

PARMELEE FARM COMMITTEE

MINUTES

November 4, 2021

The regular meeting of the Parmelee Farm Committee was called to order by Vice-chair Peg Scofield at 7:00 pm in the Pond Room at the farm. The following members were present: Peg Scofield, Guy Vecchitto, Terry Doyle, Scott Hawkins, and Linda Dudek. Absent: Tim Gannon and Chris Cronin.

Peg informed the committee of the remaining few events to that will be held at the farm.

Peg made a motion to allow the Historical Society to use the golf cart for their Christmas Fair; seconded by Terry Doyle. Motion carried. Linda abstained from the vote.

The tree lighting was discussed. Linda suggested hiring Stacey Hathaway and her husband Steve to put the lights on the tree. Steve has access to lift equipment to reach the top of the tree. Scott will contact them. The Blue Fire Stage will lead the caroling for Christmas at the Farm on December 4th at the tree lighting.

Linda reported that several members of the Lion's Club and Historical Society met to begin plans for a concert to benefit the KHS barn project. The concert will be held on March 27, 2022. More details will be available in the future as the committees meet to finalize the details of the event.

Terry reported that the trail workdays were successful. The Parmelee trail was covered with wood chips. Mike Milano (Jr) will help clear an area of the trail that is very rocky.

Peg suggested inviting groups that use the farm on a regular basis to attend one or two of our meetings each year. Suggested groups include the Community Garden, HK Rec, Land Trust, Sugar House, Historical will Society, The Chamber, Lion's Club. A Place Called Hope, HKMS and Blue Fire Stage. The Farm Committee will request these groups inform us of their plans for farm usage which will help us plan for the year. It will also be an opportunity to meet all the participants.

A brief discussion about end of the year farm chores took place. Peg noted that she and Terry removed the white tulle curtains on the pavilion prior to the meeting. Cleaning services have ceased for this year. Linda noted that the fire extinguishers in the various buildings will be serviced on Monday and she will oversee that they are done.

Peg will attend the Board of Finance meeting next week to address comments made at their last meeting regarding our funds.

Peg shared a letter by John Byrne submitted to the Farm Committee and Board of Selectmen regarding the proposed Historical Society barn. Letter attached. A brief discussion took place.

Killingworth Ambulance member, Carolyn Rambus will attend our next meeting to present "Stop the Bleed."

Peg suggested members prepare lists for short term and long-term projects for the farm for discussion at our next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda M. Dudek, Acting Secretary

Attachment: Letter from John Byrne

October 26,2021

John Byrne
115 Chittenden Rd
Killingworth, CT 06419
860 304 1950
jbyrne@region18.org

Parmelee Farm Committee
c/o Tim Gannon
38 Schnoor Rd
Killingworth, CT

Parmelee Farm Committee:

It has come to my attention that the Killingworth Historical Society has chosen a site behind the existing garage at Parmelee Farm to erect a barn for artifact storage and display. On September 2, 2021 of the Parmelee Farm Committee meeting a vote was taken passing 5-1 in support of the Killingworth Historical Society decision. I am requesting that the Parmelee Farm Committee rescind that vote and reconsider other factors. My justification mainly comes from the Parmelee Master Plan developed by Tom Elmore of Elmore Design Collaborative, Inc. Historical Landscape Architects, and additional facts from the Town of Killingworth website, Parmelee Farm website and Parmelee Farm Facebook page.

Justifications for Rescinding Vote:

The following is taken from the Town of Killingworth website:

Parmelee Farm Committee Charge

The Parmelee Farm Committee is charged with developing and managing Parmelee Farm so as to connect our community to the natural environment and cultural heritage of Killingworth through education, agriculture, preservation, passive recreation, and the arts. Specifically:

- Oversee development and management of the site according to the master plan;
- Coordinate the use of the site, with attention to security, safety, preservation of the farm, and fairness;
- Create a long-term plan for management of the farm.

There are clear charges that the committee is to oversee and manage the farm according to the master plan that are not being met.

Master Plan:

Master Plan Page 2 Goals, Objectives, and Requirements:

#4 Encourage the active use of the farm, while maintaining its heritage and restoring its spatial configuration and historic sense of place over time.

Putting up a barn on the proposed site does not keep with the "spatial configuration and historic sense of place over time" where there was never a barn. There are 2 other sites on the property that a barn once existed.

