

**Historic Preservation Commission Meeting  
Lewis House, 277 Main Street, Norwich, Vermont**

**Minutes of the February 27, 2013 Meeting**

Attending: Bill Aldrich, Roger Blake, Peter Brink, Phil Dechert (CLG Coordinator), Cheryl Herrmann, Nancy Hoggson, and Nancy Osgood. Also attending: Judy Brown, Director of the Norwich Historical Society.

Absent: Anne Silberfarb (Planning Commission Liaison) and Stuart White.

Nancy Hoggson, chair, called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

The purpose of the meeting was to refine the ideas proposed at the Historic Preservation Commission meeting of February 13, 2013, in preparation for the Commission applying for a Certified Local Government Grant to tell the story of farming then and now in Norwich. Such a story would include changes to the rural landscape that have happened over the decades including how some former farm land has been transformed from farming to recreational purposes. The goal is for the community to have a heightened appreciation of farming and its history in Norwich. Oral histories, video tapes, photographs, historic records, and an exhibit of some farm tools would help illustrate this history.

With the above goal in mind the following was mentioned and/or discussed:

- Nancy Hoggson shared an email from Chad Finer who wrote of people who could be interviewed and/or helpful in the interviewing and videotaping process. Nancy has this email.
- Nancy Hoggson has been in touch with Greg Sharrow, Co-Director and Director of Education and the Vermont Folklife Center and has asked him to submit a two-part proposal to the Commission outlining how the Vermont Folklife Center might help us with this project – most specifically in doing the interviewing and helping to curate an exhibit. From what we know so far, the Vermont Folklife Center charges \$500 for each interview they do. The fee also includes a transcription of the interview. The material would be archived at the Vermont Folklife Center, and if we were to join forces on this project, the exhibit which would result could possibly travel to the Folklife Center. This would obviously extend the breadth of the audience reached. Snippets of the oral histories collected could be accessed by some kind of an audio device associated with the exhibit.
- The Folklife Center does not make video tapes.
- There was general enthusiasm for a video tape being made which could/would incorporate oral history, images of the farm and its buildings, close-ups of historic photographs, farm implements, etc. There was general talk about asking Chad Finer and Richard Neugrass to do this and also there was the thought of approaching CATV. Nancy Hoggson spoke of the success of the video that documented the history of the Carter factory that is now AVA Gallery.
- Some of the barns in Norwich appear in the Vermont Barn Census, a project of the University of Vermont and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. The result of the inventory that was made in Norwich appears at the following:  
[www.uvm.edu/~hp206/2009/Norwichrevise.htm](http://www.uvm.edu/~hp206/2009/Norwichrevise.htm). Further participating in this project and also using some of the material gathered are possibilities. We could combine this and the analysis of

other barn structures with the stories of the farmers, farm hands, farm animals, and agricultural products, thus illustrating how the farm operated.

- With such a broad subject – everything from 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> century farms, farmers' markets, CSA's, etc. – it might be very wise to tackle this subject in phases. Begin, as Greg Sharrow pointed out, with the present by interviewing those who are farming now or have memories of earlier farms and farmers.
- Grant application date not yet been set. It probably is the end of March or early April.
- To help support this project financially could have a donation box in full view at the time of the exhibit and solicit sponsorships.
- We discussed whether it would be wise to have a fellow resident of Norwich participate in a potential Vermont Folklife Center interview with the idea that it might raise the comfort level of the main interviewee. It was decided that we would follow Greg's lead on this.
- CLG grants have ranged from \$10,000 - \$20,000, depending on the project. The thought is that we would request a grant at a fairly high level knowing that it could well be reduced.
- There was general support for including farm workers beyond farm owners and family in the project. If we can find some workers, this would further convey a fuller picture of the workings of farms and further address the Vermont Division's special attention to underserved constituencies in the 2013 CLG grants.

#### Conclusion:

Nancy Hoggson will take a stab at putting together a grant proposal incorporating some of the ideas above to support our goal of documenting how farming has evolved in Norwich and how and why these changes have occurred. She will circulate this proposal to all committee members ideally within the week. There was some thought about including in the grant proposal a request for \$300 to fund the distribution of the Commission's very successful walking tour. It was decided not to have this request as part of the application so that the waters are not muddied. Monies for the distribution will be sought elsewhere.

Nancy Hoggson adjourned the meeting at 10:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Osgood