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NEWTON FARM COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES December 4, 2008 7:00 p.m. at Newton City Hall Room 209

Meeting opened at 7:15 PM with the following attendees:

MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Harper, Chair, J. Hepburn, R. Shoul
L. Mottard, L. Bruyn, Rick Lipof, D. Lang, V. Schnell

MEMBERS ABSENT: P. Lewenberg, L. Bruyn

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Becka Smillie, Peter Barrer, & Ted Chapman, and Gene Rubin, NCF
(and, see attached sign-in sheet)

Newton Community Farm Inc. Report

Report on Farm Operation – Becka Smillie reported that Greg is looking for ways to expand. He expects to maintain the same level of CSA shares, but will produce early greens for a wholesale market – Whole Foods and some restaurants are potential customers. The farm can expand the season in the fall with a fall CSA offering, possibly in partnership with other local farms. Greg is participating in the New England Northeast Community Farms. To keep up [with expenses], the farm needs to increase the amount it produces. The farm will pay Greg's health insurance next year, and donations may be less.

Discussion of Proposed changes along the north part of the farm (see attached document (undated))

Becka read from a new agenda item prepared by Ted Chapman, describing a number of changes the NCF wants to implement, including:

1. Increasing the size of the greenhouse
2. Removing pullet shed
3. Installing composting toilet
4. Regrading area of cold frames to install additional planting beds
5. Repair & re-design chicken coop roof to allow storage

These changes are proposed for the Farm Commission to discuss and vote on in the future. Changes may also need historic review. V. Schnell says she thought the two structures would stay – they help convey a sense of farm (chicken coop and pullet shed). Ted says the roofs are too low to change their use, but they could recycle the lumber. A composting toilet is needed for people working in the field. A question was

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raised about whether the toilet would provide handicapped access. D. Lang does not want to sacrifice parts of landscape that are really important to the historic and cultural landscape. To knock it down because it is in the way, he says, is wrong. J. Hepburn thought the pullet house was not there for all the time of the farm. V. Schnell said that farms always had chickens, so if not that pullet house, there would have been another building [for the same purpose]. J. Harper suggested that a diorama be built to show how chickens were kept. T. Chapman asked to try to summarize. He asked if it was agreed to maintain the story but change the use? For example, is it approved to convert the pullet shed to a composting toilet? V. Schnell said it is a leap for her. D. Lang says the building will fall down, so if the building can be re-constructed for a new use, it makes sense to him.

Update on Barn Work- P. Barrer said the siding, roof, paint, and shoring up are completed. The scaffolding will come down this weekend. The NFC has commitments for all the money needed to pay for the work. The barn door is being re-designed, because the cost of the original design was too much. A picture of the finished work was passed around. J. Hepburn thinks the window design does not match what was approved by the NFC or the Historic Commission. She requested a comparison with the Historic Commission's Record of Action, and asked for Angino Minutes during discussion of the windows.

T. Chapman said two walnut trees have been planted on the property, and mountain ash trees are going across the street.

General Business & Announcements

November minutes: Minor changes to minutes were offered.

Motion by V. Schnell to approve minutes as modified. Second by R. Shoul. Vote: J. Hepburn abstained. J. Harper, R. Shoul, L. Mottard, Rick Lipof, D. Lang, V. Schnell voted "aye." Motion passed.

Miscellaneous

V. Schnell suggested that P. Lewenberg and Sheryl Lappin be thanked officially for their work on the board. She said maybe the NCF can acknowledge.

Motion by R. Lipof to adjourn. Second by V. Schnell. Vote: All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Phelps, Sr. Environmental Planner

