to care for these horses and ponies to engage in the beauty of caring for another being. Hybrid unlike many equestrian barns thrives off this. They are not devoted to the glamour and competition but the horse to human relationship. I found this to be true throughout my riding career. To this day I haven't found anything quite like moving together as one with another being, caring for something so powerful with such grace. Such care requires facilities and space. Without the land my pony would not have had room to graze and roam. Without the trails we wouldn't have been able to take this natural bond outside the confinement of the fenced in ring. Without the space for paddocks there wouldn't be the grand variety of personalities and sizes for hybrid to offer their riders. Without this land Hybrid is handicapped, unable to assist all those its capable of.

I ask of you to please reconsider the consequences that would result from limiting Hybrids access to the conservation land. Your support will not only keep Hybrid alive but everyone involved in this open-heart community. If every letter doesn't enforce how special a place Hybrid is I highly recommend making a visit down to the barn on a week day afternoon around 2pm when buses make a drop off and the kids fill the barn. Nobody will need to explain why the land is so valuable it will be obvious.

Anna Stabler