

CONNECTICUT PRESERVATION AWARDS • 2018

NOMINATION

Connecticut Preservation Awards Mimi Findlay Award for Young Preservationists

Project or Person nominated

The Town of Bolton, Connecticut (Bolton Heritage Farm)

For projects, date of completion: Most recent project(Fire Restoration): Winter, 2017

Address

222 Bolton Center Road

City, State, Zip

Bolton, CT 06043

If there are co-nominees, please list them on a separate sheet and check this box.

Nomination submitted by

Sara O. Nelson

Organization

Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC

Address

1156 Main Street

City, State, Zip

Branford, CT 06405

Telephone 203-481-6611 Email nelson@nec-architects.com

NOTE: The person making the nomination will be asked to notify the recipients of the award, and to communicate details of the presentation to them.

Please check one: *I am a member of the Connecticut Trust.* *My membership check is enclosed.*

IN 75 WORDS OR FEWER (we mean it!), state why this person or project should be recognized—i.e., what is particularly noteworthy about it or about their achievements in terms of preservation.

This person or project is particularly noteworthy because...

The on-going stewardship of Bolton Heritage Farm and the restoration of the barns shows extraordinary vision, commitment and perseverance by a municipality to preserve a nationally important historic site, working agricultural landscape, and the vanishing built environment of a New England farm. The Town's unwavering commitment allowed them to triumph over the depth of adversity when an arsonist set fire to the historic barn complex one evening in May, 2015.

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Description of materials submitted:

[Photographs](#)

Release authorized by:



(signature)

[Sara O. Nelson](#) [February 8, 2018](#)

(print or type name and date)

ALL AWARD NOMINATIONS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO:

Connecticut Preservation Awards
Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
940 Whitney Avenue
Hamden, Connecticut 06517

For information or assistance, call Christopher Wigren at (203) 562-6312 or email cwigren@cttrust.org.

Nominations must be received by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, February 9, 2018.

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Description of materials submitted:

Photographs

Release authorized by:



(signature)

Robert Proulx February 08, 2018

(print or type name and date)

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Concise Description

We are writing to nominate the Town of Bolton, Connecticut for their outstanding vision, commitment and perseverance in preserving Bolton Heritage Farm (the former Valley View Farm) at 266 Bolton Center Road. This work includes carefully considered long-range planning, management and stewardship efforts to preserve a nationally important historic site, working agricultural landscape, and the vanishing cultural landscape of a New England farmstead. The Town's unwavering commitment allowed them to triumph over the depth of adversity when an arsonist set fire to the historic barn complex one evening in May, 2015.

Historic Significance of Site:

Located on the east side of the Town Green, the site of Bolton Heritage Farm was first occupied in 1725 and served for more than one hundred years as the homestead and farm for the ministers called to serve the Bolton Congregational Church. In June, 1781, 4,000 troops under the command of Count Rochambeau stopped at the site on their way from Newport, RI to New York to join the forces of the American Army under the command of George Washington. This was the site of Rochambeau's 5th encampment. Since the nineteenth century, when the property stopped serving as a homestead for the congregational clergy, it passed through various ownership and continued to be used as a farm until it was purchased by the town in August, 2000.

Bolton Heritage Farm is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (2001) as the archaeologically intact Revolutionary War encampment for Rochambeau's infantry (Camp number 5.) Additionally, the property is listed as a contributing resource to the Bolton Green National Register Historic District (2001.)

Scope of Project

The restoration work for the 1908 barn was conducted in two major phases that were completed in 2010 and 2017 as well as smaller and incremental restoration projects undertaken by the Town between major work efforts.

- 2009-2010: Restoration on 1908 Barn roof and cupola, portion of the south side, and roof of 1980 cow barn.
- 2010–2015: Incremental repairs and restoration of barn's foundation, entrance ramp, site drainage adjacent to foundations.
- 2015–2016: Restoration of fire damage including to 1908 roof / cupola, siding, building structure and removal of fire damage to exposed structure and finishes. Restoration of earth 20th century ell foundation system, structure, roof, and siding.

