



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
MINUTES**

Eighty-Sixth Meeting – Wednesday, February 1, 2011

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
Beverly Thomas, Program Associate, NH Preservation Alliance
Jennifer Goodman, Executive Director, NH Preservation Alliance
John Porter, Executive Director, NH Preservation Alliance
Mae Williams, Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food
Chet Riley, Friends of the Barn Committee
Laurel Ford, Travel & Tourism, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development

I. Announcements and Minutes of December 20 meeting

Moved by Jennifer and seconded by Beth, the minutes of the meeting of December 20, 2011, were approved.

II. Creating a Matching Grant Program

The Friends of N.H. Barns have been hard at work, with four meetings devoted to preparations for the Limited Feasibility Study. Two were with Betsy McNamara and two with only the Friends group. A list of potential donors/advisors to be contacted by Betsy as part of the feasibility study is being assembled. Betsy proposed a schedule for her to start interviews in middle to late February. Prior to that, a letter will be sent to the individuals or foundations, signed by Michael Bruss and Carl, which will ask them to take part in the feasibility study. In order to elicit impartial responses, Betsy will do the interviewing by herself as a neutral party and not part of this committee or the Friends group. A key part of this letter will be the enclosed case statement describing the overall capital campaign. Substantial background material has been given to Betsy for her understanding of our barn preservation efforts to date. She had given the Friends a rough draft of the case statement that morning. More work is needed on answers to questions

that could be asked by interviewees and potential donors. A meeting has been rescheduled for March 29th from 10:00-12:00 for Betsy's report on her interviews. Jennifer said Betsy will be asked to find out from her meetings with potential donors what their interest is in preservation of barns. The letter to donors will not specifically ask them to donate but Betsy will work through this with each conversation and only approach the money piece if it fits into the way the conversation is going. Photos will be an essential part of the case statement given to each potential donor that will include lost resources and examples of adaptive reuse of barns.

B. Barn Committee's Role

The Barn Committee's role as the steward of the program was discussed. Reference was made to the possibility of grant recipients being required to accept an easement. Beverly expressed concern that an easement for this relatively small amount of grant money may not be a good idea. She also suggested that Betsy McNamara be familiar with easements and restrictions, as well as the success of the RSA 79-D program. It was suggested that the grant applications be graded on a point system using the Vermont grant program as a model. An impartial panel will grade each grant application using specific criteria. The question of financial need needs to be considered. Should donors to the capital campaign be ineligible? Chet urged that questions such as these be addressed clearly in the grant guidance. John asked if we will award grants to barns not in public view, in light of 79-D's test of public benefit provision. It was suggested that another look be given to the draft MOU before the feasibility study begins, and that Betsy be provided with 3-4 bullet points regarding the MOU.

III. RSA 79-D Tax Incentive Program

A. 2011 Implementation Results

Carl distributed a handout showing that in 2011 thirty more structures and two municipalities were added to the program.

B. Work to Promote the RSA 79-D Program and Renewal of Expiring Easements

Chet has been working with his town regarding renewal of 79-D easements. It will be a good community to work with because they are proactive in asking current easement holders to renew. How this will be done across the state will need to be decided. Among others, it will be important to get in touch with easement grantors (i.e., barn owners), town/city assessors, and the Local Government Center. Would people who renew their easements trigger an updated assessment? This could be a problem and Carl is working with Carolyn Baldwin and a small group to examine this and other issues of renewal. It was agreed that we all should make a real effort at Farm & Forest to promote new barns to be added to 79-D. Deb will make sure that the DHR staff is aware of 79-D and to promote it at the Expo.

IV. Promotional Events

A. Planning for Farm & Forest Expo, February 3-4

1. Barn Committee-sponsored education session: "How to Read Your Barn", by Arron Sturgis, 9 a.m., February 3. In the Frost-Hawthorne room on the 2nd floor. Beverly will introduce Arron and give an overview of 79-D and the partners.
2. N.H. Preservation Alliance panel discussion: "Alternative Models for Saving Historic Farm Properties", 12 - 2 p.m., February 3. This will be Maggie Stier's session with participation by Jennifer, Steve Taylor and John Porter.

B. Planning for Old House & Barn EXPO, March 24-25

The NHPA is looking for volunteers to help out at the EXPO. A wide array of educational sessions will be held throughout the event.

V. Next Meeting Date – April 9 at 1 p.m. at the DHR conference room.