

Continuing Use Study for Campbell Farmhouse, 137 Kendall Pond Road, Windham, NH



Prepared by the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance
for the Windham Conservation Commission's Campbell Farm Committee
September 8, 2015



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1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

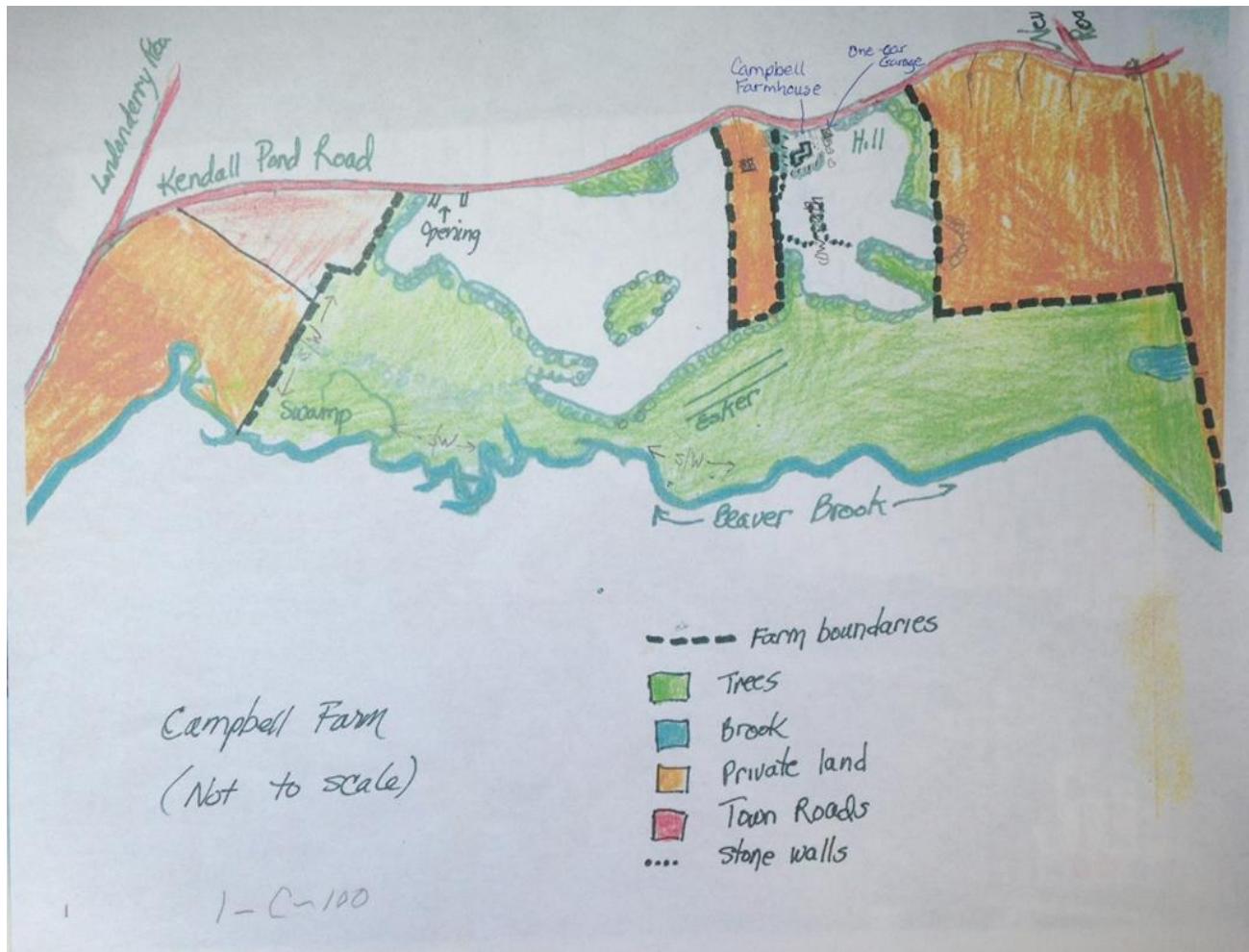
The Windham Conservation Commission proposed acquisition of a historic farm property, the 64-acre Campbell Farm, at town meeting in March, 2014. With voter approval, they acquired title to the property in July, 2014. Their goal was to protect the land and its history and provide for passive recreation within the fields and woodland and along the bordering stream. To decide what to do with the historic farmhouse, the Conservation Commission appointed a study group known as the Campbell Farm Committee. This group was charged with evaluating various ownership and preservation options for the house, and they sought the assistance of the NH Preservation Alliance. The Alliance created a team (list and qualifications in Appendix A) to assess alternatives and make recommendations; this report is the result of that contract.

