

Town of North Stonington. CT
HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, August 8, 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 3:10 p.m. in the New Town Hall with members Ellie Banker, Jack Brown, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Nita Kincaid and Eddie McGowan present. Also attending was Ed Harasimowitz, candidate for Alternate Member.

1. Approve 7/25/11 Minutes

Eddie motioned and Jack seconded to approve the 07/25/2011 Minutes.

2. Discuss next steps fo organizing "Friends of Hewitt Farm"

Nita noted that a "Friends" group would probably need to be set up as a 501(c)(3)organization, if the intention was to attract both people who would volunteer their help, as well as those who would contribute money. The group agreed that it would need to be qualified as 501(c)(3) so contributors could receive a tax deduction.

Jack offered that the ideal way for a "Friends" group to be formed would be if a leader or someone particularly interested in forming such a group could be found. The committee agreed, but admitted it did not have a clear idea how to find such a person. Jack indicated that he is working on a related organization chart. Nita offered to produce an outline of what is required to set up a 501(c)(3).

Eddie suggested "advertising" on Facebook for volunteers/"Friends" and he will draft a possible Facebook page to do so. He will, however, not post it without committee agreement. He also recommended that we, as Hewitt Farm committee members, should represent the Hewitt Farm by attending the meetings and events of other NS town committees and non-profit organizations and informing them about Hewitt Farm and what our committee is doing.

3. Open Property Day

Because Coop had to leave the meeting briefly, the committee chose to discuss the email sent by Madeline Jeffery, reminding the committee that Hewitt Road is a Town designated Scenic Road and that the cutting of trees, removal of stone walls and other actions require approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The group discussed the ramifications of the Scenic Road designation on its plans for the future maintenance of Hewitt Farm, and agreed that all such activities would comply with the ordinance.

Upon Coop's return, the group addressed its plans for "Open Property Day". On the outset, Coop stated that he believed such an event would be a great distraction from the committee's present work. He further stated that he would not stand in the way and would in fact participate in the event, but due to many other pressing tasks he wished not to be included in the planning and organizing stages of the event. All other committee members said they understood and that they would take that responsibility.

As a result, the committee agreed to proceed with planning the event by finding an available date and investigating ways to get other North Stonington organizations involved.

4. Clearing the "new entranceway"

Nita distributed information on *Tree of Heaven* from the UConn Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group. It contains characteristics and management options specifically for the eradication of this non-native invasive species. The group reviewed the document in detail and agreed it was not certain whether the Highway Department crew would be available to do this type of work. Nita and Jack will meet with Highway Foreman Steve Holliday to discuss the process.

5. Updates on Action Items & Projects

a. Final Names & Terminology list

Coop stated that he needed a name for the grassy area in front of the 1750 Farm House so he can finalize the list. The group agreed to call it "The Green."

Jack provided Coop with a list of corrections to the list and the "features" map. Ellie had done so previously. Coop will make these corrections to the final documents.

b. Eagle Project: Footbridge

Coop reported that he had spoken to Tom Kane and will meet with him at the site to review his plans for the new footbridge. Coop asked Ed Harasimowitz to join them and will notify Ed when there is a firm date for the meeting.

c. Signs

Ellie reported she had not yet heard from teacher Mark Tardiff on historical signs.

Coop stated that he had tried to get a price list from the Fossil Inc. sign company on an entrance sign, but would have to send them an email. He then asked Eddie if he would do that and Eddie agreed.

d. Possible source of project funds

Nita recommended the committee should apply to the North Stonington Garden Club for some funding for work to be done on Hewitt Farm. The money would be used for a project to create the new entryway to the Farm and could include the purchase and/or installation of an entrance sign, the clearing of invasive plants in that area, and planting of some shrubs and or/ferns and perennials at the entrance. The committee agreed that Nita should proceed.

e. Other member updates

Jack distributed and discussed his proposal "HFC 8-8-11 Meeting Notes," which contained drawings showing his proposed appearance of the "new entranceway." Ellie motioned and Eddie seconded to allow Jack to proceed with designing the entrance and planning the invasives removal. Nita offered to work with him.

The group discussed an appropriate name for the "new entranceway." Suggestions were "Hewitt Road Entrance," "Ryder Road Entrance," and "Eastern Entrance." There was no decision.

Ellie reported on her research into Greene Gables' history and distributed photographs that she had found. She stated that at the Historical Society she had found reference to many glass slides of Greene Gables and would try to locate them over the next several weeks.

Jack correctly pointed out that the updated Trail Map does NOT have Route 2 labeled.

Coop reported that he had written a letter to First Selectman Nick Mullane requesting that Deborah Lapinski and Elizabeth Haddad be offered the opportunity to engage in a legal agreement with the town that allows the Hewitt Farm walking trail to cross their property. The committee agreed that the letter should be sent to the entire Board of Selectmen as a memorandum, not a letter.

Coop also sent a letter to First Selectman Mullane documenting the committee's recommendations for planting shrubs and seeding the Route 2 Hay Field behind the Restaurant.

Coop distributed an updated *Hewitt Farm Committee Address List*. This updating and distribution will be ongoing. Members were asked to make contributions to it and also to be sure to discard their superseded copy.

6. Continue *Work Plan* review

The group agreed there was NOT sufficient time to continue the review of the *Work Plan*, however Nita distributed an updated version and it will be discussed at the next meeting.

7. Public Comments & Questions

None

8. Identify any items for 8/22/11 Agenda

- **Jack** will continue cleaning along the edge of Hewitt Road and in the area of the "new entranceway." **Coop** will periodically remove his brush piles.
- **Jack** will continue to document his ideas for the appearance of the entranceways, area around Greene Gables, and other areas of Hewitt Farm.
- **Ed H.** and **Coop** will meet with Tom Kane to review his footbridge plans. Tom is expected back from his trip on the 11th or 12th.
- **Jack** and **Nita** will meet with Steve Holliday to discuss clearing of the Tree of Heaven and construction of the "new entranceway."
- **Ellie** will continue her search for Greene Gables photos and historical information.
- **Eddie** will obtain a price list from the Fossil, Inc. sign company.
- **Eddie** will draft a Facebook page "advertisng" Hewitt Farm and introducing the Hewitt Farm Committee.
- **Nita** and **Ellie** will work on a plan to establish a "Friends of Hewitt Farm" organization.
- **Nita** will draft an application to the North Stonington Garden Club for grant money for a Hewitt Farm project.

- **Nita** will investigate possible dates for "Open Property Day." A date that does not conflict with other events in town.
- **Coop** will ask Marc Tate to add "NORWICH WESTERLY ROAD (RT 2)" to the Trail Map and will finalize the *Names & Terminology* list and map for review at the next meeting. He will also submit the "hayfield planting letter" and "agreement memorandum" to the First Selectman and Board of Selectmen respectively, and will obtain a Hewitt Farm Abutters Map.
- **The entire committee** will review the updated version of the *Work Plan* for discussion at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on **Monday, August 22, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room.**

Jack motioned and Eddie seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Richard B. Cooper