Why this restoration project is exceptional

The Town has demonstrated remarkable foresight and commitment to acquiring, preserving and maintaining this 90-acre parcel and National Historic Landmark site since assuming ownership in August, 2000. With limited resources that are the norm of every small municipality the Town has worked tirelessly and assiduously to build partnerships, apply for grant funding, understand and document the important historic and conservation issues of the site, to undertake preservation of the buildings (as of this date the barn complex) and to ensure that town planning efforts are coordinated with and support long-term stewardship of this important resource; a remarkable achievement given the limited resources and competing interests within a small town.

Perhaps the most remarkable achievement to date is the way in which the Town addressed the partial destruction of the barn by arson in May, 2015. Working with limited funds they restored the fire damage and found the resources to complete the restoration work begun and carried on since 2009.

Team Members:

Owner: The Town of Bolton, Connecticut

We want to recognize the ongoing efforts / stewardship of the Town and Bolton Heritage Farm Commission for their outstanding commitment to this site including:

- Joyce Stille, Town Administrative Officer
- Sandra Pierog, Former Chair, Bolton Heritage Farm Commission and current First Selectwoman of Bolton
- John Butrymovich, Supervisor of Parks, Buildings and Grounds

Preservation Architect: Nelson Edwards Company Architect, LLC

Structural Engineer: GNCB Engineers, PC. – James Norden, PE and Amy Jagaczewski, PE

General Contractor (2010 and 2016 restoration projects): Proulx Building and Remodeling, LLC

- PB&R provided carpentry and roofing
- Billings Media Blasting (div. of Kent Billings, LLC) provided media testing and media removal of fire damage from historic timber finishes

Partnerships:

Condition Assessment Study and Feasibility Study for Adaptive Reuse for Bolton Heritage Farm

- Survey and Planning Grant, Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (2008)

Restoration of 1908 Barn Roof & Cupola and 1980 Cow Barn Roof:

- Historic Restoration Fund Grant, Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (2009)

Incremental Barn Restoration Projects:

- CT Barn Grants, CT Trust for Historic Preservation (several grants between 2010 and 2015)

Bolton Center Study for long-term unified vision for Bolton Center

- Vibrant Communities Initiative Program, CT Trust for Historic Preservation, 2014

