

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION REPORT

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2007

Present: Ald. Linsky, Hess-Mahan, Vance, Lappin, Sangiolo, Parker, Lennon

Also Present: Ald. Coletti; Rebecca Smiley, Louise Bruyn, Rohna Shoul, Donald Lang, Jim Harper, Greg Maslowe, Vaunita Schnell, Peter Lewenberg

#58-07 NEWTON FARM COMMISSION, in accordance with Ordinance X-148, dated 05-02-05, *Sec 3-361 (b)(5), Newton Farm Commission*, presenting its Annual Report on the operation and performance of Angino Farm.
[02-05-07 @2:03 PM]

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0**

NOTE: This was an opportunity for the Committee to find out what was happening on the Farm. Ald. Lappin introduced those Farm Commission Members who were present. She stated that she was lucky to be working with these people and they each brought something to the Commission. She was impressed with Greg who made things grow a year earlier than expected and the farm made money.

Jim Harper presented the financial information for the farms operation for 2006 and the budget for 2007. He noted that the farm made money and this was due to a large number of start-up gifts, which they don't expect to see in 2007. On the expense side they had to pay a housing stipend for the farm manager since the house wasn't ready. Income from farm sales will go up in 2007 and the commission hopes to get educational grants to help support the farm. There will be an audit of the farm later this year and will be ready to be included in the city's financial statements and a business plan has been developed a business plan developed by the Newton Community Farm.

Ald. Sangiolo asked who was going to be writing grants. Greg Maslowe responded that there were several committees that would be assisting with this. Ald. Sangiolo suggested that the farm look into getting assistance from the City's grant writer.

Ald. Lappin stated that Martha Horn helped to make things happen and was a valuable resource in getting the farm up and running.

Ald. Parker was impressed with the new weekly and biweekly share program for 2007. He asked what the breakdown would be between the two categories. Greg responded that they thought it would breakdown to 30 weekly shares and 50 bi-weekly shares. Ald. Parker also was happy to see more on-site sales forecast for 2007 and a discussion of best times to be open for sales was undertaken.

Ald. Hess-Mahan asked about the \$5,000 contingency for barn roof replacement. Jim responded that the barn has had a leak that has been patched, but is concerned that more repairs need to be done. There is no immediate plan to undertake the roof repair as they want to look at the whole structure and assess it before undertaking repairs.

The Committee was joined by Ald. Lennon and also by Farm Commission member Vaunita Schnell. .

In terms of the farm house itself, the repair/renovation project is progressing as expected. All rooms on the first floor are at or near finished, with the exception of the kitchen. Greg Maslowe explained that the kitchen has very little space around it that can be used for insulation, therefore, it is a cold room at this time. He explained that the rooms on the second floor are nearly finished (with only cosmetic repairs needed in one of the upstairs rooms and the hallway). The bathroom is in real need of repairs/rehabilitation, which can be quite expensive. There is a desire to pursue short-term repairs (with the understanding that eventually this bathroom will require extensive repairs) in order to be able to provide proper facilities to hold programs at the Farm.. There is also a need to provide handicapped accessibility to the farm buildings, and Mr. Maslowe questioned as to what the best approach would be to implement such changes.

David Olson, City Clerk (and former Director of the Jackson Homestead Museum) suggested that Jim contact someone at the museum to see the process that was used to make that building handicapped accessible, as there was a similar situation with a very old building that needed accessibility upgrades that worked out well.

Mr. Maslowe added that the long-range goal for the use of the barn is to convert it into an educational center, which will require extensive improvements. He indicated that the plans for those improvements are underway, and there will be fundraising events held to help defray the cost of the project (which may need to be done in phases).

Ald. Hess Mahan stated that he had taken the opportunity to visit the farm on several occasions and he was pleased that operations of the farm have exceeded expectations at this point in time.

Ald. Lappin explained how pleased she was with the success of the Harvest Fair that was held at the farm and the sense of community that it created. She also stated that she was impressed by the setup of the educational programs being offered at the farm.

Mr. Maslowe stated that many people came to the Farm Commission with ideas for educational programs and willingness to help implement these long-term programs. He indicated that, while these long-term program plans are in order, the Farm Commission will continue to remain open to spontaneous, short-term interest programs brought forward by community members as well. He explained that there has been a lot of interest in expanding the educational programming that is occurring at the Bowen school to other elementary schools throughout the city. The Bowen program was started by the initiative of the teacher at the school who sought to offer such programming for the students, and parents volunteered to be trained to help run the program. This all occurred at no expense to the Angino Farm, which is how he would like to see other programs progress, if possible. With the success of this program, as well as the interest shown by the Nahanton Park camp and Brimmer and May school programs, the Farm Commission now has programs in place that can be presented to other groups as options for their students to learn about Angino Farm.

Ald. Lennon questioned the expense of the audit of Angino Farm. He indicated his concern that the cost of the audit represents a fair portion of the budget for operations.

Mr. Maslowe explained that the audit will be performed by a firm that has offered to audit the budget for a reduced rate (from that which it charges to corporations, etc.). He indicated that this audit is being performed in accordance with the existing Ordinance.

Chair Linsky thanked Mr. Maslowe and members of the Farm Commission for all of their work on this project thusfar. He indicated how pleased he was at the success of this project and related programs. He thanked Ald. Lappin for her excellent representation of the Board of Aldermen as a member of the Farm Commission and for her dedication in that capacity to this project.

Ald. Lappin explained that this has been a real group effort, and she thanked all of the Commission members present this evening for their great contributions to the effort. She also recognized Peter Lewenberg, who has chaired the Farm Commission (who was not in attendance this evening), and Martha Aherin Horn, Conservation Planner, who both have given their time and efforts to this project.

Ald. Coletti asked whether all funds appropriated (late in 2006) for improvements to Angino Farm had been expended as intended.

Mr. Maslowe explained that the farm house has been completely de-lead and has passed inspection for certification as a lead-free property. He stated that all windows in the farm house have been replaced, as planned. He then explained that the barn doors (that were slated to be replaced) have been scraped down and re-sealed without need for replacement.

The Committee discussed its acceptance of this first report, and Ald. Hess-Mahan moved NO ACTION NECESSARY on this item. That motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

REFERRED TO CMTE. ON COMM. PRES. AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

#34-07 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending that the sum of \$74,770 be appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund for purposes of funding the *City Archive Preservation* project. [01-25-07 @4:06PM]

ACTION: **HELD 7-0**

NOTE: David Olson, City Clerk, and Charlie MacMillen, CPC Chair, were present this evening. Due to the fact that there was a special Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for 8 p.m. this evening, there was not sufficient time to discuss this item. Therefore, the Committee voted 7-0 to hold this item; the item will be scheduled for discussion at the next Committee meeting (Tuesday, March 27th).

All other items were held. The Committee adjourned at approximately 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen M. Linsky, Chair