The Campbell Farmhouse is located at 137 Kendall Pond Road in the northwest corner of the town of Windham, NH, a rural area of both historic and newer homes just a few miles from I-93 in the southern part of the state. The yellow house is two stories with a shallow pitched roof and L-shaped footprint with rear ell. The house was built in 1868, and is exceptionally well-documented by surviving journals of both the builder and several generations of family owners. One first-floor room has changed little from its original appearance: it is almost museum-like, with stenciled wall decoration, in-grain carpet, and even some original horsehair furniture.

The house retains a high degree of integrity in its location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, though it has lost its former (and original) front porch that extended from the projection at the southern end of the dwelling northerly across the remainder of the façade. The stone foundation of the porch remains. A two-story ell on the back of the house replaced an earlier woodshed in the 1990s, providing living space that includes a year-round sun-porch and 2nd floor master bedroom. In total there are 4 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms. The cellar is accessed by interior stairs and bulkhead; it is dry and characterized by a finely-worked granite foundation and piers and a brick bake oven. It would likely be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. (See Appendix B; Notes on the Campbell Farmhouse by James L. Garvin, January 24, 2015.)

A small garage stands near the end of the driveway, close to the winding country road. The land surrounding the house slopes down at the back and sides of the lot. Behind the building's back lawn is a drop-off of some 8 – 10 feet; here stands an impressive stone retaining wall and the massive cut- granite foundation of a former barn. The remaining land around the house is open fields that give way to forest cover near Beaver Brook, the stream that forms the entire back boundary of the farm.

A previous owner sold a 5-acre house lot next door where a modern house now stands.



Sketch Map of Property, 2015

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Property will be preserved and remain an asset within the community, continuing to represent an important family and time period of the town's historic past.
2. House will be used in a manner that positively contributes to the character of its neighborhood and surroundings.
3. House will be rehabilitated and occupied as soon as practicable.
4. Strategies should maximize the chances that the house continues to be well maintained, well stewarded, and well preserved.
5. Use of house must be compatible with the purposes and uses of the surrounding conservation land.
6. The structure will be preserved and maintained insofar as possible in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties. (See Appendix C.)
7. Property outcome will not pose an undue financial burden on the town of Windham.
8. Property's operation and/or maintenance will not pose an undue burden on town staff or volunteers.



NH Preservation Alliance study team and Campbell Farm Committee members stand at top of stone wall behind house, overlooking former barn location, 2015.

3. CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

In determining preservation strategies for a historic property, it is important to first identify the features that define or contribute to the historic character of the property. Informed decisions can then be made about possible new uses for the property, taking into account preservation values and guidelines as well as factors such as available funding, labor and staffing, the availability and suitability of future owners or tenants, and external constraints such as zoning, taxes, and other regulations.

The design of this Italianate house is unusual, reflecting “both the wealth and intellectual curiosity of its builder, Deacon Samuel Campbell Sr. (1819-1902).” It is characterized by high-quality building materials, and innovative design and technology. While “the single detriment to the building’s integrity of design is the loss of the original front porch... the building should retain eligibility for listing in both the State and National Registers of Historic Places.” (see *Notes on the Campbell Farmhouse*, James L. Garvin, January 24, 2015, Appendix B.)



*Historic view of front Campbell Farm, showing front porch.
Date unknown.
From photograph hanging in first floor stair-hall 2015*

Given James Garvin's assessment and other factors, we recommend the following list and ranking of character-defining features of the building. This list can be used to help determine what should be maintained and what might be altered.

Highest priority to maintain:

- Basic form of the house including roof
- Setting and footprint of the house
- Major elements of floor plan
- Original exterior features of the house such as cornice and roof brackets and engaged corner pilasters
- Original window sash, casings, and glass
- Some interior features of the house, particularly on first floor
 - Interior front hall and staircase including front door and doorbell
 - Granite foundation
 - Doors and casings

Also very important to maintain:

- Landscape features including retaining walls and barn and porch foundations
- Lawns, adjacent fields, other stone walls and larger trees
- Original exterior materials of house
- Some interior materials and finishes, particularly in first floor rooms
- Kitchen chimney and what remains of parlor chimney

Areas where more flexibility/change is possible:

- Existing garage (new garage could be possible)
- Front porch may be rebuilt
- Ell floor plan and materials may be altered
- Kitchen and bathrooms may be changed
- Secondary staircase maybe changed

4. MARKET ANALYSIS

The 64-acre Campbell farm property is zoned “rural district,” which the town zoning ordinance defines as “intended for rural, residential, and non-commercial uses.”

