

Town of North Stonington, CT
HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 11, 2013 at 3:00 p.m
New Town Hall Conference Room

The meeting of the Hewitt Farm Committee was called to order by Nita Kincaid at 3:02 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room with members Ellie Banker, Jack Brown, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Ed Harasimowitz, and Nita Kincaid present.

1) Approve 02/25/2013 Meeting Minutes

Ed motioned and Jack seconded to approve the 02/25/2013 Meeting Minutes as corrected. The motion carried.

2) Member updates on projects and any additional items for group discussion

a) Maple Syrup Project

Jack began the discussion by stating that he was very impressed with the number of people who attended the Maple Syrup event considering the relatively short period of time that the event was advertised. All agreed with him that John Bradshaw, Gene Banker and Wayne Byassee gave an excellent demonstration and that the event appeared to be particularly enjoyed by the children who attended.

Nita read an email she had received from John expressing his appreciation for the opportunity to tap the trees. He stated that he had counted 33 attendees at Greene Gables and that most had followed him to the Banker Farm to view the sugaring-off. Nita replied to John, thanking him for a successful, informative event.

b) Planning Forum

Juliet Leeming, Senior Planning and Zoning Official for the town, stepped into the room to remind the Hewitt Farm Committee to participate in the *Plan of Conservation and Development Planning Forum scheduled for Saturday, April 6th at the Elementary School*. The group agreed to have committee members available to answer questions and to provide whatever maps, photos and other information would help the forum achieve its goal.

c) Recreation Commission Expo

Nita and Coop described their attendance at the March 5th Recreation Commission meeting. The purpose was to find out how the committee could participate in the

commission's **Expo scheduled for Saturday, May 18th at the Elementary School.** They agreed that the Hewitt Farm Committee would man an "information table" at the school on the day of the Expo and would consider possible related activities or events that could be conducted on Hewitt Farm that same day.

Avalonia Land Conservancy, North Stonington Citizen's Land Alliance, and the Conservation Commission also indicated participation, specifically with a "table" but also possibly by conducting guided walks on their properties.

The Recreation Commission will meet again on April 2nd to further plan this event. One or more members of our committee will plan to attend.

d) Event and Location Signs

Jack noted that the absence of a "Hewitt Farm" sign on Route 2 makes it difficult to steer event attendees to the farm, especially since the evergreen tree at the Hewitt Road entrance has now grown tall enough to block the view of the Hewitt Road sign.

The group agreed the tree should be removed but took no action. Coop agreed that with Ed's help he would continue making and erecting signs for upcoming events. Nita stated that, for the near-term, we should use the "sandwich board" sign and the many directional signs that had been made for the Celebrate Fall event. They are stored in her barn.

At Jack's suggestion, the committee agreed to investigate different types of signs that could be erected at the Route 2 entrance.

e) Greene Gables Resolution

Nita reported that on March 7th, five members of the North Stonington Historical Society visited Greene Gables and met with Gregory Farmer, Connecticut Circuit Rider for the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. Nita arrived to open the door to the building but neither attended nor participated in any of the discussion that took place among attendees.

Nita stated that Frank Eppinger, President of the Historical Society, informed her that a report would be forthcoming before the end of this month (March), hopefully before he goes on vacation.

Members of the group briefly discussed what might be covered in the report and agreed that it will be necessary to obtain public approval for whatever action is taken. This conclusion is based on the specific omission of any approval to resolve Greene Gables as indicated in the Minutes of the Special Town Meeting on December 15, 2010.

f) Opening Day of Fishing

Nita described an email she had received from committee member Ed McGowan stating that the North Stonington Lions Club had agreed to participate in Hewitt Farm's **Opening Day of Fishing on Saturday, April 20th**. The Lions Club will need the committee to suggest how many people it expects will attend, when the "event" would start and end, and what kind of food should be provided.

Nita offered to list the kinds of food to sell. Coop will inquire of Tim York how many people usually attend Opening Day, the composition of those attending (children vs. adults), and when they arrive and depart.

g) Timber Agreement

Nita read an email from Chris Casadei stating that he will notify us when Hull Forest Products will begin cutting and removing the trees around Greene Gables. First Selectman Nick Mullane has been advised of Hull's need to burn the remnants in the meadow.

h) "CT Trails Day 2013"

The group briefly talked about what would be needed to advertise Hewitt Farm's participation in **"CT Trails Day 2013" scheduled for Saturday, June 1st**. No action was taken.

i) Community Gardens

Nita read aloud an email that Mary Anne Ricker had sent to those who attended the March 7, 2013 meeting of people interested in establishing a community garden on Hewitt Farm. Nita also distributed a copy of a Press Release issued by Mary Ann that describes what transpired at that meeting. Nita distributed copies of a document titled "Community Garden Association", which she had received from Mary Ann. This document describes the purpose, membership, meetings, officers, terms of office, rules and regulations, and size of plot to be used by the association.

Committee members discussed the steps that Mary Ann and her committee still need to take prior to obtaining approval for their proposal. Ellie had prepared a draft list of items that should be addressed in the Community Garden Association's application/proposal. Ellie agreed to finalize the list and to send it to Mary Ann to aid her in completing the application.

3) Public comments and Questions

No members of the public were present.

4) Priorities for March 25, 2013 agenda

- Old business on items addressed above.

- Determine next steps on 2012 incomplete projects
- Prioritize committee goals for 2013 and identify "lead" members

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Richard B. Cooper