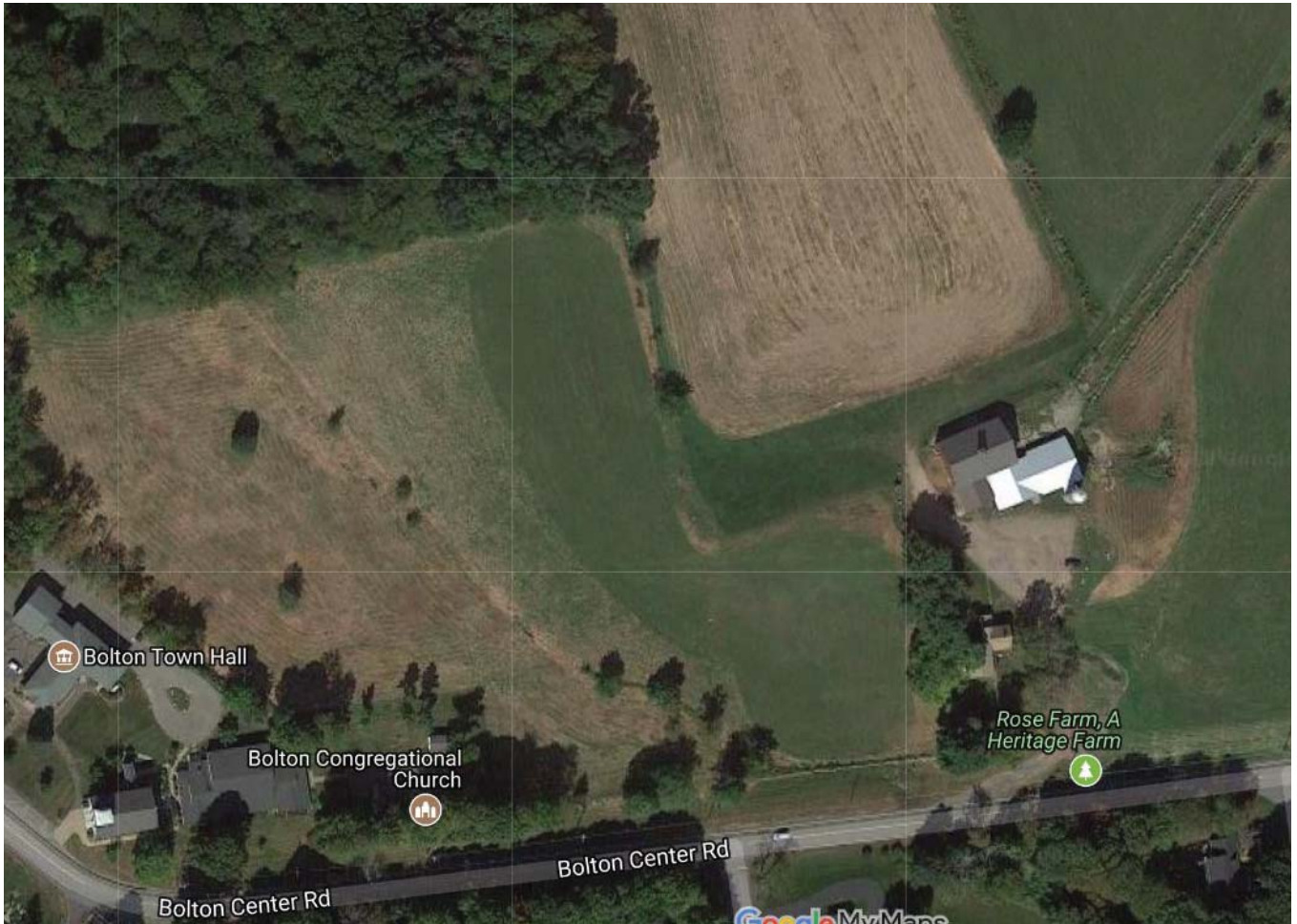


Photo 1

Photo Credit Google Earth

Image from Google earth showing the relationship of the Bolton Heritage Farm site to the center of Bolton.