(http://www.windhamnewhampshire.com/sites/default/files/PDF/Ordinances/Zoning/ORDZNG_ZoningOrdinance.pdf)

In this area, lots generally range from 2 to 4 acres. (See Windham Tax Map 5, Appendix D.) Minimum lot sizes are determined by soil type. Campbell Farm has a 1000-gallon septic system; a recent inspection found the tank to be in good condition but recommended a few modifications. (See Appendix E.)

The following table shows permitted uses and pros and cons of their suitability for Campbell Farm. These scenarios are based on the assumption that the property would be subdivided to create a smaller, separate lot of about 2 acres ± on which the house, driveway and garage would sit. The first 5 options will be discussed later and in more detail. The Campbell Farm Committee does not wish to consider the last 5 options.

Allowable Use	Pros	Cons	Comments
Single family house	Well-suited for this continued use--what it always has been.	Precludes regular public use although an occasional open-house might be possible.	Public access one or more days / yr might be part of an easement that becomes part of the house's ownership structure.
Agriculture	Some adjacent conservation land might be available for haying or grazing. Could provide additional income or educational potential.	Neighbors might have objections. Public access near house or as result of being on adjacent conservation land might pose conflicts.	Two acres of land could also support a small family farm or a few grazing animals.
Home Occupation (requires conditional use permit)	Well-suited without major renovation.	Neighbors might have objections but these should be minimal. Septic capacity may be an issue.	Would be allowable in conjunction with single-family residential use.
Accessory buildings and/or accessory apartments	Could furnish additional income.	Neighbors might have objections to multi-family use. Septic capacity may be an issue.	There was a large barn on the property; it could be rebuilt. House could also be divided into two or more apartments.

Office use and/or special events; non-profit and/or commercial	Might allow historic features and remaining furnishings to be preserved.	Might require additional modifications to floor plan. Traffic and parking needs would increase. Subsidy might be needed to operate and maintain the house.	Use by town boards or committees would be possible as well.
Day Care (up to 12 children)	Zoning would allow.	Likely presence of lead paint would make this use expensive. Neighbors might have objections.	Committee does not want to consider this option.
School	Zoning would allow.	Adapting house might be expensive. Neighbors might have objections.	Committee does not want to consider this option.
Church	Zoning would allow.	Adapting house might be expensive. Neighbors might have objections.	Committee does not want to consider this option.
Museum	Zoning would allow. Preserving house and social history would meet a key goal. Remaining historic features and furnishings could be preserved <i>in situ</i> .	Evidence of leadership for such a venture, as well as of sufficient public support and a sustainable income stream, seem to be lacking. Neighbors might have objections.	Committee does not want to consider this option.
9 hole golf/ pitch and putt/par 3 course	Zoning would allow. Surrounding land is there.	Not compatible with historic character of property or existing conservation goals. Neighbors might have objections.	Committee does not want to consider this option.

Other uses that have been suggested, such as multi-family residential (all rental apartments) or a Bed & Breakfast, are not permitted by zoning but could be implemented since the town is not required to follow its own zoning regulations on property it owns. However, both these options have drawbacks. Neighbors may object to a rental apartment building, and according to most experts, the house is too small for a commercially-viable Bed & Breakfast. Real estate consultants from Colliers International feel strongly that given Windham's market, residential use for this house is far more viable than any other.

They conclude that single family residential seems to offer the greatest opportunity for continued preservation and occupancy of this property, and is the easiest route for the town to effect a transition toward new ownership or stewardship.

5. COMPARABLE SALES

The Campbell Farmhouse is 3,128 square feet (sf) and in fair condition. According to analysis performed by team members from Colliers International (see Appendix F), in the last couple of years, the average sale/list price for other historic properties in Windham was \$296,600; the average square footage of these properties was 2,937. This yields an average per square foot value of \$100.98. Applying this value to Campbell Farm, the market value would be \$315,865.

