

## **Heritage Farm Commission**

### **Regular Meeting**

**February 5, 2024**

The Bolton Heritage Farm Commission held a regular meeting on February 5, 2024 at the Municipal Center Room B. Members in attendance were chair Arlene Fiano, vice chair Beth Harney, Ann Maulucci, Rhea Klein, and Cara Wraight, and alternates Paula Lynn, Leslie Shea and Bonnie Massey, and Building and Grounds supervisor John Butrymovich. Kevin Drake, who is assisting with special projects, was also present.

#### **1. Call to order and Approval of Minutes -**

Arlene called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. The minutes of December 4, 2023 were unanimously approved.

#### **2. Resident's Forum (Public Comment for items NOT on the Agenda)**

None at this time.

#### **3. Correspondence**

None at this time.

#### **4. Unfinished Business**

##### **a. Farm Maintenance Report/ potable water project update**

John Butrymovich reported that January was a slow time for work at the farm, except for plowing of the parking area. Plowing is becoming increasingly difficult as the entrance/ exit driveway is in very poor condition.

Arlene and Beth met with Jim Rupert on Thursday Feb 1st for a general update on projects at the farm. Jim stated that due to the small number of people who will use the potable water source at the farm, it was determined by the town that formal state approval of the system was not required. Filters have been purchased and installed to deal with turbidity (silt cloudiness) and the water has tested clean. The water has been turned off and drained for winter to prevent freezing. Once the weather is stable, John's crew will turn the water back on and it will be available for events, etc.

##### **b. Trail Maintenance/ Water Bar replacement - Bike Walk Bolton**

The commission was notified by a representative of Bike Walk Bolton that the water bars on the portion of the Rose Trail in the woods from the hayfield to the Rail Trail are in need of repair/ replacement. The Bike Walk Bolton team is willing to do the work with permission from the farm commission which was unanimously granted. Arlene will contact them and work will be completed in the spring.

##### **c. Update on Fundraising**

Beth reported the balance in the M&T Bank account (Rosie Fund) is \$6,734.43; Cara brought cash from the fair withdrawn from her Venmo account, so when deposited the new total will be \$6,769.43. The Heritage Farm Fund has \$8,620, including interest from Nov - Dec - Jan, and checks for \$185 from the Sleigh Bells Ring fair.

In addition to these funds, the Bolton Historical Society has regained their 501C3 status, and has approximately \$10k accumulated which could be used for grant matches for projects to stabilize and upgrade the farmhouse. And Friends of Rose Farm still has \$5,758.43, which can be utilized at their discretion for projects related to the barn and grounds upgrades. So the farm has matching grant monies at their disposal for future projects. John B confirmed that the town also has matching grant monies in a

budget line item, but those are also dedicated to projects across the spectrum of the community, and the farm is only one stakeholder.

#### **d. Grants for climate-controlled display case - Digging Into History artifacts**

Rhea and Cara have been coordinating the effort to obtain a display case for the small artifacts found during last summer's archaeology program with the Connecticut State Library and Sarah Sportman, the CT State Archaeologist. The CT Humanities Council has several grants available to facilitate the display case purchase and the creation of contextual materials. Rhea, Arlene and Beth attended a zoom meeting to better understand how this project can proceed, and it was suggested that we obtain permission to house the display at the Bentley Library (our first choice) and determine what size the case needs to be. After a meeting with Liz Thornton at the library, we selected a location for a countertop display, which can be 22" deep X 33" long X 36" high. Next steps include creating the contextual materials, which will likely be available in a pamphlet/ QR code format relating back to numbered artifacts, which will allow us to include more information without crowding the display case. If possible the commission would also like to include several artifacts belonging to the Rose Family found prior to the town's ownership of the farm, and develop display materials that could be shown in the larger display case during the year.

#### **e. Presentation to BOS**

The farm commission requested and is on the agenda for Tuesday February 6th to provide an update to the BHF Business Plan, which was approved in February 2020. A written update was included in the selectmen's package, and Beth and Arlene will update the selectmen on past accomplishments and immediate future goals relating to ongoing farm initiatives. Leslie also mentioned that given the delay in Phase II of the LOTCIP grant, we need to initiate improvements to the farm's entrance/ egress driveway. Arlene requested that Leslie contact the appropriate committee of the BOS and request a separate meeting to discuss this.