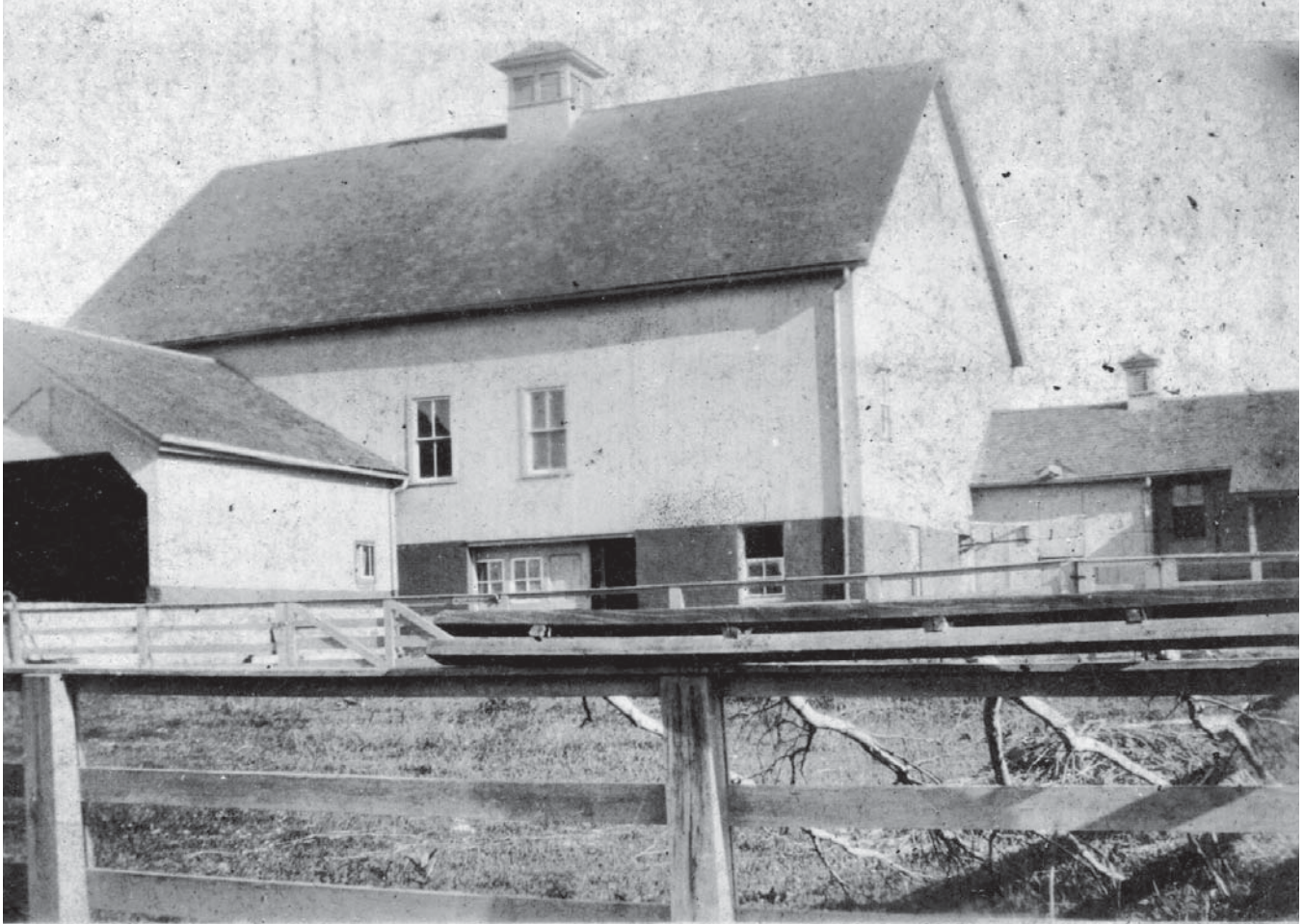


Photo 2

Photo credit: Image from Rose Family collection and provided by Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc.

Copy of photo, undated by probably late 1940s, showing south side of barn before addition of later concrete-block cow barn. The Early 20th century ell is visible at left.



Photo 3

Photo Credit: Unattributed image from online search, photo c. 2008

Photograph of barn taken in November 2008, looking south east. This photograph demonstrates the condition of the barn close to the time the Town assumed ownership, and began the first step for restoration – application and receipt of a Survey and Planning grant for a Report on the property including a condition assessment of the buildings and documentation of their history and significance.



Photo 4

Photo Credit: Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC

Photograph of barn in November 2008 showing condition of the south side.



Photo 5

Photo Credit: Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC

Photograph of the barn in 2010 showing the start of restoration efforts which included a new roof and restored cupola for the 1908 barn, and a new roof on the 1980 cow barn.



Photo 6

Photo Credit: Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC

June 26, 2015. Fire damage to the west side of the barn.



Photo 7

Photo Credit: Nelson Edwards Company Architects Company, LLC

June 26, 2015. Fire damage to the west wall from the interior.



Photo 8

Photo Credit: Nelson Edwards Company Architects LLC

Interior surfaces of barn after fire showing charring of board siding, roof framing members and sheathing.



Photo 9

Photo Credit: Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC

Prior to completion of project specifications for restoration of fire damage various media were tested on a variety of building surfaces to determine their efficacy to return wood framing and finishes to pre-fire condition and to remove fire smell from the building – all while conserving historic building fabric and not contaminating adjacent agricultural fields. The proximity of the barn to fields under cultivation meant that many conventional fire remediation systems could not be used. Some systems presented contamination and run-off issues while others such as soda blasting would be harmful to crops.

Test areas which included a variety of substrates (building surfaces) were carefully mapped and delineated in the field. Specific test parameters included type of media (dry ice versus walnut shell), psi (pressure) for equipment settings and work time for each area. As a result of the testing mock-up it was determined that dry ice blasting was best for the underside of the roofing framing system and timber framing members while walnut shell blasting was best for the bead board and floor surfaces.



Photo 10

Photo Credit: Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC

Underside of barn roof after restoration with dry ice.



Photo 11

Photo Credit: Proulx Builders and Remodelers, LLC

Photo of barn in January 2017, after restoration work.



