

August 17 2011, 7:37pm

In attendance: Tim, John, Anna, Laurie, Gineane

Email to Mark Haddad to Tom Delaney read by Anna Eliot regarding Exhibition Hall report

- \$250k repair in place
- \$20-30k to winterize
- \$40k dismantle and reassemble to label for future use

John asked if the Selectman/Town Manager have reviewed use of CPA funds, Anna thinks this depends on the acceptance of the National Historical Preservation/Register and the future intended use of the building itself.

Gineane to take the report to the Riding and Diving Club for their review and invite them to a future meeting.

Laurie to contact Don Black and find out what dates work best.

Potential special meeting for Parks, Hazel Grove, Riding and Driving Club & Pony Club to discuss parameters of future desired use. Framework needs to be provided to help streamline the communication back to the groups.

Detailed discussion needs to happen to find out the budget for dismantle and preservation of the wings to make them safe for winter as well as to put aside the main building. There needs to be a decision and funding as well as a schedule for the actual work.

The suggestion of taking the building completely out of use and rehoming the current residents. It would be significantly less expensive to put up temporary stables and take the building out of use until a permanent decision could be made on the use of the barn.

John points out that the Williams Barn is an excellent example of a building that was in poor shape that slowly evolved into something sound and well preserved.

Anna suggests there are means to raise money in both Pony Club and Riding and Driving that should also be considered for funds to help preserve the track and buy into parts of the project. A fairground account can be opened and dedicated for this via Town Hall. She also says that the Selectmen have not formally discussed the project overall but a Warrant has been opened for discussion in the October fall meeting.

Per John: Research needs to be done to document how the fairgrounds have been used over time to figure out how the building has been used in the past. Basically the narrative of the fairgrounds and the clubs that have made use of the site in the past. All the activities and the town/horse element/agricultural element. This entails extensive manual research into registers, books, diaries, etc.

This is required to submit the building to the National Registry. John feels this would be so beneficial to help highlight and educate the public on the importance of the site to the town of Groton. John displayed a map MDAR outlining the fair activities in the state. (www.mass.gov/agr)

Laurie went to Bolton Fair this past weekend. Admission was \$10 and she got the name Steve & Denise Hansen (Wallace Road) that are very active in 4H. Middlesex Cty is the only county east of Mississippi which is in Westford. It does not seem likely that the site would be used extensively by 4H, but that they like to have publicity and kids that may be able to help. Laurie is also going to attempt to get funding for the fencing and poison ivy started in the next meeting. John suggested to involve the Eagle Scouts as well.

Tim: about potential users for the site, begin to discuss different groups that could use the site.

Trail Rides, 4H, Future Farmers of America, Riding and Driving, Pony Club, Ag Com, Groton Local, Ag Fair, Sports Fields, Non Rated Horse Shows/Schooling Shows, Gymkhana.

Anna suggests we survey the groups and ask if they're willing to pay site fee, give the option of food permits/vending. Potentially organize a horse fair next year with the purpose of fundraising and surveying the participants to gather information.

Laurie suggested survey via email, for quicker turn around.

Some discussion on the way the Pony Club and Riding and Driving work (infield vs buildings), etc. Horse Shows are scheduled via Parks. Tim would like to have some awareness and enterprise money brought on by having a "equine exhibition" on the site. If the groups were willing to co-host, the man power to work the event itself.

Discussion on GrotonFest and our presence at the event. We'd like to see historical information be solicited from the group as well as future use. Distribute information cards for them to fill out and ask if they're willing to be contacted for information. Rotate staff to assist with soliciting the information from the public. Need to contact to see if space is still available and the fee. No fundraising to happen at this event. Tim to contact to find out if this is still possible. Potential sharing of booth with Groton Pony and also represent Riding and Driving.

Spencer and Greenfield fairs: Spencer 9/2-9/6 - Greenfield 9/8-9/11

Gineane - Greenfield, Jean - Spencer. Gineane to email to see if we can coordinate visitations.

Laurie investigated on the survey results that were sent out for Master Plan: all the data is still being analyzed and is not available yet. Some discussion of sending out our survey via electric bill. She is also waiting to get emails back from Don Black regarding Hazel Grove.

Next meeting 9/7/2011 - 7:30 pm

Meeting adjourned 8:46pm