

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

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, September 9, 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 3:05 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room with members Ellie Banker, Jack Brown, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Ed Harasimowitz and Nita Kincaid present. Paul Ames was also in attendance.

1) Approve 08/19/2013 Meeting Minutes

Ellie motioned and Ed seconded to approve the 08/19/2013 Meeting Minutes. The motion carried.

2) Status of Volunteers List and Work Plan Updates

Nita distributed a list entitled "Labor' Volunteers" and explained how she and Coop had developed it. The list contains the names of people who in the past had indicated an interest in helping on Hewitt Farm projects that required physical work. Such projects would generally involve tasks that were not on the Highway Department's work schedule.

Nita will next compile lists containing the names of other individuals who expressed a willingness to help in other ways. The categories for these lists include (a) fund raising, (b) historical, environmental, or other type of research, (c) communications, public relations and publicity, and (d) events.

There also will be a list of "possibles." These are individuals who may be contacted in the event more help is needed but who have not specifically indicated an interest.

Removed from the previous list were the names of tenants and leaseholders, committee members' spouses, and individuals who Nita and Coop believe are unlikely to participate.

The group briefly examined the "'Labor' Volunteers" list and agreed it was a good start. Nita will complete the other lists for review at the next meeting.

The group next discussed how these lists would be used. Committee members will use the lists as a source for help with committee-driven projects at the farm. It was agreed that whenever a new volunteer or potential worker is identified, his or her name would be added to one of the lists depending on the individual's interest. All volunteer work would also be recorded thereby enabling the committee to give recognition where it is due.

### 3) Hewitt Farm Projects for this fall

The group next briefly discussed the five projects outlined on the new "Volunteer Work Description" Forms: Removal of Invasive Plants, Ryder Road Hewitt Entrance, Improvement of the Green, Trail Maintenance and Greene Gables Meadow Invasives.

With regard to the Ryder Road Entrance the focus was how to go about rebuilding the stonewall. It was agreed that this work should be done before other work such as landscape planting is undertaken in that area.

Nita reported that the Community Garden Association is maintaining the area of the Greene Gables Meadow immediately surrounding the Community Garden, but that the remainder of the meadow should be mowed this fall. She added that she will ask the Highway Department to do it but if her request is unsuccessful, Gary Kincaid has offered.

Nita also reported that First Selectman Mullane has decided not to permit burning of the brush pile in the meadow at this time. Also the entrance driveway to the area is too narrow to accommodate a large wood chipper. Another means of disposing of the pile is being sought. It was suggested that we invite Foreman Steve Holliday or his assistant, Don Hill to meet with us.

Coop noted that a request has been made by an individual to remove a large tree that has fallen over the trail behind Greene Gables provided that individual can keep the firewood. The group noted that it had not yet established a policy on how to deal with such requests, but that in this case where the tree's removal is quite urgent, permission is granted. Coop will notify the individual.

The group agreed that future similar requests might be granted on a "First come, first served - you cut it, you can have it - basis. Ed will draft a firewood policy statement to be discussed at the next meeting.

Jack asked the group if it intended to have the large tree in the southwest corner of the West Hayfield removed in order to construct a horse cart trail through that area. This trail would essentially connect the Hewitt Road Parking Area to the back of the Farm House Meadow via the northern and western edges of the West Hayfield. Nita stated

that she believed clearer plans for this "Horse Trail" should be developed before such a project is undertaken.

Coop remarked that Marc Tate, IT Coordinator for the Town of North Stonington, had received a phone call asking "where horses could go on Hewitt Farm" and whether that information should be placed on the *Trail Map*. After a brief discussion, the committee agreed that horses could go most places on Hewitt Farm except for within the crop area of the hayfields. There may be no need to explain that on the *Trail Map* since it is stated on the "Welcome" signs and callers to the Town Hall would hopefully be so informed.

Nita will ask resident Jen Marshall who rides on the farm what trails are particularly good for horseback riding and what, if any, trails or areas should be avoided.

#### 4) Application to Hold an Educational Event about Sugar Maple Tapping

The committee received a Project/Event Application from the RI Master Gardeners' Association to conduct "tree identification for tapping for sugar sap followed by proper procedure for tapping" and "a discussion on what equipment is needed for sap processing." This session would be led by John Bradshaw (Boy Scout Troop Leader). After a brief review of the application the group agreed unanimously that the event could go forward.

Jack suggested adding a statement on the Project/Event Application form asking applicants what arrangements had been made or will to be made for publicity, advertising, media notification, etc. Jack will draft a statement to be added to the application form and present it for the committee's approval.

#### 5) Community Garden Update

The Community Garden Association sent out an announcement that it will be holding a "Fall Festival" potluck picnic at the garden on Saturday, September the 14th at 5 p.m. The association specifically invited each member of the Hewitt Farm Committee to attend.

Ellie stated that she had recently attended the association's meeting, and on behalf of the Hewitt Farm Committee had complimented the association on its very successful summer.

#### 6) Greene Gables resolution

Nita distributed a copy of an email from Frank Eppinger (Historical Society President) to First Selectman Mullane on the subject of Greene Gables. She also provided the joint reply sent by her and Mr. Mullane, which suggested five key questions to be answered

at a proposed meeting between the Board of Selectmen, Historical Society, and Hewitt Farm Committee. This meeting is not yet scheduled.

Ellie stated that she believed Frank would not be able to attend the Historical Society meeting "tonight" and she does not know if the Historical Society is ready for the joint meeting.

7) Other Member Updates

Jack provided an article from CT Gardener Magazine entitled "Wild Flower Meadows: Lets Get Real" and indicated it was worth reviewing. We also reminded ourselves that we should continue to seek any news on progress relative to the Hewitt dam repair.

8) Public comments and questions

- Paul Ames who was in attendance at the meeting stated that he would like to help with work on the farm and requested that his name be added to the "Labor" Volunteers list.

9) Priorities for September 23, 2013 agenda

- To be determined by the Co-chairs

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Richard B. Cooper