

RAYNES FARM
LONGRANGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Prepared November 2007
Revised January 2015

Heritage and Historical Development:

The Wiggin Barn and farmland were deemed eligible for the State Register of Historic Places for their significance in agriculture. The barn and its ancillary structures and the surrounding hay and cornfields document nineteenth and twentieth century trends in local farming and land-use practices. The primary period of significance documents the height of cattle and dairy farming in the second half of the nineteenth century, during the productive life of Chase Wiggin. During this era, the property was highly significant locally, both as a large farm, and as the location of Exeter Cattle Market, which may have had regional significance. The barn was updated in the mid-twentieth century, when the milk house and silo were constructed for modern dairy farming practices by John C. Raynes, who purchased the property from Albert and Catherine Violet in 1946. John Raynes continued the agricultural use of the site until it was purchased by the Town of Exeter Conservation Commission in May of 2002.

The large barn and silo surrounded by open farmland is a long-standing community focal point, an important historic landscape in the town of Exeter. Still in agricultural use, this property is one of the most intact farm landscapes remaining in Exeter. The way the barn and silo are sited on a curve in the road surrounded by the open fields is a visual agricultural landmark, and the site is popular with photographers.

Historically, the homestead and barn property contained 104 acres of land on both sides of Newfields Road. A number of subdivision actions over the road reduced the Raynes farm land, as we know it today, to 48.6 acres. The homestead, now a private residence, is located on the west side of the road on 5.4 acres.

The property, bisected by an early railroad bed and an active rail line, and the location of the early "town landing" is also locally important within the contexts of railroad and river transportation.

This property is also important for its association with the life of Chase Wiggin, who made a significant contribution to the local and regional economy by establishing a large cattle market that helped supply the Boston market and benefited farmers from the community and throughout the state, and northern New England region. The barn and land retain integrity for this period of occupancy.

The Wiggin Barn, erected in 1860, is architecturally significant as the only hundred-foot barn in the town of Exeter, the largest surviving historic barn in the community. It is important as a well-preserved example of mid-nineteenth century barn design and construction. An assessment of its statewide importance was conducted at the time of acquisition and the property and barn was determined eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places.

Conservation and Preservation Actions:

The Town of Exeter purchased the Raynes Farm in 2002 with Exeter Conservation Funds and a state Land Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) grant. The 48.6-acre parcel located on Newfields Road, is held by the Town, and managed by the Conservation Commission. LCHIP has been granted certain rights as defined in the Stewardship Agreement and Executory Interest Deed and therefore also have authority over certain actions as defined in those documents.

Raynes Farm Management and Oversight:

Soon after purchasing the farm, an oversight committee was established by the Conservation Commission. Membership would consist of a minimum of two representatives from the Conservation Commission, one member from the Exeter Historical Society, one member from the Public Works Department, the tenant farmer and two private citizens. Farming on the property continues through a lease with a local farm. The Conservation Commission feels it is important to provide the tenant farmer with a voice in the overall vision and management of the farm, and asked Nathan Merrill (one of the owners of Stuart Farm) to serve on the Stewardship Committee. This is an important piece of the relationship which keeps communication open and helps

ensure a successful long-term arrangement for operation of the Raynes Farm. To avoid a conflict of interest, the tenant farmer would not vote on matters regarding the lease.

The “Raynes Farm Stewardship Committee” (RFSC) oversees the use of the farm, helps identify and prioritize preservation and public use objectives, and advises the Conservation Commission on actions that need to be taken. The Chairperson of the Stewardship Committee also serves as the primary contact person for inquiries regarding the property, particularly in maintaining the Town’s relationship with farmers who lease the farmland and barn.

The RFSC should meet at least annually prior to August 1st to review the monitoring report, the farmer-Commission lease agreement, and the Management Plan (which guides policy decisions on property uses). Any suggestions for changes agreed upon by the Committee should be submitted to the Commission for their approval. The Raynes Farm Stewardship Committee will inspect the condition of the barn itself and forward any recommendations for maintenance needs to the Conservation Commission annually no later than August 1st. This will allow incorporation into the LCHIP annual report as well as the town budget process.

The Conservation Commission is the responsible party for monitoring the Raynes Farm annually in compliance with the LCHIP regulations. By incorporating the RFSC review of the barn into the annual inspection process it will help to ensure the Management Plan and annual monitoring reports include current conditions of the barn. A copy of the complete monitoring report should be shared with the Stewardship Committee each year.

