

From: William Mullin [WMullin@wcu.com]  
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2013 1:27 PM  
To: Community Preservation Committee  
Cc: Morrison Committee; Board of Selectmen; John Earle  
(john@johnearlephoto.com); Tom Ryan (tryan@ryan-assoc.com); Tom  
Tidman; Roland Bartl; Catherine Fochtman  
Subject: FW: An idea  
Attachments: The John Earle Plan for Morrison.pdf; John Earle w Tom Ryan Review  
02.14.13.pdf

Hello CPC and MFC Members-

#### Background

- \* As you may know, we conducted an Organic Gardeners Focus Group a couple of weeks ago. We got a lot of input, and our landscape architect, Tom Ryan created some revised site plans, which were circulated at our last Morrison Farm Committee meeting on 2/7.
- \* John Earle, one of the gardeners took it upon himself to draft up his own scheme. The text of his e-mail message about this is below and his "idea" is attached.
- \* The bottom line is that I like John's ideas very much! While I do not see this plan as changing anything materially in our current plans, which is primarily a costing model, it would change overall emphasis, while adding to our list of elements.
- \* I especially like the formalization of the agricultural focus, which has always been of interest to us, but we did not have any "owner" of this aspect.
- \* I had some first concerns, mostly around ADA and emergency service access, but John and Tom have come up with something that I think works pretty well.
- \* Because of the extensive work of getting a farming/livestock operation going, I would see it that the "farm animal" component could be Phase II...it really could be done at any time after the MN&HCenter is ideally sited. So, this part of the plan would not be included for this year.
- \* Tom Ryan and John have spoken and Tom sketched out the attached siting plan, which appears to be ok with ADA and emergency access.

#### Suggested Action

- \* Because of Open Meeting Law constraints, these plans have not been presented to or reviewed by the Morrison Farm Committee. So, this e-mail is from me, not the committee.
- \* I suggest that I immediately schedule a Morrison Farm Committee meeting to discuss these and then report back to you, the CPC, about the suggested siting plans, and the increased agricultural focus.
- \* An additional emerging element is to detail more of the "green" and "sustainable" opportunities for the farm, the meadows, the gardens and the Morrison Nature & History Center.
- \* We could report back to you within 10 days or so with the feedback of the MFC.

In essence, I see this as the culmination of our process of getting feedback and processing it through to end up at the best result. It seems to me, that we are close to achieving that.

Thanks very much and I look forward to seeing you soon.

And, thank you to John Earle for his creative work!

Sincerely,

Bill Mullin  
Chair, Morrison Farm Committee

From John Earle:

Attached you will find a crude map of my idea. I realize some of the spatial possibilities may not exist (terrace). The key points are:

1. The community building sits on the existing footprint of the barn, and then extends at 90 degrees along the cemetery boundary line. This allows for some flexibility in terms of building mass, affords the best view of the landscape, allows for a terrace if space permits (covered or not) which extends and enhances the possibilities of the site. In this configuration the existing view from Concord Road does not change, thus appeasing the historical commission.
2. The parking lot drawn into the last illustration you showed us last Thursday remains, bermed on two sides to minimize the visual impact both to the road and the garden, while maintaining reasonable parking.
3. The existing parking area remains to service the building, the garden and meadows, and the farmhouse.
4. Overflow parking exists at Ice House Pond, the Concord Fields lot and, as a last resort, the cemetery land on the far side of the wall by the monument. This last part needs no development except mowing, so when and if the cemetery is expanded, that area is easily relinquished.
5. Please note the red line on the map. This marks the beginning of the "Farm". At that point the existing road is upgraded but remains dirt or gravel. The garden is retained as is, though for aesthetic reasons I recommend a new fence at least on the building side. Please note the retaining wall to the left at the beginning of the "farm" road that allows for leveling of the terrace area.
6. Now the big idea. Allowing for a buffer to the community building, may I suggest the introduction of livestock. There is an existing shelter in the ramshackle shed, to be rebuilt or at least serve as a footprint. I imagine a very simple scenario here. Sheep (2) on the building side (less odor, and a better visual) and chickens on the far side of the shelter. With the introduction of the animals you create a dimension to the site that respects and enhances the historical precedents, and also provides wonderful possibilities for youth involvement. In a word, the eggs are collected and either sold or donated, the wool is harvested, processed, and becomes material for all kinds of possible endeavors ... from knitting and spinning, to looming (word?) with product, again, to be sold or donated. The educational and service possibilities here are endless. And, yes, the manure is recycled in the garden.
7. Concurrent with this idea is organizing the garden as a resource for vegetables to be sold or donated. The Asian community already does this. There is an amazing amount of surplus in the gardens, especially squash, tomatoes, beans, and snow peas. Modeling on "Gaining Ground" in Concord, why not harvest the surplus for sale or philanthropic use. That pipeline might even encourage the planting of crops that could be shared. Again, a great possibility for youth involvement.
8. And who you might ask is going to manage all this? The person living in the farmhouse. I have been inside: it is a great and useable little house. For a negotiated rent subsidy, and perhaps a stipend of some sort, he/she/they could be in charge of animals, building maintenance, mowing, and other tasks to be defined. Think a manageable "Codman Farm". Far better than a vacant

building.

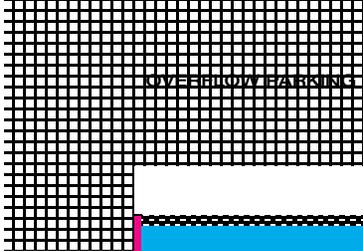
Conclusion: I believe that these ideas transform a passive and neutral solution to a dynamic and inclusive one. Rather than just a simple recreation area, this scenario creates a site that is historically relevant and serves as a model of civic pride and possibility., while retaining all the self sustaining revenue possibilities. The opportunity for youth to understand the sources and processes involved in sustaining a community are invaluable. In a word, everything you have imagined and so much more.

I would be interested in knowing your thoughts (as if you needed something else to think about).  
Thanks for listening.

John Earle

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Farmer

Barn

Terrace

Chickens and Sheep

sell eggs, process wool, wool products

Animal Shelter

Chickens or sheep



GARDEN with new aesthetic fence

Sell or Donate Vegetables  
Cross Cultural produce

