



**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**Brookfield Conservation Commission**  
**Brookfield Town Hall Room 119**  
**January 8, 2014**  
**7:00 PM**

**I. CALL TO ORDER** – A. Dew called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, and established a quorum of members:

**Present:** A. Dew, Chair; S. Landis, Secretary/Treasurer; M. Dew; M. Carmody

**Absent:** R. Blessey, Vice Chair; M. Murphy

**Also Present:** Kevin Archer; Jacqueline Salame; Emily Cole Prescott, Recording Secretary

**II. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (12/04/13)** – **M. Dew made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. A. Dew seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.**

The Commission reviewed a trail map for the Eriksen Farm and Happy Landings properties.

*The Commission moved to discussion of the Gurski Homestead.*

**VI. CURRENT PROJECT REPORTS:**

**Gurski Homestead:** A. Dew noted that twice now the water has come up to the electrical panel in the basement of the house and it has severely damaged the electrical system there. Kevin Archer noted that the foundation had been re-pointed to 3'6" below grade years ago. The new window wells were put in, and the foundation was put in. The footing drains were 3'6" and the footing drains were connected all around the house. The contractor was Steven Ricard. Mr. Archer explained that the footing drains could not go lower because of the height of the pipe to the catch basin. There was an upgrade to a sump pump done at the time, and the slab was raised about a foot with gravel. The sump pump goes out the wall to the silt plate and out the catch basin, which runs out to the brook. Kevin Archer stated that there is still water in the basement when he looked at it the other day. Mr. Archer stated that there had always been an issue with the electrical functioning of the system. He had Hantsch upgrade the electrical panel, but he is not sure about the connection for the electrical on the outside of the house, as it was never checked. He thinks that the issue is that the pump is not working properly. Mr. Archer also noted that the electricity needs to be checked, and the drain should be snaked going back to the brook. A. Dew and M. Dew noted that it had been checked. M. Dew asked about the depth, and Kevin Archer stated that he had asked the town to lower everything when the other foundation and drainage work had been done, but it could not be afforded at that time. Mr. Archer stated that the entire system would need to be lowered in order to lower the footing drains.

*J. Bronn entered the meeting room at 7:10 PM.*

Jacquie Salame stated that the catch basin had not been changed at the time of the work. Kevin Archer stated that the pump has a lifetime warranty. A. Dew noted that the only way to keep water out of the basement is to bring the footing drains and the catch basin down. J. Salame stated that the whole system needs to be lowered. Kevin Archer stated that the whole basement had been dug out. J. Salame stated that there was a foundation wall collapse; the whole stair needed to be redone at the time. A. Dew noted that there is a pond-like area on site that she believes Parks and Recreation has dredged in the past. Kevin Archer stated that when the work had been done, the basement was dry. J. Salame stated that the furnace probably should be hung or elevated in some manner off the floor in the future. J. Salame stated that there had never been water in the basement previously. M. Dew stated that the electrical system should be checked. He suggested the possibility of moving the utility panel to an upstairs location. J. Salame noted that some of the repairs were not done in a permanent way because at the time the Committee had hoped for the possibility of more money to properly restore the buildings. A. Dew thanked J. Salame and Kevin Archer for the information. Kevin Archer noted that the main purpose then was to get a foundation under the house where there was none and to repair some of the foundation.

Kevin Archer stated that the worst problem was that there was no plan as to what this property was to become. J. Salame stated that the Committee had advocated to have a plan done for the property. M. Carmody stated that the land would be a great piece of land for a park. A. Dew stated that the purpose of the grant for the engineering review (discussed last month) is to determine what is salvageable on the property. M. Dew stated that the question is what is the State going to require the Commission to keep. M. Dew stated that he is unsure if everything would have to be built exactly as it was. A. Dew stated that she will review the current easement information. K. Archer noted that the Committee had applied for a grant that was not awarded to rebuild the main barn. M. Dew asked if there had ever been any kind of loft level prior to doing the roof work. K. Archer and J. Salame stated that there had never been another level. K. Archer stated that the timbers and part of the framework was timbers to hold the hay at the top. J. Salame stated that there was a lot of hay up there. M. Dew asked K. Archer if this looked structurally odd, and he responded that it looked like a common barn. M. Dew noted that P. Conlon (the engineer conducting the structural engineering review) had mentioned that the walls were a bit unstable because there is not a loft there. Whatever framing was up there is still up there now, but J. Salame noted that the back (east) side was mostly replaced. The hay was removed because it was trapping water in the building. K. Archer noted that he had never seen anything in regard to the barn that would indicate that there had been a loft at the barn. J. Salame stated that she and K. Archer both have many photos, if the Conservation Commission would like to see them.

