

**Beaver Brook Farms
Visioning Committee
January 28 2016**

Present for the Committee: Chairman Ellis Neofotistos, Dave Paquin, May Paquette and Debra Dewitt Ahearn. Also present was Elizabeth Ware, Director of Community Development and Recording Secretary Samantha Carver. The meeting was held at the Town Hall in the 2nd floor administration conference room.

Absent: Warren Shaw, Andy Graham, Don Plummer

Present for this meeting was Michael Buxton, the Department of Public Works Director

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m. and welcomed Mr. Buxton. Mr. Neofotistos explained that they are in the process of planning for use of the Beaver Brook Farm property that the Town has acquired. At their last meeting they discussed what will happen after Mr. Richardson and his wife move out of the property and whether it would be possible for the public works department to cut the grass and do some minor snow plowing to make it looked lived at.

Mr. Buxton stated that he could see them cutting the grass around the main house and plowing the area near the house. He could not hay the fields. The Committee understood that and stated the Town may have to send an RFP out for that work.

Mr. Neofotistos asked Mr. Buxton about the sewer easements and whether the language could be altered so they could get access to develop a trail down by Beaver Brook. Mr. Buxton believed it could be by contacting the owners.

The Committee asked Mr. Buxton what he thought it would entail to do the trails. Mr. Buxton stated that more than likely you'd have to remove the subsurface and loam if you're paving the trail. Also, you have to make them handicapped accessible.

There was brief discussion as to whether Mr. Buxton would need space to store any of his equipment.

The Committee thanked Mr. Buxton for his time coming to the meeting.

Inspection and Walk Through by Brian Pfeiffer

Ms. Ware gave an overview of the site visit to Beaver Brook done by Mr. Pfeiffer. Ms. Ware provided a summary sheet of her notes that she made during the site visit. Ms. Ware explained that Mr. Pfeiffer was accompanied by five other people, three of which are carpenters who do a lot of work on Nantucket, but were apprentices to Brian Pfeiffer to learn this process. Ms. Ware's notes are attached to and made part of these minutes.

The overall summary was that most of the buildings and even the main house were in fairly good condition and built very solidly. The three objectives that are to be considered were rebuild,

stabilize or demolish. Ms. Ware's opinion was that she felt the report would come back with a lot of suggested repair work rather than demolishing or rebuilding.

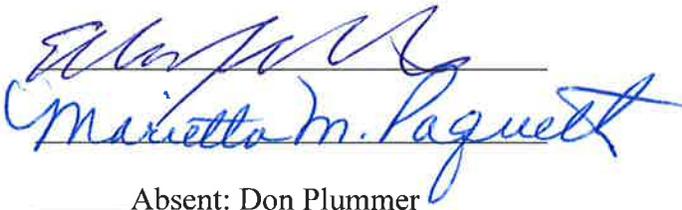
Minutes

The Committee held off on the approval of the minutes for the next meeting.

Adjourn

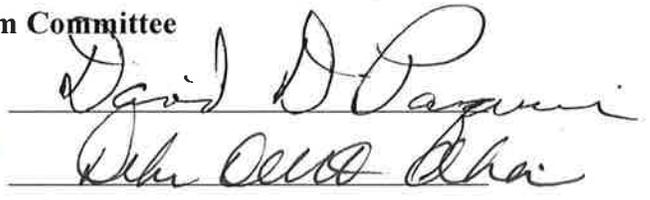
Mrs. Dewitt Ahearn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Paquin seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Beaver Brook Farm Committee



_____ Absent: Don Plummer _____

_____ Absent: Andy Graham _____



_____ Absent: Warren Shaw _____

Beaver Brook Farm – 761 Mammoth Road

Ware comments regarding the Site Visit with consultant team on Friday, January 22, 2016

The Team: Brian Pfeiffer

Michael Burrey- North Bennett Street School

Pen, lime, mortar and masonry expert

Mike, Matt and Colin- carpenters who want more information.