However, since this property is in only fair condition, the market value would need to be adjusted. Newer homes, based on comparables, have recently performed more strongly in the market. Three properties have sold on Kendall Pond Road in the past two years. The average age of these was 25 years; the average price was \$449,667. The average size was 2,894 sf and the average lot size was 2.72 acres.

Using this data, if the Campbell Farm were to be sold “as is” on two acres, a fair estimate of value would be about \$300,000. The cost of needed improvements would affect the actual value to a greater or lesser degree.

If certain character-defining aspects of the property were protected with a preservation easement, this value might be further reduced. Development of the terms of the easement and a professional appraisal would be required before determining a new market price.



*Rear View of Campbell Farm,
2015.*

6. CONDITION AND RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

Based on walk-through inspections by James Garvin and Steve Bedard, as well as a home inspection performed by Steve Cauthen of *About the House NH, LLC* (Appendix G) the house appears to be in solid, useable condition. Most buyers today would want to see some upgrades. In the kitchen and bathrooms, where there is little historic material remaining and where most historic house buyers would expect to see updating, changes could easily be made. Other upgrades would improve cosmetic appearance, functionality, and energy efficiency. We recommend that all changes be done by a qualified preservation contractor who understands old houses and has experience in applying the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix C). As current owners, the Windham Conservation Commission could undertake some changes right away or might choose to specify them in the terms of an as-offered sale or lease agreement.

Below is a list of possible upgrades suggested by preservation contractor Steve Bedard of Bedard Preservation & Restoration in Gilmanton. His estimate of the minimum monetary investment to upgrade the house to typical contemporary standards for a historic house of this size and age is about \$150,000 - \$200,000.

- Upgrade kitchen.
- Upgrade both bathrooms.
- Rehabilitate all windows and add storm windows; replace windows in ell with compatible style.
- Upgrade or replace furnace and add heat on second floor; consider forced hot air rather than current forced hot water system to eliminate risk of leaks and water-damage.
- Implement septic recommendations.
- Inspect roof and repair if needed.
- Add insulation at the roof level; wall insulation is not recommended. (For more information on insulating historic buildings, see <http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/buildings/weatherization/insulation/#.Ve8wehFVhHw>)
- Optional: Reconstruct front porch using historic photographs and other evidence.
- Optional: Convert existing 1-car garage to 2-car garage.

If these changes were made by the Windham Conservation Commission before selling or leasing the property, it is likely that all or most of the costs could be recovered. However, experience has shown that construction projects that are developed and carried out by a committee often carry a higher-than-average risk of problems. In addition, using town funds to finance improvements, whether such funding is readily available or needs to be appropriated, might also add an unwanted layer of complexity.

7. PRESERVATION TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

There are several preservation tools and strategies—used alone or in combination—that could be utilized in the course of protecting the Campbell farmhouse and conveying it to a new owner or long-term steward.

a. Preservation Easement

In general, an *easement* is a voluntary legal agreement that conveys to a second party a partial interest or right in a property but does not convey ownership. A familiar example is a right-of-way in which a property owner gives a neighbor or a utility company the right to cross his or her property. Easements are legally enforceable agreements.

With *historic preservation easements*, the right that an owner gives to a second party is the right to protect and preserve the historic character of the property. The owner retains all of the usual rights to the property except the right to substantially alter or fail to maintain the historic and architectural features of the property. Each preservation easement is designed with the owner's/seller's wishes in mind and customized to protect the significant features of a historic property as well as any archeological potential that the site holds.

This strategy makes sense for Campbell Farm because it shifts decision-making about the future changes to the property to a higher level and provides a good system of checks and balances for the long term. In other words, it provides a means to assure that the house and its historic features will be preserved no matter who owns the house. The easement holder would be responsible for working with subsequent owners to assure compliance with the terms of the easement, provide referrals and information, and enforce any infractions. The NH Preservation Alliance and Historic New England both hold multiple preservation easements; the Windham Heritage Commission could also hold the easement. (For more on Preservation Easements, including a Sample, see Appendix H.)

b. Short Term Rental; Long Term Lease with Rehabilitation Requirements (Historic Curatorship)

A long-term lease or rental agreement, rather than a sale, is a strategy that makes sense if the Windham Conservation Commission wants to find someone else to maintain and rehabilitate the Campbell farmhouse but wants to retain long-term ownership of the property. A short term rental agreement would be advantageous to get someone living in the house immediately, and might be coupled with some short-term improvements to the property while a longer-term strategy is pursued.

