

April 2, 2018

To: Tyringham Historical Commission

Thank you for meeting with us to review our request to demolish the 'old horse barn' (#4) on the map. After seeing the photos, we understand the reason behind the Commission's decision. It has been part of the Sunset Farm for many years.

Our house/barn inspector who examined the property when we purchased it, said that the barn is in bad shape and we should consider taking it down. In truth, I have been in barn #4 only once and left quickly because there is asbestos, peeling paint, and the building looked unstable inside and out. We just assumed it was going to be coming down in our effort to repair the 1891 barn, improve the landscape and revitalize the overall farmland.

We met with Wayne Wilkinson last Sunday and examined the structure more carefully in light of the Commission's decision. We went through all the structural issues with the barn. The floor to the 2nd story is sagging and it is likely many of the boards making up this floor are rotten. The floor itself has been 'reinforced' in a makeshift manner by placing multiple plywood and other lumber pieces on it, presumably to keep people stepping on the floor from going through. There is a substantial amount of asbestos tiling at one end, which would require an expensive hazardous waste removal operation to take out before any repairs could begin. The foundation is cracked. The roof is sagging badly despite numerous patchwork repairs (e.g., rafters reinforced with modern 2x4 lumber). On the north (Main Road) side, asphalt shingles have apparently been covered with a metal roof, but the very poor state of repair of the roof is evident from examining the shingles on the south side which was not covered with metal. The walls of the barn are sagging badly. In short, it would cost more to repair it than to rebuild.

It seems very likely that this barn is not safe for visitors and children to enter.

We have to be thoughtful about where we spend the money. Owning the farm, especially this farm, is very expensive. Our number one priority is the repair jobs that are necessary in the 1891 barn: complete the slate roof repair, rotted walls, many broken windows, broken front door, etc. We plan to repair these issues as soon as possible. We consider it as a responsibility of owning the property to keep the 1891 barn in as good condition as we can.

We respectfully request that the Commission reconsider and give us permission to tear down the barn #4. We will get a reputable structural engineer to evaluate the building if you feel that this is prudent next step.

Sincerely,

Liz and Fred Cross  
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