Concept:

The following development plan outlines the vision, objectives, usage and plan specifics for the property. They were established in consistency with the LCHIP Project Agreement, the Conservation Easement Deed and the Warranty Deed of Executory Interest. The development plan consists of the Vision and Objectives narrative, Appendix A (Project Priorities), Appendix B (Vision and Usage Plan), and Appendix C (Completed Projects).

Vision:

To preserve and protect the Raynes farm and Wiggin Barn for the Town of Exeter and its citizens to enjoy and use for agricultural, recreational and educational purposes in accordance with the established Raynes Farm Management Plan.

Objectives:

1. To preserve and utilize the Raynes Farm as active farmland in agricultural production using best management practices.
2. To preserve the Raynes Farm and barn as a significant historical and archaeological site.
3. To retain the Raynes Farm as a scenic vista and natural area enhancing the aesthetic quality and visual character of the Town.
4. To protect the unique and fragile saltwater marsh of the Squamscott River.
5. To assess and maintain the wildlife habitat the Raynes Farm provides, with its special combination of river frontage, salt marsh, fresh water wetlands, actively managed open fields and woodlands.
6. To provide the citizens of Exeter with appropriate access and use of the conservation land and the riverfront.
7. To provide educational activities to for school groups, historical organizations and other interested parties.
8. To provide a venue at the farm and barn for public usage events that benefit the Raynes Farm through awareness and fund raising.
9. To provide a secure storage and viewing area for historic items such as wagons, farm equipment and other items that have a historic time fram connection to the period of the farm and barn.
10. To actively pursue alliances with organizations and individuals who support the presence of the Raynes property in the Town of Exeter.

Guidelines:

The actively managed farmland provides a unique scenic quality quite different from un-managed open lands. This landscape defines this special parcel of land. The historic barn on the edge of the road adds to this defining quality. The farmland has been in agricultural production for centuries, making it one of the key historic elements of the property. The high-quality agricultural soils found on the farm require active management to remain productive, economically viable and scenic. For these reasons, the Conservation Commission, with town meeting authorization and the approval of the Board of Selectmen, have entered into an agreement with a local family farm (Stuart Farm, LLC) to use the land as active farmland. The agreement contains specific arrangements for the use of the farm and includes but is not limited to management for hay, row crops such as corn and raising farm animals. Since

farming the land is the first objective of the Management Plan, other objectives of the Plan, should be implemented as to not interfere with the active farming.

The Raynes Barn should be preserved as a classic example of a 19th century barn with 20th century improvements. The timber-frame barn is the largest of its type remaining in Exeter, and the mid-20th century modifications in the lower level for then-modern milk production remain fairly intact. A fund to maintain the barn should be established and overseen by the Commission to finance the upkeep of the barn. The use of the barn is to be under the control of the Commission with guidance from the Stewardship Committee. Subject to its physical condition and safety, uses could include utilization by the farmer as specified in the agreement with the Commission. No materials or equipment can be stored in the barn without written approval of the Conservation Commission.

Subject to the physical condition and safety of the barn, public usage would be on a controlled basis, with specific permission for each event. Public usage events would include, but not be limited to school groups, Historical Society visits, artist uses, music events, farm to table dinners, outdoor events such as skiing and snowshoeing and other similar gatherings. The Stewardship Committee hopes that different types of educational activities can take place at the farm. For example, elementary school children from around the area could visit the farm for historic, environmental, or agricultural lessons. Seacoast School of Technology Building Trades students could come study the timber framing in the barn, or even help with maintenance or future improvements at the barn, such as building new doors or installation of new clapboard siding. Given safety considerations and the historic character of the barn, commercial events such as weddings, parties, and other social gatherings, not relating to or benefiting the farm and barn, should not be permitted. Educational signs and displays should be created for informing the occasional tour group from local schools or historical societies.

The barn retains many remnants of its evolution from a 19th-century stable and loose hay storage all on the main level (manure was stored in the basement) to a mid-20th century dairy operation with baled hay and equipment stored on the main floor, a tower silo for silage, and livestock housing, milking facilities, and milk room all located on the ground level. Other historical features of the farm such as the cemetery site and the cattle underpass should be maintained for their historical value.