#### **f. Manure Pit Remediation**

##### **1. Concrete pad regrading**

Arlene and Beth met with Bill Phillips of Landie Construction to review the scope of work required to break up the concrete base and fill the manure pit, including regrading the area for the pouring of a concrete pad to create a tent platform/ pole barn structure for future farm events. John B and Roger Barrett of Country Carpenters also attended the meeting. After walking the site, it was agreed that a pad approximately 35-40' X 60-65' would be an appropriate size, and several grading options were discussed. Once that quote is received, we will search out grant funding and present the plan to the BOS for approval. This project is in keeping with the master site plan, will create a safer environment, and allow us to rent/ lease the space for outdoor events.

##### **2. Grants for Pole Barn**

Roger Barrett will also provide more information on the cost of developing a pole barn structure over the concrete pad at this location. As opposed to a tent, a pole barn structure - basically a peaked roof with a closed ceiling and open pole sides - will allow us to host events in all weathers and have power and lights in the space. This is a larger project and new construction, and will require significant funding but will also allow us to begin charging a fee for public use of the facilities. And it can be completed prior to the building of a toilet building because porta-potty trailers can be brought to the site, and power is available on site.

#### **g. Outstanding Projects**

##### **1. LOTCIP/ STEAP follow up**

At the meeting with Jim Rupert, he confirmed that LOTCIP Phase I work will be completed this spring by Landie Construction, and the farm is in Phase II, which is still in the design phase and requires a 2nd public hearing before any work will begin. The town has received the funding to complete Phase II, which includes the connectivity path from Town Hall, through the Pistritto property through the farm down to Bolton Center Road. More clarification is needed on whether or not the work will include handicapped access to the barn, handicapped parking stalls, parking lot improvements and driveway improvements; if so that work is probably 2-3 years out.

We also discussed the STEAP grant work, which is centered around a community septic system located on the top hayfield of the farm in the 12 acres allowed for municipal use, and will serve the library, Resident State Trooper's offices, Town Hall, HF barn and farmhouse. Prior approval by Planning and Zoning (over 10 years ago) did not include the farm buildings because no development plans were established. However, the town did contemplate an expansion of Town Hall on the Pistritto property, so Jim assumes that capacity will not be an issue within the current design, even with adding the farm buildings. Currently the town hall expansion will not be built in the town center, and will most likely be a new building on the old Municipal Center site. Arlene wants to be sure that the system design will formally include any development at the farm, so that projects going forward cannot be denied because they were not originally contemplated.

## **2. NPS Wayfinding Signage**

Arlene will contact Sean Bailey, new head of Roads in town, to restart the placement of wayfinding signs on the roads leading to the farm. This initiative was part of the NPS funding that covered the interpretive signs and the reenactment event held last October, but due to personnel changes has not yet been completed. Prior discussions suggested 9 signs including along Rt. 6/44 and I-384 and local roads would be optimal, some requiring DOT approval. Once Sean and Arlene determine the final plan, Jim will go to DOT for sign off and the signs can be installed, hopefully prior to the 2026 reenactment event planned for the country's 250th anniversary celebrations.

## **3. Farmhouse Remediation [not on agenda]**

Roger Barrett also reviewed that foundation and sill/ sister joists and beams in the basement of the farmhouse to determine their condition and any remedial work required before removal of siding and replacement of windows can proceed. Several beams are in need of replacement and the sill under the 'El' is also rotted and in need of repair. Roger will provide a quote for this work, which is not as extensive as previously feared. Once a quote is received and a source of funding has been identified, the work can be sent to the BOS for approval. After completion we can move onto the siding and windows, where fundraising and in-kind assistance will be key to the project. The work at the farmhouse is the primary goal of the Bolton Historical Society, and they have agreed to commit funding and grant research to make it happen.

## **5. New Business**

None at this time

## **6. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Harney, vice chair

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.

