

Town of North Stonington, CT
HEWITT FARM COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 21, 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 3:04 p.m. in the New Town Hall Conference Room with members Ellie Banker, Jack Brown, Dick (Coop) Cooper, Ed Harasimowitz, Cindy Faucher and Nita Kincaid present.

1) Approve 10/7/2013 Meeting Minutes

Ellie motioned and Cindy seconded to approve the 10/7/2013 Meeting Minutes as corrected. The motion carried.

2) Planning for new trail signs

Nita distributed a copy of the "North Stonington Garden Club Project Proposal Form" submitted in June to solicit a grant for the purchase of permanent trail signs for Hewitt Farm. Nita announced that the full requested sum had been awarded and she showed the committee a copy of the check in the amount of \$1,200. The group asked Coop to compose a thank you note to the Garden Club and he agreed to do so.

Using vendor website photos and price lists, Nita then refreshed the group's memory about what was previously researched in order to purchase the signs. The group agreed to the following preferences: **(a)** the signs should consist of uncoated and unpainted White Cedar wood panels with rounded corners, **(b)** should contain upper case, routed out and burnt-in (as opposed to painted) characters, and **(c)** the characters should be all upper case at a height of 1 1/2 to 2 inches.

Coop will start the vendor selection process by telephoning the two vendors that Nita had previously contacted and any others that committee members may identify. Cindy suggested searching trailsigns.net. Coop will report his findings at the next meeting.

3) Firewood Policy

Ed distributed a draft of the "Hewitt Farm Firewood Harvesting Policy" for review by the committee. After discussion, the group concluded that the best policy, at least for the time being, is to only grant permission to cut specific live and deadfall trees on a one-time basis to individuals with known or proven experience in such work. The committee would compile a list of such individuals based on word-of-mouth recommendation. This list might also be useful to select wood harvesters for future farm projects.

Ed will email the draft policy statement to committee members for further input.

4) Community Garden Annual Review

Nita reported that the Community Garden Association October meeting minutes listed various changes that they may wish to consider for the 2014 garden: moving the water tank to the concrete pad near the corn crib, relocating the chip pile and compost pile to the rear (south side) of the garden, constructing a rear gate and possibly providing a storage shed for garden tools.

The committee briefly discussed the possibility of allowing the corncrib to be used for storage, but Nita noted that the structure was unsafe for use.

5) Greene Gables

Nita reported that she (as co-chair of the Hewitt Farm Committee) had received an invitation to meet with Historical Society President Frank Eppinger and Selectman Mark Donahue to discuss development of an evaluation approach for Greene Gables options. She will keep the committee informed of results.

6) Hewitt Dam Project

Nita reported that *Request for Proposals* (RFP) for the dam's reconstruction would be issued in December. Submissions will be reviewed in January with a target start date for construction in March.

7) Rental properties

Nita stated that letters to tenants of Hewitt Farm asking them if they intend to renew their lease were mailed today. Replies are due back to the Selectmen's Office by November 1, 2013.

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

Cindy reported that an offer of an old outhouse has been made to the committee for placement on Hewitt Farm. It was suggested that the structure might be usable by the Community Garden Association as a storage shed. Cindy will follow up with the potential donor for more details.

Jack proposed identifying a good location on The Green for a fire pit to be used by Boy Scouts and others with permission when they camp overnight. Jack would build the fire pit as a circle of large rocks. After some discussion, it was concluded that the pit's existence might suggest fires are permitted on the property without a special permit. It was also noted that the Boy Scouts enjoy building their own and take pride in restoring their camp area to its natural condition when they leave.

9) Public comments and questions

- None

10) Priorities for November 4, 2013 agenda

- To be determined by the Co-chairs

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Richard B. Cooper