The Commission shall maintain the LCHIP sign provided by the State. The Commission must approve the installation of any additional signage and it must conform to the Town's regulations.

The Commission has developed a trail system that allows public access without interfering with the farming activity. Access is provided at the opening in the stonewall at the northern end of the property, allowing for limited parking on the old Newfields Road right-of-way. The trail system should be maintained to stay on the perimeter of the property. Trails should maintain adequate signage to inform users as to parking, specific areas not to be used and the general rules of the Property. No wheeled

or motorized vehicles shall be permitted on the trails or land, except those specified in the agreement between the farmer and the Commission.

The Stewardship Committee's objective of assessing and preserving wildlife habitat is driven primarily by a desire to protect the increasingly endangered rural, undeveloped habitat that is home to many species of flora and fauna in coastal New Hampshire. Management of the Farm for wildlife shall be done in accordance with the goal of encouraging active farming. Hunting shall be permitted as allowable by State laws and regulations. Any lease between the farmer and the Commission should contain specific agreements regarding any wildlife management policies. The Commission should conduct a yearly review of the flora and fauna to ensure proper stewardship of the property. All changes in wildlife management activities should be done while working closely with the farmer so as to not diminish the agricultural activity on the farm.

Planning Horizon: The plan envisions a graduated time line based on funding and details yearly requirements, immediate-need projects (less than 2 years), planning for mid-range projects (2 to 5 years) and concept planning for long-range projects (5 to 10+ years).

Needs Statement: To implement the plan, it will be necessary to acquire funding and active support from the Town of Exeter administration, Conservation Commission and the town citizens. Preservation needs are elaborated in the project plan and will be included as appropriate in the Town's Capital Investment Plan and the operating budget.

Funding Possibilities: While the majority of funding is expected to come from Town of Exeter budgets, the committee will also look to grant funding and volunteer gifts and volunteer donations, gifts in kind and volunteer work.

APPENDIX A
Development Plan Maintenance, Repair and Development Actions
(updated November 2016)

Annual Maintenance and Monitoring Requirements Needs (yearly):

- 1) Mow and clear brush around the barn yearly following the growing season.
- 2) Conducted the required property monitoring and reporting for this property in compliance with the LCHIP agreement.
- 3) Annual inspection of the barn structure by a person familiar with facilities inspections.
- 4) Inspect the catch basin on the north side of the barn and clean when needed.
- 5) Include approximately- \$1500 in the annual budget request to address minor maintenance repairs.

Highest Priority (less than 2 years):

- 1) Design and repair stone foundation wall and sill at northeast side of barn.
- 2) Provide interim repairs of deteriorated clapboards until such time that a major clapboard repair project is funded.
- 3) Repair and/or replace missing and deteriorated floor boards in the barn so that the barn is safe for public use.
- 4) Accomplish miscellaneous repairs: Secure truss cross braces, tighten cables, repair broken windows, paint east side door, secure east side entrance door.
- 5) Apply to the State of New Hampshire for inclusion of Raynes Farm and Barn on the State Register of Historic Places. Update the 2002 NHDHR Historic Inventory and the 2002 Historic Structures Report as the basis for the submission.
- 6) Apply for grant funding to accomplish repair projects including a grant application for NH LCHIP funds.
- 7) Prepare a Draft Budget Plan: This will provide the Town and residents with a realistic cost analysis of what maintaining and operating the farm under this management plan will cost and facilitate efficient annual budget planning.
- 8) Survey and remove invasive plant throughout the property. This will include removing the scrubby brush that surrounded the old farm equipment removed in 2010.

Moderate Priority (2-5 years):

- 1) 1) Replace all deteriorated clapboards with highest priority given to the east side of the barn.
- 2) 2) Apply No-Char to barn interior.
- 3) Repair and repaint the barn exterior.
- 4) Remove and replace sill at silo connector. This may require removing the silo connector which would include coordination with LCHIP.
- 5) Replace sill at northwest gable end.
- 6) Conduct invasive plant monitoring program every two years to minimize the spread of invasive plants (*Reoccurring Activity*)

Lower Priority (5-10+ years):

- 1) Rebuild the milk room.
- 2) Conduct a structural analysis of the barn to insure that the use and loading of the barn is within safe limits. This should include hiring a structural engineer to set a #/sq foot load allowance.