Photo 12

Photo credit: Proulx Builders and Remodelers, LLC

Photo of new sliding barn door at north gable end.

Written List of Photographs with Captions

Bolton Heritage Farm

Photo 1 (Google Earth)

Image from Google earth showing the relationship of the Bolton Heritage Farm site to the center of Bolton.

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Photo 3 (unattributed image from on-line search, photo c. 2008)

Photograph of barn looking south east. This photograph demonstrates the condition of the barn close to the time the Town assumed ownership, and began the first step for restoration – application and receipt of a Survey and Planning grant for a Report on the property including a condition assessment of the buildings and documentation of their history and significance.

Photo 4 (Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC)

Photograph of barn in November 2008 showing condition of the south side.

Photo 5 (Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC)

Photograph of the barn in 2010 showing the start of restoration efforts which included a new roof and restored cupola for the 1908 barn, and a new roof on the 1980 cow barn.

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Photo 7 (Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC)

June 26, 2015. Fire damage to the west wall from the interior.

Photo 8 (Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC)

Interior surfaces of barn after fire showing charring of board siding, roof framing members and sheathing.

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Photo 10 (Nelson Edwards Company Architects, LLC)

Underside of barn roof after restoration with dry ice.

Photo 11 (Proulx Builders & Remodelers, LLC)

Photo of barn in January, 2017 after restoration work.

Photo 12 (Proulx Builders & Remodelers, LLC)

Photo of new sliding barn door at west gable end.

N.Y. / REGION

The View From/Bolton; Open Space, History, a Family Farm

By STEPHEN L. PURDY AUG. 16, 1998

WITH its central 100 acres rich in open space and Bolton history, Valleyview Farm, bought by George O. Rose Sr. in 1922 and in the family since, is now for sale. Many area residents think its turnover could alter the face of this rapidly expanding town of 4,700 in east-central Connecticut, now an increasing haven for commuters to Hartford and other metropolitan areas.

However, before anyone can speculate on the merits of private development or preservation -- possibly with state help -- they must sort out the family's conflicting signals over the Rose Dairy Farm, as it's commonly called. Do they really want to sell and, if so, to whom? Who's making the decisions?

Richard L. Rose, 60, who owns 50 percent of the business and runs the working farm -- two barns, two silos and 85 registered Jersey cows -- says the sale is against his wishes. "If I owned it outright," he says, "it would not be for sale." His brother, George O. Rose Jr., 67, who lives in nearby Hebron, and sister, Helen R. Meloche, who lives on a separate lot on the farm, each own 25 percent. It is Ms. Meloche, Richard Rose explains, who wants the sale, to settle long-standing estate disputes.

The brothers say they feel an obligation to preserve the farm as open space. Still, George Rose Jr. says another dairy farm won't appear, and not just because a farm in Connecticut these days is lucky if it breaks even. "It's backbreaking work," says Mr. Rose, who until 20 years ago, ran the farm with his father. "Nobody wants to do it."

3

ARTICLES FROM THE

For his part, Richard Rose wants the town to buy the farm, allowing him to work there, then see that the land be preserved. To him, it's a symbol of character and history. He shudders at the thought of a developer putting up 50 to 70 houses on the land, an admitted possibility. "It wouldn't surprise me to see land near our house and barns go for \$90,000 to \$125,000 an acre, or more," he said.

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He scoffs at the suggestion that development would bring in added tax revenue, claiming it wouldn't begin to offset the cost of construction and education. "The average house in town, I believe, contributes about \$3,000 in taxes a year," he explained. "If it costs \$8,000 to educate one child, where's the town going to be in 10 years?"

Both brothers underscore they're not interested in the town buying the land with the promise to develop only part of it. "Unless it's going to be kept entirely open," says Richard Rose, "it's not going to be sold to the town." He adds that keeping it natural will actually save money. "Open space costs very little," he noted.

Meanwhile, Ms. Meloche denies forcing a sale and adds she wants as much land preserved as possible. "I feel we're developing much too much," she said. But she also disagrees on a blanket veto on development.