Historic Curatorship programs have been established by many state parks systems and are spreading to historic site museums including Strawberry Banke in Portsmouth, NH. Such an arrangement addresses the deterioration of publicly-owned historic buildings through the mutual benefit of a public-private partnership, and keeps open the option of future use by the owner when and if their needs, financial resources, or other circumstances change.

Under such a program, the Windham Conservation Commission would partner with a qualified lessee or “curator” (a preservation carpenter or other skilled professional) who would provide the services of rehabilitating and maintaining the historic property in return for a long-term lease or rental contract, generally 25 to 30 years. The lease or rental price would be calculated to encourage a skilled tenant to offset their housing costs with an investment of skill and sweat equity.

If the decision is made to pursue a historic curatorship arrangement, a Request for Proposals (RFP) should be prepared that spells out the qualifications sought, work to be done, time frame, payment amounts and schedules, who provides oversight and review, and any penalties. Generally, work on curatorship properties requires adherence to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, and often such properties also carry a preservation easement. The tenant’s use must be compatible with the goals of the leasing organization and fit with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Residence requirements for such agreements may vary, though year-round residence provides the best assurance that the house will be looked after on a regular basis. Habitability is usually required within the first three to four years. Performance milestones and other terms are generally spelled out in the lease document.

Managing such a lease requires setting standards and benchmarks, overseeing progress, and handling difficulties as they arise. The current trend is for the owner to hire a qualified lease manager to handle logistical details including oversight of rehabilitation benchmarks. (For a sample historic curatorship lease, see Appendix I; a sample of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for such an arrangement may be furnished on request.)

c. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the State Register of Historic Places

Designation on the National Park Service’s national list of “historic resources worthy of preservation” adds honorary recognition for significant properties but typically does not constrain the owner in what he/she does with the house. Listing affords limited protections only in the case of a federal undertaking that may affect the property in the future (such as cell towers or power lines). Listing also offers benefits such as eligibility for federal tax credits for a major rehabilitation if the property is income-producing.

Some owners are able to claim a tax benefit by donating a preservation easement on a National-Register-listed property to a qualified non-profit organization. In this case, we recommend that an easement be placed on the house before it is sold to another owner, thus eliminating this option for subsequent owners.

A preservation consultant is typically hired to prepare a National Register nomination. It is then submitted for review to the state historic preservation office. Final determination for listing is made by the National Park Service.

Applying for listing to the State Register of Historic Places is simpler; generally a local volunteer historian or researcher can prepare the form. Designation is strictly honorary, though being eligible or listed to the State Register does open the door for non-profits or municipal entities to several preservation funding sources.

Ideally, the Campbell Farm project would work with the NH Division of Historical Resources to submit a nomination for either the National Register or State Register to obtain recognition for this significant site, its architecture and local history as well as its archeological potential. Both National Register and NH State Register of Historic Places listing may also offer relief from certain building and energy codes and, at times, access to certain preservation promotion, planning and funding programs. For more information, see <http://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/programs/>

d. RSA 79-E Community Revitalization Tax Relief is a temporary tax relief incentive for a property in private ownership where the owner wishes to substantially rehabilitate a historic building that is located in a village center or downtown, or that is located anywhere in a community if it also qualifies for either the State or National Register of Historic Places and where the building's substantial rehabilitation (greater than \$75,000 or 10% of the structure's assessed valuation, whichever is less) would conserve the embodied energy in the structure. The Town of Windham would have to adopt the provisions of this law at town meeting, but once adopted, there could be considerable benefit not only to a future owner of the Campbell Farmhouse but also to owners of other historic properties in town.

As long as the Conservation Commission owns the property, however, benefits under this mechanism would not be available since there would be no tax liability

(See the two flow charts describing how RSA 79-E works in Appendix J.)

e. Continued Town Ownership or Non-Profit Ownership

The Conservation Commission also has the option of deciding to retain ownership of the Campbell Farmhouse, with or without subdivision of the property. With full control over the house and surrounding acreage, they would gain flexibility for both outdoor and indoor programming, offices and meeting rooms, storage, new construction, and perhaps even limited residential use for program or town staff.

For this option to be viable there would have to be demonstrated desire or need for additional space and funding to support that use. A town-wide survey, conversations with other town departments, and/or a series of public forums might help to establish interest in this course of action. Because any change of use triggers a requirement to meet current building and life safety codes, however, the house might need to be adapted for new uses.