With Betsy Ware, town's representative on site

Dairy Barn Complex:

Main Barn: rebuild vs. stabilization vs. demolition

Minor Barn: The remaining barn, closest the main house is in relatively good shape. The back half portion of the barn (closest to silo) has had water coming into it for years and is very compromised. Team was looking at how to address back portion of barn.

Milk Room: very interesting space, with vats in the back of the building. Failure apparently is where steel I beam and concrete meet.....roof is very damaged.

Silo: Everyone went in.....seems to be relatively weather tight.....some exterior work needed.

Squash Barn: In relatively good condition.

- Concerns for what happens to all the “stuff” in the building that would assist in telling the story of the history of the farm and its operations;
- The end of the squash barn towards the dairy complex (second floor) had a fire, some repairs are needed;
- The end of the squash barn towards the dairy complex first floor used to house horses. Their manure pit is out the back door from the stables and towards the orchard field;
- Water cistern under Peter's “office”;
- Heating system (asbestos) with huge heating tank under Peter's office;
- Most of the team thought that minor repairs were needed and were thrilled with the building.
- Slate roof seemed to be in good condition;
- Upper floor windows needed modest repairs
- Great function/event location

Workshop (back red painted building):

The workshop closest to the dairy complex is very lightly constructed (1940s?) but contains a lot of wood and machinery. There's a saw with pulley system and a lathe(?) that are built into the concrete foundation. There's a system of tables that are intended and used to move and store wood within the structure.

The pipe shop, which is part of the main workshop complex, is the location of the fire. Again, the construction was light, there's limited use for the building in its present condition.

Ware asked them to look at the option of re-build the entire building to today's standards (in the event that a viable use/need could be determined). The basement area of this section of the building was in relatively good condition, despite the condition of the floor above.

Seed Shed (front red-painted building with greenhouse):

The building itself is solid, with the first portion of the building believed to be a corn crib, which has been modified to a seed shed. M. Burrey was very interested in the structure and everyone explored all areas of the building, including the second floor.

Stone Garage:

This building was believed to be originally stone with mortar. In the 1940s(?) an interior wall of concrete was added. Not sure whether the building was always used as a garage but also used as a root cellar. Pen loved the stoneworkand believed that minor repointing was required.

Main House:

- Foundation is large stones of granite, undressed and with little work (debate on where they came from). Center chimney foundation is HUGE, and is dry-laid stone, with six flues (one of which is in the basement). Based on the foundation, house could have been constructed in two phases- fairly close in time;
- Rain water chamber in the basement;
- Some dampness in the back addition, due to malfunctioning gutters. Needs to be addressed. Also, some water coming in at the front of the house and at the bulkheads. Same cause;
- Asbestos on pipes in basement (limited)
- Main house appears solid, rooms are nicely proportioned, house in better condition than anticipated;
- Attic has some squirrel activity

Additional Comments:

Thanks for the information. I am glad you enjoyed meeting the group. I have worked with Michael and Pen for roughly 14 years and 11 years respectively. Evaluating buildings with them is enormous fun because of their unique expertise in timber-framing and traditional lime plaster/masonry respectively, and because of their enthusiasm for old buildings. Mike, Matt and Colin are all smart, eager and have good building skills. Each has found us and wants to learn more about the specialized techniques needed to make in-kind repairs to historic buildings. We are currently carrying out a couple projects on Nantucket, which are made enjoyable by working with such committed people who get along well as a group. If and when the Town of Dracut gets to the stage of looking to repair the main house and corn crib at the Beaver Brook Farm, I am confident that our group will want to make a proposal. Everyone was enthusiastic about these two structures. We found the other structures interesting, but some of their materials are beyond the realm of the techniques we practice, especially concrete which is tricky to repair. There are other people with whom I work who carry out repairs on these more modern materials, and now, back to deciphering our notes and recommendations.

Michael Burrey offered to consider a North Bennett Street class to restore the corn crib. Work would be free to the town.