Meanwhile, Bolton First Selectman Carl A. Preuss says he is trying to protect something basic to the town. "As you look out the back windows of Town Hall, you overlook the farm," he noted. He suggests Bolton's hands are tied by Ms. Meloche, who he says is negotiating with a private party and won't yet talk with the town. "We would like to sit down with the parties involved," Mr. Preuss says. Although he confirms he has no asking price, the rumor mill suggests \$1.2 million to \$1.5 million.

Richard Barger, Bolton's Town Attorney and chairman of its Open Space Preservation Committee, says property cost makes some development probable. Financing, he explains, would have to be collaborative. "The town would be a willing buyer for open space, and you'd need a couple of other willing buyers -- someone to do development, someone to buy the farm," he said. "The town should step up to the plate on development rights or conservation easement, if that's the way it goes."

Last spring, Mr. Barger got in touch with David T. Santomenna, project manager for the Trust for Public Land, a national land conservation group. Mr. Santomenna says the friction here is normal. First, he says, towns overreact at the thought of losing a key parcel. Then, families like the Roses, multiple owners who haven't sold like this and probably won't again, feel as if matters are being taken out of their hands.

"There's nothing that gets a landowner's anxieties up more than knowing their property is the subject of a very public conversation," he said.

Over the summer, the trust has met twice with Richard Rose and engaged an appraiser, whose report is due by the end of this month. It then hopes to create an option agreement for the family, giving both them and the town time to clarify goals and financing.

The latter is expected to include matching funds from newly passed state legislation on open space. This will then lead, Mr. Santomenna hopes, to a referendum, also coordinated by his agency. "We would love to take this to the voters in the spring of '99," he said.

Town Historian Hans DePold expects Bolton's State Representative, Pamela Z. Sawyer, to lobby hard for the state funds. Ms. Sawyer says the loss of the Rose Farm's land would be a blow similar to that of historic homes that made way for development along nearby Route 6. In addition to open space funds, she suggests money from Route 6 settlements be considered for the farm.

"The state should escalate this fight, make as many people aware as possible of the land's historical and farmland value," she said. "There's a sense of direct urgency to this."

Rodney Parlee, chairman of the Bolton Conservation Commission, thinks his group's studies of natural resources in open spaces will contribute useful data on the land's value. "If we're going to market this parcel to the taxpayers of Bolton, it would be nice to have as much information as we can about it," he says.

Mr. DePold, skeptical on development, remains focused on the Rose Farm's past as its foundation for the future. In suggesting its buildings could be used someday as a museum, he explains that at least 90 percent of the town's history is connected to the farm, located along a route newly approved by the Connecticut Legislature as the state Revolutionary Road.

The road, whose status he says Ms. Sawyer also lobbied hard for, is best known for connecting Boston and Providence to Hartford, Philadelphia and Yorktown, Va., during various Revolutionary War efforts. George Washington traveled it and stopped in Bolton. The French General Rochambeau transported his troops along it in support of the cause, camping on the farm for four days. "It could be quite a feather in Bolton's and Connecticut's cap," says Mr. DePold, "if we have this as a national tourism route."

Although it may be some time before the future of Valleyview Farm and its impact on Bolton are resolved, residents along and near the village green, with its Town Hall and Congregational Church, Colonial homes and gazebo, have begun to talk.

So far, it all seems low key. Elizabeth E. Thornton, director of the Bentley Memorial Library and devotee of local farms and produce, said "I haven't heard anybody coming in and out of the library discussing it."

One colleague, Pamela L. Bahre, a resident for four years, argues the importance of a referendum that would enable residents to have a say on what happens to a piece of land in its center. Another, Vannesse O. Rowe, adds that based on what she knows so far, the farm should be sold to the town, unless a private developer is required to keep house and barns intact.

A 25-year resident, Ms. Rowe says she isn't surprised at the possible sale, but adds that it represents a sad trend. "That was one of the town's charms, the small farms," she said.

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Crews From 10 Departments Battled Barn Fire in Bolton

Published at 10:37 PM EDT on May 20, 2015 | Updated at 7:14 AM EDT on May 21, 2015



Firefighters from 10 departments responded to a fire at a large historic barn on Bolton Center Road in Bolton on Wednesday night and investigators are trying to determine what caused it.

Around 10 p.m., fire broke out at the Bolton Heritage Barn, a historic barn the town owns and was in the process of renovating so the public can use it.

