

## **2023 Annual Report: Stewardship Committee**

### **Hidden Acres, 42 Thornell Rd, Newton, NH**

In 2004, the Town of Newton was fortunate in acquiring a Conservation and Preservation Easement to protect Hidden Acres Farm from future development, and to conserve, preserve and maintain the unique characteristics of Hidden Acres Farm. This was the first easement (of this kind) to be created in the State of New Hampshire. The hope is to keep the property in its present scenic and open space condition, which taken as a whole, has scenic, agricultural, architectural, and historical significance. This Easement also allows for access to the 6-acre, town-owned parcel that abuts Hidden Acres Farm to the southwest, known as the Guscora Property. Our mission is to preserve The Farmstead Area for single-family residential uses as described by the Newton zoning ordinance as of the date of this Easement, for Residential A Zones, consistent with its preservation values as described and defined in the Farmstead Area Baseline Documentation prepared by Elizabeth Durfee-Hengen for the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, dated September 2002, copies of which are on file with the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, Concord, NH.

The Stewardship Committee collaborates closely with the homeowner to maintain the Conservation Easement. Multiple site-walks have been conducted throughout the year, by the committee and landowner and LCHIP. Annual reports are submitted to the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (referred to as LCHIP).

Unfortunately, the landowner lost her husband this year, very sudden & unexpected. She is working extremely hard to keep the farm going as he would have wanted, as well as keeping it in compliance with the State LCHIP program. She completed a lot this year, including: a good portion of the large barn has been painted; the pond on the property has fish in it; Newton residents have put a community garden on her property; a Newton resident has assisted her in getting the wood-milling equipment working again; Residents are enjoying the trail on her property that leads to the Guscora Property (located behind hers). Although she mowed the field with the help of her son and grandsons, the excessive rain prevented them from making any money on the hay. She stocked her farm stand with items to sell such as eggs, pumpkins, squash, tomatoes, and flowers.

The rest of the barn needs to be painted, the roof and soffit-vents need repair, and the Hidden Acres sign at the end of the driveway needs to be either repaired or replaced and then put back up. If you know of anyone that could help the Stewardship Committee and the homeowner, please reach out. People have thought about getting together to form a "Friends of Hidden Acres" group, to help her. Even if Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts could help us make a new Sign for her, that would be fabulous. Please contact us at [conservation@newtonnh.net](mailto:conservation@newtonnh.net).

The Committee Members are:

Trisha McCarthy-Chairperson, Mary Marshall-Vice Chairperson, Nancy Slombo, Mike Seekamp, Barbara DiBartolomeo, Ex-Officio Selectman Matt Burrill