

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

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, April 23, 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 3:06 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room with members Ellie Banker, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Nita Kincaid, and Eddie McGowan present.

Because Grant Leiper, Troup 71 candidate for Eagle Scout, was present, Nita requested moving Agenda item #2 to be addressed first. The committee agreed.

1) Proposal for Eagle Scout project (picnic tables) to be presented by Grant Leiper

Grant Leiper introduced himself and distributed a brief written description of his proposed project entitled "Hewitt Property Picnic Tables." He also distributed a printout obtained from the internet which showed detailed plans for the tables. Grant said he would build six tables and briefly described how he intended to obtain sufficient funds. He also said one of the tables would be designed to be ADA accessible.

Grant noted the tables would have two large wheels on one end to enable them to be moved easily for mowing. The legs and frame would consist of pressure-treated wood but the top would be of a smoother-texture wood. Actual construction of the tables will be performed off-site.

The committee asked Grant to submit a formal "application-for-project" form, which the committee developed some months ago. This form will provide information to help the committee judge the suitability of the project for Hewitt Farm. Grant agreed to complete the form and attach his plans. Locations for the picnic tables will be determined by the committee at a later time.

2) Approve 4/05/12 Special Meeting Minutes

Ellie motioned and Coop seconded to approve the 4/05/12 Special Meeting Minutes amended to include the signature of the recorder. The motion carried.

3) Approve 4/09/12 Regular Meeting Minutes

Ellie motioned and Ed seconded to approve the 4/09/12 Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion carried. This was followed by a brief discussion about the amount of money in the Hewitt Farm bank account that holds donations. Eddie suggested that the balance

of the account be recorded in the minutes at least once every quarter. The committee agreed.

#### 4) Progress on the review of Greene Gables

Nita distributed a copy of a memorandum (4/10/12) she had sent to the Board of Selectmen informing them of the Hewitt Farm Committee's request to "engage a qualified environmental safety firm to complete a thorough environmental analysis of the building (Greene Gables) and the site." Nita followed this by reporting that Mystic Air Quality Consultants, Inc., had been retained and would be conducting tests at Greene Gables tomorrow (4/24/12).

The committee next discussed what information it expected from Mystic Air's report. Nita suggested that the committee should be prepared to promptly address the findings of the report once it is received. She asked whether the group would like to contact the three individuals with experience in structural evaluation and renovation of older buildings who had volunteered to visit the site.. Some members of the committee expressed that this might be premature and that the committee should wait for the report before proceeding further. No action was taken.

Nita further stated that she had asked First Selectman Mullane if Mystic Air would make an oral presentation to the BOS and HFC when they submitted their report. First Selectman Mullane assured her that would be done.

Coop stated that there is a need to establish a common terminology with regard to Greene Gables that can be used in communications between committee members, and with organizations and individuals outside the committee. The group agreed to the following:

The subject will be known as "**Greene Gables resolution.**" The four possibilities of the resolution are "**Restoration**" - return the structure to a pre-selected period of time in the past, "**Renovation**" - upgrade the structure to present-day usable condition, "**Re-build**" - raze the existing structure and construct an entirely new building, and "**Demolish**" - raze the structure and remove all materials. It was agreed that to do nothing or delay action on the structure is not acceptable, given the poor condition of the building.

Coop reminded Ellie that they had promised the North Stonington Historical Society's Board of Trustees that they would return to the next meeting (05/07/12) to report on the Hewitt Farm Committee's progress.

#### 5) Finalize Plans for Ryder Road Entrance area

Nita reported that she was ready to submit the design of the finalized entrance sign to Fossil. She showed a copy of what she was submitting and stated it may not be possible to include the off-property road names Coop had requested. Coop noted that

the new trail's crossing of the Shunock River below the dam was not shown on the sign's map and must be added before the sign is manufactured.

6) Discuss leases on Hewitt Farm rental properties

Ed was not in attendance but Nita reported that he had contacted her before the meeting to say he would present the draft leases at the next meeting.

7) Member updates on projects

Eddie noted that Opening Day for trout fishing apparently was a huge success. There were so many people that the parking lot was full, and cars were parked along the roadway and at Greene Gables. "In general," Eddie said, "townspeople are very happy with the fishing at Lower Hewitt Pond even though it was reported that not too many fish were caught."

Coop stated that Tom Kane has begun construction of the footbridges at his home. He may be nearing having collected sufficient funds to complete the project.

Eddie and Ellie reported that they continue to look for a musical group who will perform a concert this summer or in the fall. The group then discussed various types of musical events that could occur at the Amphitheater.

Nita suggested a "Fall Walk" in conjunction with one or more organizations such as Avalonia Land Conservancy, North Stonington Citizen's Land Alliance, and scout troops.

Ellie suggested compiling a list of individuals who are interested in cutting firewood on Hewitt Farm. The committee could then select from this list using a lottery or some other process. Each tree cut (primarily dead or fallen trees) would first be approved by the committee.

Nita stated that she had contacted Highway Foreman Steve Holliday about removing the Tree-of-Heaven stumps and roots on the east side of the Hewitt Road at the Ryder Road Entrance. Steve assured her that this will be done within the next few days.

8) Next steps on "Friends of Hewitt Farm"

Discussion on this subject was deferred to the next meeting.

9) Public Comments and Questions

There were no members of the public in attendance.

10) Priorities for May 7, 2012 Agenda

- a) Review draft leases for Hewitt Farm tenants
- b) Plans for Friends of Hewitt Farm organization
- c) Update on progress of Ryder Road Entrance sign
- d) Update on scout projects (Karin Leiper, Tom Kane and Grant Leiper)
- e) System for granting permission to cut firewood
- f) Preparation for the committee's walk of the property

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Richard B. Cooper