

These minutes are subject to possible corrections/revisions at a subsequent Exeter Conservation Commission meeting.

Exeter Conservation Commission
Work Session
Draft Minutes
Raynes Barn, Newfields Road Exeter
July 5, 2016

The Conservation Commission gathered at the Raynes Barn on Newfields Road at 6:00 pm. The purpose of the work session was to review the structural needs of the barn and develop next steps for funding needed repairs.

Members Present: Don Briselden, Todd Piskovitz, Carlos Guindon, Ginny Raub, Bill Campbell.

Staff and Others Present: Kathy Norton and Ben Anderson from the Raynes Farm Stewardship Committee, and Kristen Murphy, Natural Resource Planner.

After introductions, Don Briselden, provided a brief overview of the acquisition of the farm and barn and the repairs and restoration completed to date.

Don then reviewed the previously presented list of repair and restoration needs--which may total as much as \$200,000 --that include but not limited to:

- repairs to NE foundation and wall
- structural repairs/improvements to barn frame
- replacement of NW sill
- replacement of sill adjacent to silo
- clapboard repairs/replacement
- exterior painting
- floor repairs
- connector repairs/replacement
- engineering support and repair plan update.

There was a discussion of the documentation provided when the farm was acquired: Base Line Documentation, NHDHR Inventory, and Historic Structures Report, all from 2002. Those documents may be helpful if the Commission wishes to engage in the process of placing the barn on the NH List of Historic Resources.

There was also a discussion of the possibility of applying for a LCHIP grant and the amount of funds to be requested. LCHIP grants require matching funds (50%). If the Commission sought funding of the full needs list (approximately \$200,000) with a LCHIP application of \$100,000, then the Town will need to provide the matching \$100,000. The LCHIP application will require cost estimates for the line items included in the grant request.

There was further discussion of whether to include the Town's funding in the annual budget or to seek funds via a warrant article; either Town sponsored or via a citizen's warrant. It was suggested that some funding should be included in the Town's operating budget for minor repairs. There was also a suggestion that the needs funding for the barn be included in the Town's Capital Investment Program (CIP).

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The Commission discussed whether to approach repairs needed as a single project or as several smaller projects, whether to incorporate funding request in the 2017 budget or 2018th budget request, how to continue to engage the public in the facility, and grant scheduling and opportunities.

A discussion also included the need to develop a base of support for the farm and barn which may include the development of a “Friends of Raynes Farm” initiative. There were suggestions for continuing and expanding the use of the farm and barn along the lines of the snow shoe event, the return of the artist’s visit, a fall festival event, and other small scale events that would highlight the use of the farm/barn as a venue. The Commission considered such use as essential to convince voters that the barn is used and valuable, in addition to its historic and iconic value, and worthy of continued investment in repairs and renovation.

Next Steps:

1. It was felt that working to a larger grant with a town match for the repairs is preferred.
2. Don and Kristen will develop a schedule of LCHIP and Town budget deadlines
3. Don will approach Kevin Smart for an estimate of the repairs to the failed basement wall.
4. The Commission will continue with public events with the next one scheduled in the fall.
5. The Commission will investigate the type and cost of a sign: “Raynes Barn, date, Town of Exeter” to be mounted on the barn.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm. A tour of the barn was then conducted.

Submitted: Don Briselden, Kristen Murphey