

Town of North Stonington, CT
HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 10, 2012 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 3:00 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 08/27/12 Meeting Minutes

Ellie noted a needed spelling correction on page 3. Ellie then motioned and Coop seconded to approve the 08/27/12 Meeting Minutes, as corrected. The motion carried.

2) Plans for Greene Gables visit with the Historical Society and Board of Selectmen

Nita distributed a copy of an email that she had sent to Historical Society President Frank Eppinger earlier in the day. Coop read it aloud to the group.

A lengthy discussion followed in which the group, by referring back to its Mission Statement, clarified what it believed to be its role in the Greene Gables resolution. All agreed that the committee's responsibility is to provide any information or help it can to individuals or groups who express interest in preserving Greene Gables, but that the committee itself should not assume that role.

The group further agreed that if the Historical Society chooses to pursue preserving Greene Gables, the Society should be given a reasonable amount of time to develop a plan-of-action on how the structure would be used, how funds to restore or rebuild it would be obtained, and how the entire project would be carried out. Ellie who is a member of the Historical Society's Board of Trustees stated that she would carry this message to the board at it's Regular Meeting scheduled for later in the evening.

In concluding its discussion on the subject, the committee agreed to send a memo to the Board of Selectmen recommending that appropriate action be undertaken as soon as possible to secure the Greene Gables structure and immediate surrounds, in order to ensure the safety of visitors, as well as to protect against vandalism.

3) Status of rental inspections and leases

Nita distributed a copy of the final version of "Report on August 8, 2012 Inspection of 3 Hewitt Road." As a result of the inspection, she recommended three changes in the draft Cabin Lease.

Ed suggested that purchasing gas tanks, rather than renting them from the vendor might produce a significant cost savings in heating costs.

Nita pointed out a section added to the report, which lists repairs made to 3 Hewitt Rd., since the Town's purchase. She stated the committee needs to "keep track" of expenses of maintaining both Hewitt Farm residences in order to determine the costs of upkeep in comparison to the rental income received by the Town.

Nita also distributed a 9/4/12 revision of 2 pages in the 1750 Farm House Report, which now contained a section listing repairs made to that rental since the Town's purchase, as well as a few changes to that draft lease.

Both inspection reports have now been presented to the BOS and the next step will be for First Selectman Nicholas Mullane to sign both leases and forward them to the tenants for their signature.

4) Status of "Uses & Rules" signs

A drawing showing the requested design of the "Uses & Rules" sign has been given to Highway Foreman Steve Holliday.

5) Review of findings from hayfield walk and discussion of hay contact

Nita stated that she had been contacted by Mr. Perkins asking when the Town would be distributing the Request for Proposals on the hayfields. Nita informed him that the Hewitt Farm Committee is in the process of drafting the RFP to advertise for bids on a new contract. She told Mr. Perkins that she will inform him as soon as the RFP is available for distribution to the public.

Using a Flip-Chart, Nita then led the group to list, define and discuss the specifics in the operation of the hayfields that it hoped could be accomplished through the new contract. Coop took the completed Flip-Chart sheets and agreed to write a *DRAFT Request for Proposals* to be reviewed and discussed by the committee at its next meeting.

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

A request has been mailed to the North Stonington Garden Club, asking that the Hewitt Farm be considered to receive an annual donation from the group. This is the time of

the year when that club makes decisions on use of any discretionary funds. The Hewitt Farm Committee application indicated that any funds received would be “placed in the separate Hewitt Farm bank account to be used for improvements to the property.”

Ellie stated that she had received a request from the Grange for a list of work projects they could undertake on Hewitt Farm. She wanted to make sure that the list, which we had prepared earlier (*Suggestions for Work Projects at Hewitt Farm*), would be appropriate and the group assured her that was the case..

7) Public comments and questions

There were none.

8) Priorities for the September 24, 2012 agenda

- a) Results of the Historical Society's visit to Greene Gables
- b) Progress on leases and contracts
- c) Progress on the hayfield contract RFP
- d) Status of "Uses & Rules" signs
- e) Ideas for guest lecturers or consultations
- f) Member updates on projects and additional items for group discussion

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Richard B. Cooper