

**Town of North Stonington. CT**  
**HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES (Amended 10/17/11)**

**Monday, September 26, 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 3:02 p.m. in the New Town Hall with members Ellie Banker, Jack Brown, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Ed Harasimowitz, and Nita Kincaid present. Eddie arrived at 4:30 p.m.

Invited guests were Mark Tardiff and Mark Perkins.

1. Approve 09/12/11 Minutes

Ellie motioned and it was seconded to approve the 09/12/11 Minutes.

2. Discussions with Mark Tardiff (History Sign Project) and Mark Perkins (lessee of the hay fields).

Ellie introduced Mark Tardiff to the committee. He is a History teacher at Wheeler High School. He explained that he had received a \$500 grant from the North Stonington Education Foundation (NSEF) to design construct and install a sign on Hewitt Farm that would describe the history of the property and/or its structures and other features. Bulletin board capability and a weather protection overhang are also possible. He has begun only preliminary planning and will be engaging the 8th and 9th grades, and the History Club in the project throughout the winter months.

Mark stated that the historical research, design and fabrication of the sign would be performed by the students themselves. He anticipates that the sign will not be ready to install until the spring of 2012, but he will in the meantime keep the committee informed of his progress. The committee discussed with Mark what purpose the sign might serve, what it might look like, and where it might be located. Ellie will continue as his point-of-contact with the committee.

Mark also spoke about the Wheeler Cross Country Team and the use it currently makes of Hewitt Farm. The committee told Mark that the team should feel free to make suggestions or requests with regard to the trails and other features on Hewitt Farm that would help their sport.

Coop next introduced Mark Perkins who is the lessee of the farm's four hay fields. Mark explained the process whereby he tests, fertilizes and otherwise maintains the fields; cuts and bails or rolls the hay crop; and retrieves the rolls over the winter as the demand warrants. He is in the second year of a three-year lease with the Town.

Coop noted that there are four issues that the committee wanted to discuss with him. They are **(a)** whether areas in the North Hay Field and Route 2 Hay Field could be used for parking vehicles during the "Celebrate Fall" event; **(b)** what he would like to see done in the Route 2 Hay Field to mark the location of the vent and outflow pipes behind the restaurant, and restore the haying area disturbed during the restaurant's construction; **(c)** what problems he encounters with regard to soil testing, fertilizing, seeding, and crop or equipment storage; and **(d)** his position with regard to clearing the borders of the hay fields and use of these borders for horse, skiing and cross country trails.

The following briefly captures Mark's responses to the above:

- Mark said that he will have all hay cut by the "Celebrate Fall" date and that cars can be parked on the North Hayfield close to the Hewitt Road barway. It will also be OK to drive horse wagons around the edges of the field. Mark noted that the period from spring to October when the hay is growing and being cut is the time during which visitors need to take care not to impact the hay fields by crossing through them.
- Mark does not intend to cut or clear the edges of the hay fields any more than they already are. He is cutting hay as close to the stone walls and tree lines as he intends to.
- Mark suggested that if in the future we construct a permanent Parking Area in the North Hay Field, it should be to the west of the barway in the corner of the field. The area should be ringed with logs or a low rail to keep people from driving across the field. He also suggested that the group consider a Parking Area off Cemetery Rd. in the northern corner of the Rte, 2 Hay Field.
- Mark agreed with the committee's August 8, 2011 letter to the Board of Selectmen that recommended shrubs (Gray Dogwood or Bayberry) be planted close to each vent behind the restaurant, and that the area be raked and seeded with Timothy or Orchard Grass and noted this should be done soon - early fall. Mark does not believe the outflow pipes need to be marked. He stated that he can cut and roll directly over them.
- Mark stated that the hay fields would benefit significantly from overseeding but, if he did so, he would want a longer lease to ensure that his investment is returned. He recommends overseeding with Alfalfa.
- Mark would also like to use Class A Organic Fertilizer instead of the current chemical fertilizer, but will need permission from the Board of Selectmen to do so. He will have a soil analysis done beforehand and would employ Best Management Practices. He added that the Ph of the soil is currently very "good."
- Mark said he would like to continue to store the hay rolls on the property around the edges of the fields and will take care not to block pathways. He will not store equipment on the property during the winter.

3. Member updates on projects and items for group discussion

a. Jack (entrances, dam paper)

Nita described the significant progress that has been made at the new entrance under Jack's leadership. She stated that she had contacted Wayne Berardi, Inland Wetlands Enforcement Officer, to ask him about proposed work at the new entranceway. Wayne was on vacation, but will examine the site when he returns.

Nita reviewed the parking plans for the "Celebrate Fall" event, noting that most attendees will park at the Rte. 2 entrance. She has spoken to 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Mullane about enlarging the opening to the dam walkway for the event. He will investigate the best way to accomplish this and reply back to her.

b. Eddie (Facebook)

Eddie stated that the band is still "good to go." The committee then discussed an appropriate location for the band and the acoustics of the area. Eddie said that if the band cannot perform he has arranged for a "back up."

The work on the Facebook page can be completed as soon as we obtain an appropriate Town email address from Marc Tate.

c. Ellie (Greene Gables history)

Ellie reported that the Historical Society's Board of Directors voted to ask the "Photography Club" to copy Fred Stewart Greene's glass plate photos, and at the same time be on the "look-out" for photos of Greene Gables.

d. Coop (letters, *Plan for Operation and Maintenance* including new policy requested by 1st Selectman Mullane)

Coop distributed a "DRAFT Table of Contents" for the *Plan for the Operation and Maintenance of Hewitt Farm*. He also read the letter that he proposes sending to Hewitt Farm abutters introducing the committee and informing them of the "Celebrate Fall" event.

e. Ed (Greene Gables report)

Ed reported that he had not yet heard anything from Wayne Greene.

f. Nita ("Celebrate Fall" event, Friends of Hewitt Farm)

Nita reported that the event notice has been put on the Town website and that we should make further changes to the Hewitt Farm page after the event. Unfortunately the "North Stonington Bulletin Board" website is temporarily out-of-order and a Hewitt Farm Facebook page can only be accessed by registered users..

Nita stated that she had driven her horse trailer through the new entrance to Hewitt Farm and onto The Green. She concludes there is more than ample space for all exhibitors to arrive, to set up, and to depart.

Nita also stated that there is about \$1,200 that was contributed to "Hewitt Farm" shortly after it was purchased by the Town and that the money will be transferred to an account earmarked expressly for the Hewitt Farm.

Nita distributed a proposed application form to be handed to potential "Friends of Hewitt Farm" members. The form contains a list of categories-of-interest to be checked off by the applicant. Nita asked the committee to think of other categories to add to the list. Nita also distributed "Celebrate Fall" flyers that should be distributed around town.

The committee next addressed other concerns regarding the up-coming Celebrate Fall event. These concerns will be further discussed during the **workshop on Monday, October 3rd at 3:00 p.m. in the New Town Hall.**

Nita suggested the committee discuss Jack's paper, *Hewitt Farm Committee Input to the Dam Reconstruction Project*. Coop suggested that action be deferred until the next meeting when there will be more time to discuss it.

4. Continue Hewitt Farm Work Plan Review starting with Task #19 and including new items. Materials were distributed at the 08/08/2011 meeting.

There was not sufficient time for the review of the *Work Plan*. The review will continue at a future meeting.

5. Public Comments & Questions

No members of the public were in attendance.

6. Identify any new items for 10/17/11 Agenda

There were no new items.

The next regular meeting will be held on **Monday, October 17, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room.**

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

Respectfully submitted, Richard B. Cooper