

TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH  
Steele Farm Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes of August 24, 2015

Meeting was called to order by Chair, Ed Whitcomb at 7:45 PM at Town Hall. Attending members were Jeanne Steele Kangas, and Bruce Hager. Absent: Dave Birt. Visitor: Owen Neville at about 9 PM.

Minutes. The Minutes of our July 9 meeting are in process and will be presented at our next meeting.

Barn restoration project update. The lowest bid was \$96,750, more than the \$90,000 already approved. A Reserve Fund transfer for the difference has been approved, and the job is to start very soon. The contract specifies the job is to finish by November 15. The color of the doors of the barn was discussed. Jeanne stated that the historic color is what you see now—white. Whether that color should be changed to red or black was debated, and white was approved.

Management Plan follow-up. During the annual monitoring walk of the property for the Conservation and Historic Preservation Restriction with Sally Naser of The Trustees of Reservations, which co-holds the Restriction with the Boxborough Historical Society, the Plan was discussed. The main concerns are for the Plan's applicability and usefulness, and for environmental preservation of the property. The status of the berm at the head of the main trail needs some re-construction, it was stated.

Christmas tree pruning and sale. The price and timing of the sale was discussed. The income from the sale of our trees will help defray expenses of maintenance of the Farm, perhaps including the installation of new drainage at the farmhouse, and other necessary maintenance and improvement projects. VOTED to price the trees at \$30 each, and confirm the sale date will be from 10 AM to 3 PM on Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>—with a rain/poor weather date for the next day, the 6th. The Friends of Steele Farm will be asked to help and perhaps sell hot chocolate to benefit the Farm. Two volunteers are needed to greet patrons at the Barn and accept payments; and two more at the field of trees, to guide and help patrons. Two trails will be used for the tree traffic. Two tractors with trailer will be employed and two more volunteers at the barn to assist patrons to load their tree in their vehicle. Publicity will be sent to local news outlets, and the newsletter for our senior citizens, the Boxborough Buzz.

Other Old Business.

- Drainage at the farmhouse. The Town's Consulting Engineer charges \$3,000 for design for the drainage, needed to protect and help preserve the farmhouse foundation. VOTED

unanimously: To allocate the funds from the Christmas trees sale toward the cost of that project.

- Picnic tables. Ed to investigate obtaining the cost of metal picnic table and bench frames to replace some of the 6 that were at the Farm; and will be on the agenda for our next meeting.

#### New Business.

- Brush clearing. The western edge of the Farm needs clearing, Ed stated, and rotating the mowing around the Farm should be done. Bruce noted that non-native and invasive Loosestrife is spreading and needs control efforts. Both needs shall be further investigated and discussed at our next meeting.
- AMD Company volunteers. On Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, AMD Company of 90 Central Street in Boxborough will help with invasive plant removal. Appropriate dress and footwear are required.
- Clearing trees at stonewall on eastern boundary. Discussed beginning to implement the Management Plan's recommendation of opening up the viewshed to the East, by exposing the old stone wall there and the field of the Picnic Trust. The Selectmen will be contacted regarding the project.
- Steele Farm Volunteer Day. VOTED unanimously: On Saturday September 19<sup>th</sup>, from 9AM to 12 Noon we will invite the Friends of Steele Farm to join us at the Barn to clear around the Barn and prune the Christmas trees. Jeanne to notify the Friends.

Next Meeting. The next meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00PM at Town Hall.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM.

*Jeanne Steele Kangas, Clerk*