The Conservation Commission might also want to consider lease or sale of the house to an existing or newly-created non-profit that would operate it for public benefit. Some space might even be shared with the town. Possible uses might include museum exhibits, classrooms, meeting space, and storage.

Whether owned by the town or a non-profit, one major downside of such educational uses would be that the building might not be occupied on nights and weekends, putting it at greater risk for vandalism, arson, etc. Another caveat is the trend at traditional history museums and historical societies of declining visitation, reduced budgets, and a growing inability for the institution to maintain its historic buildings.

A living history farm, environmental education center, or similar use has also been suggested. A careful examination of costs to operate such an attraction would be essential, as would projections about sources of income and possible endowment funds, as well as the relationship of the center to the Campbell Farm's 64 acres. The Beaver Brook Association in Hollis (www.beaverbrook.org) is located in a historic house and barn adjacent to a 2000-acre forested property with trails, and it appears to enjoy strong local support. Other properties such as the Remick Country Doctor Museum in Tamworth, Musterfield Farm in Sutton, or the New Hampshire Farm Museum in Milton all occupy historic buildings. Visits and conversations with their management could provide more information for decision making.

Considerations for non-profit use include the house's rural residential location, the costs of rehabilitating and maintaining a historic structure and how to provide the necessary infrastructure. Where would parking be located? Could septic capacity be expanded? What assurances would there be that the non-profit would devote adequate resources to the house's maintenance and preservation? Is there a market and sufficient audience for such programming? With non-profit use and typical tight budgets, an overall long-term

commitment to stewardship of the historic building may be difficult to achieve, especially if such a requirement comes into conflict with the organization's philanthropic mission.

Moreover, when the town voted to borrow money to acquire this farm (the amortization schedule for the bond payments due for Campbell Farm is included in Appendix K), the Conservation Commission indicated that the land would be used for passive recreation.

The NH Preservation Alliance recommends against pursuing a non-profit or educational option at this time due to its low probability of success in meeting the guiding principles and overall objectives. There are too many inherent risks in this strategy, but if further investigation is desired, we would suggest a thorough process of public involvement, audience analysis, and land-planning, as well as solid projections for on-going income.

To support the stated purpose of acquiring this land for conservation and demonstrating good stewardship practices, we would encourage the Conservation Commission to prepare a land management plan that would address questions of land use including agriculture, wildlife habitat, timber and forestry activities, and haying of the fields. Determining allowable recreation use (hiking, motorized vehicles, horses, snowmobiles) and mapping out possible trails might also inform decisions about the house. The NH Bureau of Trails at DRED would be one place to seek assistance in this process.



Historic view of Campbell Farm, showing barn and connecting high-drive from back yard retaining wall of the house.

Date unknown.

From photograph hanging in first floor stair-hall, 2015.

8. MATRIX FOR DECISION-MAKING ABOUT STEWARDSHIP STRATEGIES

The following chart summarizes, in order of preference, possible next steps and considerations of each.

Stewardship Strategies					
	Impact on marketability/ viability. Asset or Constraint	What it Takes to Execute	Schedule considerations	Level of Preservation Protection	Notes
Subdivision	Create separate lot for house. Sales potential as residence will be enhanced with capacity for small-scale agricultural or equine use. Certain commercial uses possible but may require variance.	Survey and legal costs	minimal	none	
Short Term Rental	Might allow time and/or funding for some important improvements/ upgrades and to develop other strategies	Finding right tenant is key-- town employee might be ideal	Minimal, short-term or interim strategy	Occupancy of house better than vacancy	
Preservation Easement with sale (perpetual or term)	Medium constraint. Easement terms must consider impact on flexibility/future use. Typically narrows market somewhat but does not necessarily affect price.	Baseline documentation by preservation consultant, plus survey, legal costs and stewardship fund. \$30,000 - \$50,000 est.	Develop and execute before marketing the property to be clear about expectations and minimize obstacles in transaction.	Very high	Third party easement holder develops documents in conjunction w/ owner/grantee and consultants.
Historic Curatorship/ Lease	Provides long-term control of property while someone other than owner invests in rehabilitation. Assures high preservation standards and returns rehabbed house to owner's control at end of lease. Constraint in finding qualified lessee and overseeing process	Baseline documentation, condition assessment, and rehab plans needed before executing lease. Management fee during term of lease.	Identify lessee, then develop and execute lease in cooperation	Very High	Requires careful oversight and management throughout process.

