

Town of North Stonington, CT
HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 25, 2013 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, Jack Brown, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Ed Harasimowitz, and Nita Kincaid present.

1) Approve 02/11/2013 Meeting Minutes

Ellie motioned and Coop seconded to approve the 02/11/2013 Meeting Minutes as corrected. The motion carried.

2) Discuss Community Garden next steps

Nita reviewed the progress to date with regard to Mary Ann Ricker's request to establish a Community Garden at Hewitt Farm. Nita described her presentation to the Board of Selectmen in which she reported that the committee has concluded that "Community Gardens" are an approved use on Hewitt Farm. She informed the board that a written proposal that thoroughly describes plans and details of the project must be received, reviewed and approved by the committee next, and would then be submitted to the selectmen for their approval. The selectmen voted to agree with the committee's conclusion that a community garden is an approved use. This decision will be communicated to Mary Ann.

Nita next distributed a document published by the American Community Gardening Association titled "Starting a Community Garden." The document lists basic information that can be used by groups wanting to start a community garden, but also provides an avenue whereby potential sponsors and supporters can become knowledgeable of what is required to organize and operate a community garden.

The committee read and discussed the publication line-by-line to determine what information it should require on the project application. Ellie will summarize this discussion in a paper that identifies those items that must be addressed in Mary Ann's proposal.

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

Ellie reported that she had contacted Chris Casidei from Hull Forest Products to see if Hull is still interested in cutting the large evergreens at Greene Gables. Ellie told Chris

that several trees had blown down during a recent storm, narrowly missing the structure, and that the committee has decided to retain a few others that are growing in the southern corner of the meadow. The committee has approached members of the Historical Society who agreed that the trees currently pose a danger to Greene Gables and should be removed before any more of them fall.

Chris told Ellie that he would re-visit the situation and give her a new proposal for removing the trees. It is the committee's intention that the trees be removed at no cost to the town and preferably with some compensation to the Town. First Selectman Mullane has agreed that the remains from the trees can be burned on-site, probably in the center of the meadow. Ellie will notify the committee by email when she receives a reply from Chris.

Nita stated that John Bradshaw had notified her that he would be willing to conduct a demonstration of the sugaring-off process behind Greene Gables on Saturday, March 2, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. The group would then travel to Gene Banker's home to witness the boiling-down, filtering and bottling process.

Committee members noted that there is not much time remaining to advertise the event, but agreed that it should "go on". The group will do their best to "get the word out" before Saturday. If successful, the event could be conducted annually and publicized to a much greater extent.

The Co-chairs received an email from the North Stonington Historical Society requesting that Greene Gables be open on Thursday, March 7, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. for an inspection by Gregory Farmer, Circuit Rider for the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. Nita will ensure that the building is open at that time.

Nita relayed a message from Eddie that he is contacting the Lions Club to prepare snacks for the opening day of fishing season on Lower Hewitt Pond. The event, which will take place on Saturday, April 20 starting at 7 A.M., will be advertised in the spring issue of *North Stonington Today*, the Recreation Commission's quarterly publication.

Ellie reported that she had received notification from the North Stonington Education Foundation that they would not plan a musical event to be held at Hewitt Farm this spring because of the lack of electricity and toilet facilities. They chose the Grange as the location, because it had these facilities. After review, there simply is no time available that it could be scheduled. The Hewitt Farm Committee, however, still intends to fully participate in the "Connecticut Trails Day 2013" event scheduled for Saturday, June 1, 2013 at 1:00 p.m.

In closing the meeting, Nita asked the group to review our 2013 goals to determine if there is an appropriate project to be submitted for a 2013 North Stonington Garden Club Discretionary Funds Award. The committee will do so and will discuss their findings at the next meeting.

4) Public comments and Questions

No members of the public were present.

5) Priorities for March 11, 2013 agenda

- Determine next steps on 2012 incomplete projects
- Prioritize committee goals for 2013 and identify "lead" members
- Identify possible NSGC Discretionary Funds project, if any.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Richard B. Cooper