



NEW HAMPSHIRE DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

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**HISTORIC AGRICULTURAL STRUCTURES MATCHING GRANTS
PROGRAM**

**(HB 395 □ CHAPTER 285, LAWS OF 1999 □ RSA 227-C: 27 – RSA 227-C: 32)
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

AGENDA

Eighty-Eighth Meeting – Wednesday January 9, 2013

1:00 p.m.

19 Pillsbury St., Concord, NH

(An accessible public facility)

Carl Schmidt, NH State Historic Resources Council
Elizabeth Muzzey, Director, Director & SHPO, NH Division of Historical Resources
John Porter, Professor Emeritus, UNH Cooperative Extension
Jennifer Goodman, Executive Director, NH Preservation Alliance
Ben Wilson, Bureau of Historic Sites, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development
Beverly Thomas, Program Associate, NH Preservation Alliance
Colin Cabot, Friends of the N.H. Barn Committee
Robert Johnson, II, Policy Director, NH Farm Bureau Federation
Steve Bedard, Friends of the N.H. Barn Committee
Jennifer Gornert, NH Department of Agriculture, Regulatory Services

I. Announcements and Minutes of August 14 meeting

Carl congratulated John Porter on his recent receipt of the New Hampshire Farm Bureau Federation's Profile Award, which recognizes individuals for their outstanding service to agriculture and rural life. Ben noted that in the Garden Conservancy's last newsletter Colin was featured accepting an award on behalf of his late father. Following a motion by Beverly, seconded by Ben, the minutes of the August 14 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

II. Creation of the new NH Preservation Alliance Barn Task Force

The first meeting of this new Task Force had taken place just prior to the Barn Committee meeting. Jennifer Goodman reported to Barn Committee members on the purpose and plans of the Task Force, which will explore and promote a number of barn preservation activities. The first meeting focused on refining our quantification efforts (i.e., the number of barns needing repair assistance). Two additional Task Force meetings are planned over the next six months. At the next meeting, fundraising consultant Betsy McNamara will come back to speak with the Task Force about various options for going forward. Jennifer promised to make minutes of the Task Force meetings available to the Barn Committee. Carl said it is important and encouraging that the Preservation Alliance has taken on this new initiative.

Colin and Paula Cabot, Steve Taylor, Michael Bruss, Chris Rogers, Steve Bedard, Carl Schmidt, John Porter, Ben Wilson, Beverly Thomas and Jennifer Goodman are all members of the Task Force.

III. Implications of the 2012 Capital Campaign Feasibility Study

As a result of the feasibility study, Betsy McNamara's recommendations regarding a major capital campaign were: "Not now, but not never." The principle findings were: the need to better quantify and thus justify the proposed amount of money to be raised; the need to clarify the roles or re-think the "co-branding" between the "Friends of New Hampshire Barns" and the Preservation Alliance; and the need for the effort to be a clear priority of the Preservation Alliance. Jennifer noted that the Preservation Alliance has kept in touch with the people who participated in the feasibility study via two letters thus far.

IV. Tax Incentive Program (RSA 79-D)

A. 2012 Implementation Results

Carl distributed information about the 2012 implementation results based on year-end data received from the N.H. Department of Revenue Administration (NH DRA). The number of easements went up by 15 in 2012 with a total of 425 structures now under preservation easement. Three new towns joined the program: Easton, Jaffery, and New London. Carl talked to Nancy Dutton about New London and learned that a resident has become very enthusiastic about the program and hopes to promote it throughout the town.

B. Promotion of Renewal of Expiring Easements

Beverly Thomas, attorney Carolyn Baldwin (who drafted the bill which ultimately became RSA 79-D), and Carl have been working for several months on an action plan regarding the original 79-D easements that went into effect in 2003 and will expire on March 31, 2013. The object is to encourage barn owners with expiring easements to apply to renew by April 15 and to alert and encourage their Selectboards to renew their membership in the program. It is also an opportunity to encourage new applicants in the towns that are currently part of the program. Fifty-eight structures in 26 towns have easements that will expire this year. Beverly and Carl contacted government offices in the 26 towns to obtain the names and addresses of the current property owners. On November 9 Carl, Carolyn, and Beverly met with Stephan Hamilton, Director, Property Appraisal Division at NH DRA, in order to establish a common understanding of the implications of 79-D renewal. Because renewal is only briefly referred to in the original statute, Mr. Hamilton suggested that the subject, including the question of the assessed value under renewed easements, be clarified at the time DRA's Administrative Rules are readopted in 2013. After numerous efforts in November and December by letter, email and phone messages elicited no response from Mr. Hamilton, and because of the impending need for us to inform property owners and Selectboards of the implications of renewal, Carl was advised to send a Registered Letter containing our understanding of the issue and requesting DRA comment.

As of the time of the Barn Committee meeting, no response from DRA had been received. Beth suggested Carl look at the beginning of the Rules Section for the Department of Revenue Administration to see if they have a definition for "renewal."

Barn Committee members discussed the situation and made various suggestions, including an examination of the rules for easements for properties in Current Use and of Emergency Administrative Rulemaking procedures, calls or other intervention

by one or more legislators, and a letter to NH DRA saying a letter would be sent to all easement owners and relevant Selectboards by a specific date with the renewal language we proposed unless DRA responded otherwise.

V. Education & Outreach Task Force: Visit to Larrabee Barn, Hooksett

John Porter described the October 2nd Task Force visit to the Larrabee Barn, circulating a photo of the barn and a report. The group had encouraged the property owner to include the barn as part of their development plan and to retain as much of the original fabric as possible. The group also discussed re-roofing and structural repairs. Since the visit, an interest in purchasing the property had been expressed. Although the purchase did not go through, the owner is now considering selling the property. John believes the property is still threatened.

VI. Committee Participation at N.H. Farm & Forest EXPO, February 8-9, including February 8 panel ("How to Resurrect your Dilapidated Barn") with Steve Bedard, Ed Pape, and Steve Fifield

Jennifer noted the Preservation Alliance has already been promoting this event. Beverly and Deb Gagne will put out a call for volunteers to staff the information booth. Beth suggested that "79-D Easements" and "Renewals" would be a good focus for the booth. Bev will attempt to get new photos of 79-D barns.

VII. Other Business

John will talk about barns on Sunday, January 13, at the Annual Meeting of Musterfield Farm at the Congregational Church in North Sutton.

The tentative date for the next meeting of the Barn Committee is March 6 at 1:00.