

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

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, July 30, 2012 at 3:00 p.m**  
**Wheeler High School Media Center**

The meeting of the Hewitt Farm Committee was called to order by Nita Kincaid at 3:08 p.m. in the Wheeler High School Media Center with members Ellie Banker, Jack Brown, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Ed Harasimowitz and Nita Kincaid present.

1) Approve 07/16/12 Meeting Minutes

Jack motioned and Ellie seconded to approve the 7/16/12 Meeting Minutes. The motion carried.

2) Finalize "Suggestions for Work Projects at Hewitt Farm"

Nita distributed two new lists compiled from the draft "Suggestions for Work Projects at Hewitt Farm" provided by Coop at a previous meeting. The first is essentially a "take-your-choice" list. It contains suggestions for work projects that organizations or individuals can do on their own. The second list contains work projects that the committee must first discuss, then either perform the work itself or supervise its performance by others.

Nita will make the few changes suggested by the group and redistribute the two lists at the next meeting.

3) Discuss contents of the new Hayfield Contract

Nita next distributed (a) copies of the "Request for Proposals" to harvest Hewitt Farm's hayfields that was issued by the Board of Selectmen on September 9, 2009; (b) copies of the current lessee's proposal; and (c) copies of a map showing the 7.8 acre Route 2 Hayfield, 2.0 acre West Hayfield, 8.8 acre North Hayfield, and 3.1 acre South Hayfield, as well as The Green and two meadows

The group reviewed and discussed the map in light of which fields should remain as meadowland and which should be harvested for hay. Nita motioned and Ed seconded that the only fields to be included in the new contract and therefore the only ones to be hayed should be the 7.8 acre Route 2 Hayfield, 2.0 acre West Hayfield, 8.8 acre North Hayfield, and 3.1 acre South Hayfield. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Nita stated that Mr. Perkins, the present contractor, has offered to brush-hog the edges of the fields before the current lease term expires this fall, but is requesting committee guidance as to how and where to cut. The group agreed to meet at Hewitt Farm next

Monday, August 13th as a workshop to view the hayfields and to determine if and when the edges should be cut. Nita will communicate back to the contractor that the hayfields should not be cut at this time.

The committee also discussed other issues that should be considered prior to drafting the new Hayfield lease. These include (a) possible expansion or contraction of the parking areas, (b) assignment of a reserve area for overflow parking to accommodate large events, (c) the possible identification of other areas for community uses, and (d) the inclusion of horse trails around the fields.

Maintaining the condition of the hayfields (particularly the edges which have been "growing-in" for a number of years) was discussed. Nita noted that a lease with specific performance requirements would be best. Ed will search the Internet and elsewhere for examples of the type of contract that we are seeking to write.

#### 4) Status of Ryder Road Entrance sign, entrance area, and "Uses & Rules" signs

Nita reported that the Ryder Road Entrance sign is expected to be ready for shipping on August 14th and that she and her husband Gary are planning to travel to Long Island to bring it back.

Nita noted that the sign will be supported on a single iron post. She believes that the town Highway Department will be willing to install it for us.

Jim Cowen will lead North Stonington Garden Club members on a field trip of Hewitt Farm on August 25th. Nita is hopeful that the new entrance sign will have been installed by then and that at least some of the picnic tables will be in place. Nita will contact Scout Grant Leiper to learn his schedule.

There has been no activity on the manufacture of the "Uses & Rules" signs.

#### 5) Report on tenant inspections and leases

Nita stated that she wrote a draft report on the inspection of the 1750 Farm House and has provided it to Ed and Nick Mullane for their review, as they were part of the inspection team. She'll then distribute it to the committee. She also reported that they are waiting to hear back from the Cabin's tenant to schedule that inspection.

#### 6) Status of Greene Gables resolution

Nita distributed copies of letters and emails between the committee and Frank Eppinger, President of the North Stonington Historical Society. Two questions that are asked of the Historical Society are how would the building be used and do members of the Board of Trustees wish to walk through the structure and, if so, when? Nita expressed a need for answers to these questions so that the committee may proceed with the Greene Gables resolution.

The group agreed that it is the committee's responsibility to maintain Hewitt Farm in a safe condition and to advise the Board of Selectmen accordingly. As such, Nita motioned and Ed seconded a "request to the Board of Selectmen that Greene Gables and the immediate surroundings be secured with appropriate fencing to the approval of the Building Official to reduce liability to the town."

Nita, Ed, Ellie and Jack voted in favor of the motion. Coop voted opposed. The motion carried. Nita will contact First Selectman Mullane to communicate this request.

7) Member updates on projects and additional items for group discussion

Nita acknowledged that Coop has sent a letter to Scout Leader John Bradshaw praising Scout Tom Kane and thanking other members and leaders of Troop 71 for the excellent job they did in constructing and installing the footbridges over the Shunock River. Coop will look into procuring a permanent sign that briefly describes the project and thanks all donors and participants.

Nita stated that she had not recently communicated with Grant Leiper and could not report on his progress with collecting funds for the picnic tables or in constructing them.

The committee agreed to postpone a discussion on firewood harvesting until after it visits the property next Monday.

8) Public comments and questions

There were none.

9) Priorities for the August 13, 2012 agenda

- a) Results of August 6, 2012 property walk by the committee.
- b) Update on Greene Gables resolution.
- c) Progress on tenant leases and hayfields contract.
- d) Status of "Uses & Rules" signs
- e) Member updates on projects and additional items for group discussion
- f) System for granting permission for firewood cutting

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Richard B. Cooper