

Town of North Stonington. CT
HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, July 25, 2011 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 3:05 p.m. in the New Town Hall with members Jack Brown, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Nita Kincaid and Eddie McGowan present. Ellie Banker arrived a few minutes later. Also attending were Karin Leiper, Julie Evans and Marilyn Mackay.

1. Approve 7/11/11 Minutes

Eddie motioned and Jack seconded to approve the Minutes of the 07/11/2011 meeting.

Because Karin Leiper was present, the group agreed to move the review of her written plan for constructing a Butterfly Garden to the first item on the agenda. After discussing Karin's written schedule and layout of the proposed garden, Ellie motioned and Jack seconded the committee's approval of the project. A letter to that effect, signed by First Selectman Mullane, was given to Karin so that she could forward it to the Girl Scouts of America organization.

2. Discuss Hewitt Farm Work Plan in detail

Coop next conducted a task-by-task review of the Work Plan for the purpose of ensuring that everyone understood what each task would entail, and to assign a "Start Date" and "Leader" to those tasks that are currently underway or soon to be started. Since work on some of the tasks is already in progress, those tasks were discussed under Updates on 7/11 Action Items & Projects (below).

Eddie described some of his ideas on how to form a "Friends of Hewitt Farm" organization. The committee then discussed the types of things they would expect a "Friends" group to do, and proposed a number of different ways such an organization could be formed. Jack noted that he is working on an organization chart. It was decided to continue further discussion of this topic as the first item at our August 8th meeting.

The committee next discussed the difference between Task #3 ("Develop a recommendation for Greene Gables based on a professional review of the structure) and Task #4 (Clear overgrown vegetation. . . . and stabilize the structure. . . .). It was agreed that Task #3 involved a study of the feasibility of renovating the structure, and Task #4, involved beginning actual work, which should be performed only after Task #3.

Coop distributed a list of names of individuals whom he believed should be sent letters of reply and/or appreciation for what they have done for Hewitt Farm. The group will review the list for discussion at the next meeting.

Tasks # 6 (collection of Hewitt Farm information) was postponed to be discussed at a later date. Task #9 (documentation of HF Operating & Maintenance Plan) will be started by Coop.

Nita described why she believes the "main entrance" to Hewitt Farm should temporarily be changed from the Route 2 entrance to the Hewitt Rd. entrance near the footbridges until the repair of the dam is completed. Nita stated that the Highway Department is prepared to provide support in clearing invasives, brush and debris in that area when the committee is prepared to work with them. This prompted suggestions on how to best use the Town's offer for performing other tasks that involve clean-up. Everyone agreed, as First Selectman Mullane had earlier suggested, that committee members must be present when the town crew does this work.

The review of the Work Plan was suspended at Task #18 and will be resumed at the next meeting.

3. Updates on 7/11 Action Items & Projects

a. Butterfly Garden

Minutes on this subject are in number 1, above.

b. Kallen Letter

Coop reported that a letter from First Selectman Mullane to Eric and Kathie Kallen, along with a blank *License Agreement*, had been sent to the Kallens. Coop said that based upon his reception at a follow-up meeting with Mr. Kallen, he believes the letter was received favorably. The selectmen are awaiting the return of the signed agreement.

Coop also noted that there are two other instances where Hewitt Farm's hiking trails cross over private property, and that the owners should be contacted to determine if they also want to enter into a similar agreement.

c. Final "Names & Terminology" list

The list of agreed-to names and terminology, and a map showing Hewitt Farm's features was distributed to the committee for editing and mark-up before the meeting. Member's lists and maps were returned to Coop to be incorporated into a final document.

d. Revised Trail Map

The DRAFT "Hewitt Farm Trail Map" and reverse-page write-up was distributed to the committee for editing and mark-up before the meeting. Member's red-lined copies were returned to Coop to be incorporated into the final document. Coop asked for a vote on the approval of this document to prevent it from unauthorized changes. Nita motioned and Eddie seconded to approve the map and reverse-page write-up.

