

TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH
Steele Farm Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2016

Meeting was called to order by Chair, Ed Whitcomb at 7:05 PM at the Town Hall. Attending were members Jeanne Steele Kangas and Bruce Hager; and resident, Jim Moss.

Minutes. The Minutes of our November 24, 2015 are in process; the Minutes of the December 29, 2015 meeting were adopted.

Barn restoration project update. Ed Whitcomb met with the outgoing building inspector, Dave Lindberg, and the incoming building inspector, Gerry Noel, and Kneeland Construction Corporation of Medford, MA regarding the completion of the barn project. Dave recommended the Town accept the job as done, in spite of concerns Ed expressed about the barn door, the siding, and the painting job. Ed noted that the barn doors were hung too close to the building, causing them to scrape the siding, and the many small gaps in the siding forecast future water problems and decreased integrity of the siding. Ed recognized that the vendor did adhere well to the time frame for job completion. The next job will include more detailed specifications, and we'll try to hire a local contractor. Ed volunteered to repair the barn doors so they work smoothly without scraping the siding and will install proper handles to operate the doors. The Committee thanked Ed for his commitment to quality work and the proper repair and maintenance of the buildings at Steele Farm.

Evaluation of Farmhouse maintenance/restoration. Ed stated that the Selectmen want us to find a qualified person to estimate the cost to maintain or restore the farmhouse. Jim Moss suggested that among conservators who specialize in historic architecture are Associates or Fellows of AIC—the American Institute for Conservation. Jeanne will contact our Historical Commission for suggestions; Bruce will contact Sally Naser at TTOR, and all will report at our next meeting.

Ways to involve the Friends of Steele Farm. Ed stated that we can use volunteer help with such activities as:

- Maintaining our Christmas trees—mowing, weeding around them, and trimming
- Pruning of our apple trees; and
- Pulling out invasive plants.

All those activities could be done on the volunteer's own schedule, after they sign up and give us a time frame for their help. Replenishing our tree inventory by planting was discussed, and possible planting where trees have been sold and removed. The next Volunteer Day will help determine the future of our Christmas trees. Jeanne volunteered to draft a car window sticker for our Friends, with a motto such as "Be A Friend--Bring A Friend" with a Steele Farm logo of some sort. Other agricultural activities or demonstrations were discussed, such as hosting a gathering of antique tractors, and a presentation of antique farming implements and tools.

Old Business

- Picnic tables. The metal frames arrived. Ed will obtain the lumber and construct them.
- Drainage project. \$3K was approved to be spent from our revolving fund the engineering

design for drainage at the farmhouse, to help eliminate the water problem in the cellar.

New Business

- The Selectmen will consider the appointment of Jim Moss as a new member of our Committee.

Next Meeting Tuesday, February 23, 2016 at 7 PM at Town Hall.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 9:14 PM.

Jeanne Steele Kangas, Clerk

VOTED: February 23, 2016