Master Plan Page 26 Stewardship:

There are six bulleted items and the 2 most pertinent are quoted:

"For best practices and expertise in caring for the site, the Town and Steering Committee will consult with professional experienced in the rehabilitation and conservations of historic resources, including but not necessarily limited to architects, engineers, landscape architects, archeologists, and conservators."

It would appear that none of these experts were consulted because there is no physical site plan developed with elevations etc. and no building construction plans only a barn brochure picture.

"All future knee-jerk reactions to 'improve' or work on the farm's heritage features must stop immediately so no undo harm is created. All future work and improvements must be approved by the Steering Committee and must be consistent with their mission."

I believe there must be a stop to reevaluate this project and look at alternatives that were spelled out in the Master Plan. (see Master Plan Improvements) Although the project was approved, I do not think the Parmelee Committee has not done enough due diligence in being "consistent with their mission."

Master Plan Page 43 Stone Walls

"Many of the old walls stand on their original location. These historic walls are part of the farm's heritage and must remain."

Master Plan Page 70 Recommendations

"1. Maintain all historic walls that exist."

A proposal was made to disturb the original stone wall for creating an opening to the new barn. This would not keep with the intent of the Master Plan.

Master Plan Page 82 Vegetation Removal

3. Selectively remove trees and other types of vegetation in the old road. Clearly define what is to be cut and what is to be saved.”

6. Be proactive with tree removal. It is recommended to remove a tree that is standing hazard or potential standing hazard before it can fall and damage property, buildings, or people. All trees have a life expectancy.”

Discussion was to remove two large healthy sugar maple trees that were providing sap to maple syrup production. The only hazard these trees provided were a stop to the new barn site.

Master Plan 3 The Planned Improvements pages 45-72

“A holistic and sympathetic approach to this site’s heritage helped realize the planned improvements. Each feature has been carefully allocated its future location so that scarce resources can be used wisely to improve the farm for public use and enjoyment. **In this manner, the improvements will not be installed and then removed and rebuilt because various aspects were not considered ahead of time.**”

These suggested Master Plan improvements provide 3 alternative plans for the Killingworth Historical Society barn proposal.

Master Plan The Lodges pg. 52

The Lodges was removed by the Town of Killingworth in 2007, one year before the Community Gardens began. The unfortunate removal of this structure changed the character and sense of enclosure of the farmhouses rear yard. It has been reported the Lodges were originally a carriage house and then converted into four single rooms, each with sink and toilet in the mid twentieth century.

Recommendations

1.Rebuild the Lodges should be rebuilt if and when additional covered storage, display, interpretive, or educational space is needed.

2.Rebuild the Lodges on the location of the former building-within close proximity of the farmhouse northeast corner. The size, scale, roof angle, openings and material choices should

match historic structure. The approach will re-establish the sense of space and sense of enclosure that previously existed in this location.

Master Plan Red Barn (aka English Barn) pg. 48

The red barn was taken down in 2010 because of its condition. The Boscos poured the concrete pad in the barn, which remains today”

Recommendations:

- 1.Rebuild the red barn in its historic location as determined by the concrete pad.
5. This barn can provide additional storage as well as unique educational and interpretive opportunities as covered indoor space that exemplifies historic construction materials and techniques.

Master Plan Old Barn Pg. 49

1. Conduct an archaeological investigation to determine where foundation of the old barn was located. This will determine its actual size.

My Recommendations:

1. The Parmelee Farm Committee share the Master plan with not only their members but the members of the Killingworth Historical Society.
2. Both groups meet to discuss the implications of the Master Plan and for a better understanding of the document.
3. The PFC and KHS meet and form solutions in keeping with the Master Plan. (it has given you 3 already.)
4. Depending on as agreed solution experts be consulted to develop site plan, a set of building blueprints, and a cost estimate.

5. Consult with town agencies inland wetlands, building and fire inspectors, etc. as to the viability of the project. Keep in mind this is a municipal building on town property you need a permit.
6. Present scope, plan, and reasoning to the taxpayers asking for input.
7. PFC members vote on acceptance of project, Members that are also in the KHS should recuse themselves.
8. Selectpersons vote on acceptance of project.

In conclusion I am only trying to have people step back and think for a minute if there is a better way that will not only satisfy the Killingworth Historical Society but meet with the Parmelee Farm Committee charges of following the Master Plan. I am available if you would like to discuss this further knowing that the PFC has always and continues to be open to community input.

Sincerely yours,

John Byrne

Cc: Town of Killingworth Selectmen 323 RT81 Killingworth, CT 06419

Killingworth Historical Society Att: Ken Wodatch PO Box 707 Killingworth, CT 06419