e. Plantings around restaurant vents and hay field

Coop reported that he had been in contact with Jim Cowan, author of Hewitt Farm's Botanical Survey, and that Jim recommended Gray Dogwood and/or Bayberry shrubs be planted around the vents and outflows behind the restaurant. He recommends 3-4 plants per group - at least two feet in height - planted in the Fall. Also a big concern to him was the poor condition of the field in that vicinity. It should be raked (at minimum) and topped with loam, and seeded with Timothy or Clover in the Fall.

f. Footbridge

Jack reported that he had not recently communicated with Tom Kane regarding his progress on the footbridge and asked Coop if he would take over the lead on this task. Coop agreed!

Jack further stated that if Tom chooses to use the materials currently available to him that are stored in the town garage, then the materials Jack is in the process of obtaining could possibly be used for the "Wyassup Trail" and "Loop Trail" footbridges.

g. Signs

Ellie has heard nothing further from Mark Tardiff.

h. Contacts with Gwenmoor Marina & Trout Unlimited

Jack reported that his letter to Trout Unlimited was sent and that he is awaiting word back from Gwenmoor Marina regarding any surplus materials they may have at present or are anticipating in the future.

i. Grant Money

Eddie reported that his research into funding and possible grant money continues.

j. Submission for Recreation Newsletter

Coop reported that according to John Hines, the deadline for submitting items to be printed in the Recreation Commission's Fall edition of "North Stonington Today" is August 5, 2011 and that the deadline for the winter issue would probably be early November. Given this deadline it will not be possible to include anything about an "Open Property Day". Coop will submit a short "Hewitt Farm in Autumn" note for the Fall issue.

k. Hewitt Farm page on Town website

Nita indicated that she had not yet met with Marc Tate.

4. Discussion of ideas - Open Property Day

There was a discussion on whether to have an "Open Property Day" and, if so, when to have it. It was agreed that the event should NOT be combined with the *Harvest Festival* that will be held at Holly Green by the Business Association on October 22nd or 29th. The committee's primary concern was participants having to cross Route 2 to attend both events.

A further brief discussion led to general agreement by committee members that the "Open Property Day" should be held, but the date and particulars of the event are yet to be determined.

5. Establish a date for visiting the property together as a group

The group agreed to meet on Monday, August 1, 2001 to walk the Hewitt Farm property and view the interior of Greene Gables. The group will meet at 1:00 p.m. at the 1750 Farm House. The meeting is open to the public and Nita will post the Agenda. Co-chairs will invite First Selectman Mullane and will obtain the key to Greene Gables.

6. Public Comments & Questions

Marilyn Mackay suggested that the committee establish a page on the *North Stonington Bulletin Board* for the committee to promote and keep the public informed about Hewitt Farm. She also suggested different types of events that could be used to raise money for Hewitt Farm projects.

7. Identify any new items for 8/8/11 agenda

- At Jack's request, **Coop** will obtain a map showing all abutters and a large 24" x 36" map of the entire Hewitt Farm property.
- **Jack** will continue cleaning along the edge of Hewitt Road at the Route 2 entrance.

- **Jack** distributed a "list of things that people can give us."
- **Coop** will contact Tom Kane to check on his progress with the footbridges.
- **Jack** will maintain contact with Gwenmoor Marina and Trout Unlimited.
- **Ellie** will maintain contact with Marc Tardiff.
- **Eddie** will continue to research funding and grant opportunities.
- **Nita** and **Ellie** will work on a plan to establish a "Friends" organization.
- **The entire committee** will meet at the 1750 Farm House on Monday at 1:00 p.m. to inspect Greene Gables and view areas of Hewitt Farm that are of particular interest.

A site walk will be conducted on **Monday, August 1, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. on the grounds of Hewitt Farm.** Participants will meet at the 1750 Farm House.

The following meeting will be held on **Monday, August 8, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room.**

Eddie motioned and Jack seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard B. Cooper