**IV. CORRESPONDENCE:** A. Dew noted receipt of the Forest & Park Walk CT brochure. A. Dew stated that the Commission started at the Library and moved to Williams Park for the Nature Walk held last June.

A. Dew stated that she has also received a request from Bill Leverage for the budget information for Gurski and the Conservation Commission. S. Landis stated that she would like to have walking trails to connect all of the systems.

**V. TREASURER'S REPORT:** S. Landis reported the remaining amount in the budget.

**VI. CURRENT PROJECT REPORTS:**

- **Nature Center** – S. Landis stated that the priority for this property is the house rental. A. Dew stated that she has spoken with Chris Rabuse, who knows someone who is willing to move in for the price that the current tenant was paying for six months. A. Dew mentioned that she will speak with the Town Attorney regarding this matter. M. Carmody asked about the necessity to fill the oil tank before the current tenant leaves. M. Carmody stated that this matter should be included in the lease. The current tenant will move out on January 31<sup>st</sup>. S. Landis stated that she has spoken with Betsy Birdsall, whose daughter would like to be on the agenda for the March meeting to discuss a Girl Scout presentation for this property.
- **Happy Landings** – J. Bronn stated that he has not been on the field to see if the hay bales have been moved. A. Dew stated that the hay had been moved from the wetlands, but it was clumped together and left during the snow. A. Dew stated that F. Lollie had cleaned out the kiosk and all of the Plexiglas there. A. Dew stated that F. Lollie is also putting together some trail brochures. A. Dew stated that the Commission would like to think about what they would like to do next time with the trail guides.
- **Burr Farm** – M. Carmody stated that she was looking at the cistern, and asked M. Dew about what could be done in the Spring.
- **Burr Farm** – M. Carmody stated that she would like a couple of signs toward the back of the farm to help define the history of the trails.
- **Williams Park** – M. Dew stated that there are still hanging trees and limbs over trails. A. Dew noted that some of the money in the Gurski Homestead budget may be used to remove some of these dead trees on trails. J. Bronn stated that the two benches at the top of the field are in disrepair. M. Dew asked if someone from the Commission could fix the bench. M. Dew stated that he will look at the bench when he is there.
- **18 Junction Road** – S. Landis stated that there is no report.
- **Gurski Homestead** – This item discussed earlier. A. Dew stated that she has received the report from Conlon Engineering, which she has emailed to the Commissioners.
- **Eriksen Farm** – A. Dew stated that the property has passed the test according to the Housing Authority, which is going to test the water today.
- **Deer Management** – M. Dew stated that there are no reports.

**VII. OLD BUSINESS:**

**Open Space Opportunity** – A. Dew stated that this property is currently being appraised. A. Dew stated that she would like to wait to see what the appraisal value is.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

**Nomination and Election of Officers for 2014 Calendar Year** – J. Bronn asked that this item be tabled to the next meeting. The Commission agreed to table this item until February.

**Informal Discussion:** J. Bronn stated that he had the opportunity to go to Old Bridge sanctuary, and he remembered that there is no one that is looking after that property. A. Dew asked J. Bronn if he would like to look after this property. A. Dew stated that S. Landis, M. Dew and A. Dew had installed a sign, but since the installation, it has been taken.

**9. ADJOURN – M. Dew made a motion to adjourn at 8:23 PM. A. Dew seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.**