APPENDIX B
Farm and Barn Vision and Usage Plan
(updated November 2016)

Vision Expansion and Process: The following is a list of vision and usage suggestions derived from various Conservation Commission, and Raynes Stewardship Committee meetings. It is intended to refine and develop the suggestions into a timeline action plan.

- Start with small accomplishable events and build upon successes.
- Repeat and expand the past uses such as the snowshoe event, artist event and similar uses.
- Arrange for a small band or folk concert events.
- Develop a farm/barn use policy that addresses the how and what (application, permissions, insurance, etc.)
- Develop a logistics plan that addresses parking, bathroom facilities, handicap access, security, etc.
- Promote the farm/barn through various media, ENL, website, Facebook and other social media.
- Develop a list of support people, establish partnership with support organizations, and promote a Friends of Raynes.
- Join barn preservation associations such as the Barn Alliance and promote the Raynes Barn in their media.
- Include the vision and processes actions in a action plan within the Development Plan; similar to the present plan's Project Priority List
- Develop a budget to support the vision implementation.
- Consider charging a small, reasonable fee to become a Friends of Raynes Farm member, and actively sought membership? We could offer a few perks as an incentive to join (i.e. free t-shirt, free note cards, a "Friends of Raynes Farm" appreciation day/event at Barn?). This could help shine a light on the property/efforts, provide a small source of revenue, but most importantly, help build a nice database of supporters who we could email, mail, etc. updates about upcoming events, volunteer-days, projects, etc.

APPENDIX C

Completed Projects (updated November 2016)

1) Barn Repairs:

Phase 1: - **Completed: 2004** Included the rebuilding of the north wall sills, installation of a catch basin along the north wall that passes through the lower level of the barn, installation of granite support posts and repairs to structural members.

Phase 2: Restoration **Work Completed: December 2006** and included:

- Temporarily removing existing milk room to permit sill repairs.
- Replacing deteriorating sills on milk room side of barn from milk room to wood framed wall (at other access door section) as per original drawing
- Repairing rotten vertical beams at new sill as required.
- Repairing vertical beam and re-engaging tendon into mortise as noted in original drawing.
- Replacing damaged floor joist as shown on original drawings
- Removing and replace existing broken girder beam as noted in original drawing.

- 2) Electrical Work: Basic service and lighting. **Completed: Summer 2006.**
- 3) Install multiple fire extinguishers and no smoking signs in the barn. **Completed: Summer 2007**
- 4) Barn doors: Tracks and rollers were replaced for the north-west gable end doors. The south-east gable end man door was restored for pedestrian access to the barn from the rear (to avoid people walking along the hazardous blind corner in Newfields Road to get into the barn). **Completed: Summer 2007**
- 5) Install a car and bus parking area at the north end of the property along Newfields Road opposite the former Raynes home. **Completed: Summer/Fall 2007**
- 6) Mark / delineate and restore the cemetery plot. Add a sign or historical marker. **Completed: Eagle Scout Kyle Scoggins, 2010.**
- 7) Removed dilapidated farm equipment. **Completed: Fall 2010**
- 8) Installation of cables in the wall, north and south of the barn along Newfields Rd.
- 9) Roof repair/replacement: The funds for replacement (\$33,000) were approved in the 2014 CIP. **Completed June 2014.**
- 10) A site plan was completed and recorded at the registry of deeds (D-29789)
- 11) Develop hiking trails that connect the parking lot with the barn and cemetery as identified in the Trail Management Plan. **Completed: Summer 2011**
- 12) Repair barn doors and replace missing window panes to ensure a weather -tight closure. SST constructed the door. **Completed: Summer 2015**
- 13) Stabilize failing NW sill: **Completed: 2015**

Priority Setting: Project needs will be evaluated annually. At each review meeting, priorities will be recommended by the RFSC and approved by the Conservation Commission.

Project Funding: Phase 1 restoration was accomplished using a combination of Town funds, LCHIP funds and donations. The Phase 2 restoration was accomplished by funding acquired through a Town Warrant Article, Conservation Commission funds and LCHIP funds. Roof replacement in 2014 was completed with a combination of Conservation Fund dollars and a portion within the building maintenance operating budget request. Requests for future projects will be submitted in the town's CIP process and operating budget process.