Crews from Bolton, Andover, Columbia, Glastonbury, Hebron, Manchester, Marlborough, North Coventry, Tolland and Vernon were called to 266 Bolton Center Road just after 10 p.m.

As firefighters battled the flames, they made it a priority to ensure the flames did not spread to any homes nearby. It took around 40 minutes to get the fire under control and it did not spread.

No animals were inside the barn and no one was hurt, officials said.

State troopers now guard the driveway as investigators determine what happened.

Connecticutbarns.org, a site devoted to the preservation of historic barns around the state, has a listing for Bolton Heritage Farm online.

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Commission Celebrates Beauty And Community Of Bolton



Diverse offerings of flowers and plants, crafts, and more could be found at the market. (Annie Gentile / Special to Courant Community)

By **Annie Gentile**
Courant Community

SEPTEMBER 6, 2016, 10:37 AM

Sunday, Aug. 28, couldn't have been a better day for the annual Bolton Farmers Market and Antique Truck Show held on the green.

"This is our fifth year," said Bolton Heritage Farm Commission Chair Sandy Pierog, whose organization sponsors the event. "Our overarching plan is to bring awareness to the Bolton Heritage Farm and to celebrate the beauty and community of Bolton."

Purchased in 2000 by the Town of Bolton, the Bolton Heritage Farm provides unfragmented forest, wetlands, and grasslands for various wildlife, plant life, and passive recreation.

The farm is also steeped in history. According to the commission's brochure, in 1781, General George Washington asked French troops to assist in defeating the British. As regiments of French troops marched from Newport, Rhode Island toward New York, they stopped along the way, setting up an encampment at the Rose Farm (now the Bolton Heritage Farm).

Visitors to the market were able to purchase a variety of fruits and vegetables, jams and jellies, flowers and plants, honey, soaps, crafts and more, as well as learn a little more about local nonprofits and businesses that are an important part of the Bolton community.

In addition, children had the opportunity to climb onto some huge tractors lined up along one end of the green and visit with a pair of friendly alpacas from Aussakita Acres in Manchester. Live music was performed from the gazebo.

While Bolton farmers were the focus of the day-long event, they were not the only organizations represented at the market. The nonprofit Community Voice Channel, which provides free public access programming for Bolton and six other area communities, set up a tent to promote its upcoming film-making workshops to be held Oct. 5, 6, 12, and 13 at the studio on Notch Road. The CVC welcomes anyone interested in creating diverse programming for the station.

"We're trying to fundraise to upgrade to HD equipment," said CVC Community Outreach and Workshop Trainer Melanie Merkel said.

Brenda Gentile, of the Sadie Mae Foundation, a local volunteer dog rescue organization which operates solely on donations, provided information about the efforts to save abused and neglected dogs, to impart the importance of spaying and neutering pets, and to find them good and loving homes.

"An abundance of the dogs we rescue are from down in Georgia, where they don't often spay or neuter their dogs. It's a little different way of thinking. Dogs are more often seen as livestock rather than family pets. We also get a number of dogs from the Hartford pound if they are scheduled to be put down," said Gentile. "The Sadie Mae Foundation was started in 2004 by Brenda Albert and named in memory of her own dog, Sadie Mae. Over the years, we've saved on average about 100 to 150 dogs a year, and we're nearing 90 dogs this year."

Todd Moser was promoting his services, which help people rid their homes of swarms of bees and re-hive them.

"I'm a carpenter by trade and a beekeeper by default," he said.

Moser said he got his start back in June of 2014, when he got a call from someone in need of a carpenter/beekeeper. The homeowner had a swarm of bees in their home and before he knew it, he was up on a ladder cutting open the dormer and dismantling part of the eave to vacuum out the bees.

"A friend of mine had bee boxes and was able to save the bees in a hive," he said, adding that with the money he made from the work, he purchased a hive of his own, a veil, a suit, a smoker, as well as a course on beekeeping.

"We're so afraid of bees, and yet they are so precious and valuable," said Moser.

"He gets so attached to his bees," said Moser's girlfriend, Lauren Hardy. "The honey is just a bonus."