Continued town ownership/other non-profit use	Would provide flexibility for town use of property, linking with conservation land, and potential for limited income production. Constraint is that non-profit is responsible for everything.	Variable Operating and maintenance costs plus any improvements.	Should be implemented only after careful study, evaluation, and public process	Moderate; voters may decide to choose a different path for property at some future date.	Other non-profits could be brought in as partners for shared office space, educational programming, or function rentals.
National Register or State Register listing	No constraint; recognizes historic importance. May afford benefits in some instances such as protection from federal undertakings or local tax relief.	Research and report preparation. Cost varies depending on complexity of structure. Savings likely if done in conjunction with easement documentation	Future owner may be eligible for federal tax benefits for donating an easement if one has not already been put in place.	Moderate. May be useful if property will be income-producing and federal rehab tax credits are sought.	National Register requires preservation consultant to prepare; State Register process can be done by volunteers.
RSA 79-E Tax Incentive	No property tax increases due to structure's rehabilitation for up to 5 years, plus 4 more years if structure is historically important; extensions for affordable housing and new housing units may also be granted.	Application preparation.	RSA 79-E would have to be adopted at town meeting, after which any applicants could request tax relief.		Could provide tax savings to many other historic properties in town as well as this one.
Commercial use of additional land within the conserved parcel	Farmers Markets Community gardens Agricultural lease Livestock	Land Management Plan should be prepared and adopted before any commercial uses are tried.		varies	Voters were promised "passive recreational use" so might have to OK any changes

9. SELLING and MARKETING STRATEGIES

If the Windham Conservation Commission decides to put the house up for sale, a surveyor should first be engaged to begin the process of sub-dividing the property to create a separate lot for the house. Approval will be needed from the town's Planning board if the town is required to follow its own procedures. Concurrently, the process of developing a preservation easement to protect the character-defining features of the house should be initiated. Once a separate lot has been created, and draft decisions reached about what would be included in a preservation easement, the house can be marketed.

Selling a historic house requires the services of an experience real estate agent who understands to value of original features and speaks the same language as buyers in search of an antique home. In addition, considerations and recommendations include:

- Having a draft of the preservation easement to share with potential buyers
- Assurance that a broker is willing to accept the constraints of the agreed-upon easement and/or stewardship strategies.
- A commitment to keeping up high standards of exterior and interior maintenance during the marketing period and/or investing in upgrades before marketing
- Communicating, as appropriate, with neighbors and other stakeholders to keep them informed of the plans for property.
- Obtaining feedback from prospective buyers after marketing begins and adjusting plans accordingly.



Corner of front façade (note row of stones denoting former porch foundation), mature tree, and new house next door on former Campbell farm land that was subdivided and sold by previous owners.

10. AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY AND NEXT STEPS

The New Hampshire Preservation Alliance submits this report to provide additional information and suggested strategies for the Campbell Farm Committee to consider in determining the future of this important property.

We suggest that, after reading and discussing the report, the Committee begins to develop consensus around strategies that have been suggested, keeping in mind the guiding principles, cost considerations, and other factors and constraints. One of the first things to determine might be the minimum or desirable level of improvements and new investment needed to make the house habitable, or to decide to leave all future upgrades to a new tenant or future owner.

We have seen good results from approaches that employ an incremental process of testing re-use strategies. To maintain the greatest flexibility, a short term rental arrangement might be tried first. Or the decision could be made to keep the house vacant, as is, for a certain period of time, although a vacant house, especially over the winter, should be avoided if possible.

Either course would allow time to begin the process of subdivision and of developing a preservation easement, and perhaps even addressing some high-priority maintenance issues or upgrades. A historic curatorship might be tried, with a Request for Proposals being developed and a certain window kept open for responses, interviews, and negotiation. If that process does not come to fruition within a specified time period—perhaps 2 years—then the next option could be tried. Selling the property with an easement in place might be a longer-term option; while it allows little long-term flexibility it does offer strong assurance that the house will be protected and maintained.

Should there be a compelling reason to explore non-profit or town use, time should be set aside within the schedule for an exploratory period that might include a feasibility study to gauge public support, projections of estimated revenues and expenses, and discussions with potential partners or users.

The New Hampshire Preservation Alliance welcomes further consultation and discussion.