

Mendham Township Pitney Farm Property Update

It has been a busy few months on the Pitney Farm Property and we wanted to provide an update to the community on the current status of the Historic Park at Pitney Farm (7+ retained acres) and the 5+ acre parcel recently auctioned.

We have successfully closed with the winning bidder for the 5+ acres of developable land on the Pitney Estate, for which the Township received \$625,000. It is our expectation that the new owner will be making application to address the current structures on the property and we look forward to a more detailed application for future development.

The 7+ acre parcel retained by the Township, which is protected in perpetuity for passive recreation, has been named the Historic Park at Pitney Farm. Last year a Task Force was convened to put forward a conceptual plan for this space, which has been presented to the Township Committee and the community at large on multiple occasions. As a result of the conceptual plan, and under the leadership of past Mayor Diana Orban Brown, we have completed a grant application to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Program for a Stewardship grant in the amount of \$377,500 in matching funds towards a project goal of \$755,000. We will be making an additional grant application to the Morris County Trail Grant Program in an effort to secure additional funding for the Park. We expect to hear back from the State by mid- summer on the Green Acres Grant and the County Trail Grant by year-end.

Until we know what grant money is available for the Park Project, we are taking steps to prepare the property and improve the visual impact. As you have likely seen, our DPW department has been on the property addressing several issues related to old/dangerous trees and related structures. They have also graded the area, with near-term plans to temporarily seed and hay the exposed soil to stabilize the property while we await funding. There will also be an outside tree contractor on the property to address the last remaining hazardous trees, which are too large for our DPW department to address.

The brick wall of the Walled Garden and the Seed House and associated greenhouse knee wall, will remain on the property. We may be looking for

volunteers to help address the Seed House, as we would like to protect this structure and improve its visual impact as soon as possible. Keep an eye out for the call!

Although it will be some time before we can realize the full concept established by the Task Force for the Historic Park at Pitney Farm, our hope is to have an accessible passive use location by late spring/early summer of this year.

We look forward to providing future updates on the progress of the Pitney Farm Property and want to thank all of those that have contributed to bring us to where we are today!