

# South Windsor Agriculture, Arts & Nature Center

## Intro – The Priest Farm

- Consists of 75 acres on Sullivan Ave,
- Adjacent to 14 acres near Pierce Rd (Knights of Columbus)
- Adjacent to 19 acres owned by the South Windsor Land Trust
- The original farm dates to 1823 and remained in the same family until the Town Of South Windsor purchased the property in 1998 (in partnership with the Trust for Public Land) --Utilizing Open Space Bond Funds
- The Town currently leases the farmland to a local farmer



# Priest Farm Planning Team

- Saud M. Anwar
  - Patricia Botteron
  - John Caldwell
  - Thomas Delnicki
  - Stephanie Dexter
  - Mary Etter
  - Raymond Favreau
  - Jeffery Folger (Co-Chair)
  - Katie Graham
  - Sandy Jeski
  - Michele Lipe
  - Virginia Macro
  - John Mitchell
  - Andrew Paterna (Co-Chair)
  - Elizabeth Pendleton
  - Charles (Tim) Shepard
  - Janice Snyder
  - Elizabeth Warren
- Official Town Recorder: Deborah Reid
- Town Council  
Open Space Task Force  
Parks & Recreation Dept  
Town Council  
Planning & Zoning Commission  
Library  
Parks & Recreation Dept  
Planning Dept  
Park & Recreation Commission  
Agricultural Land Preservation Adv Comm  
Planning Dept  
Historic District Commission  
SW Rotary Club  
SW FOOD Alliance  
Town Council  
SW Land Trust  
Town Council  
Inlands-Wetlands/Conservation Commission



# Priest Farm Aerial View



Photo by: Alan Witkin

# South Windsor Agriculture, Arts & Nature Center

- As the only publicly owned remnant of a working farm, the site will serve to help preserve the key elements of the cultural landscape of the town's history
- Funding for this Feasibility Study was supported by a \$24,000 grant awarded by the State Office for Historic Preservation, and by a \$4,000 grant awarded by the South Windsor Community Foundation





# Priest Farm Aerial View



Photo by: Alan Witkin



# South Windsor Agriculture, Arts & Nature Center

## Physical Features:

- While the original farmhouse has important historical significance, one of the most outstanding features of the farm is a CEMENT SILO located directly behind the farmhouse





# Cement Silo @ Priest Farm

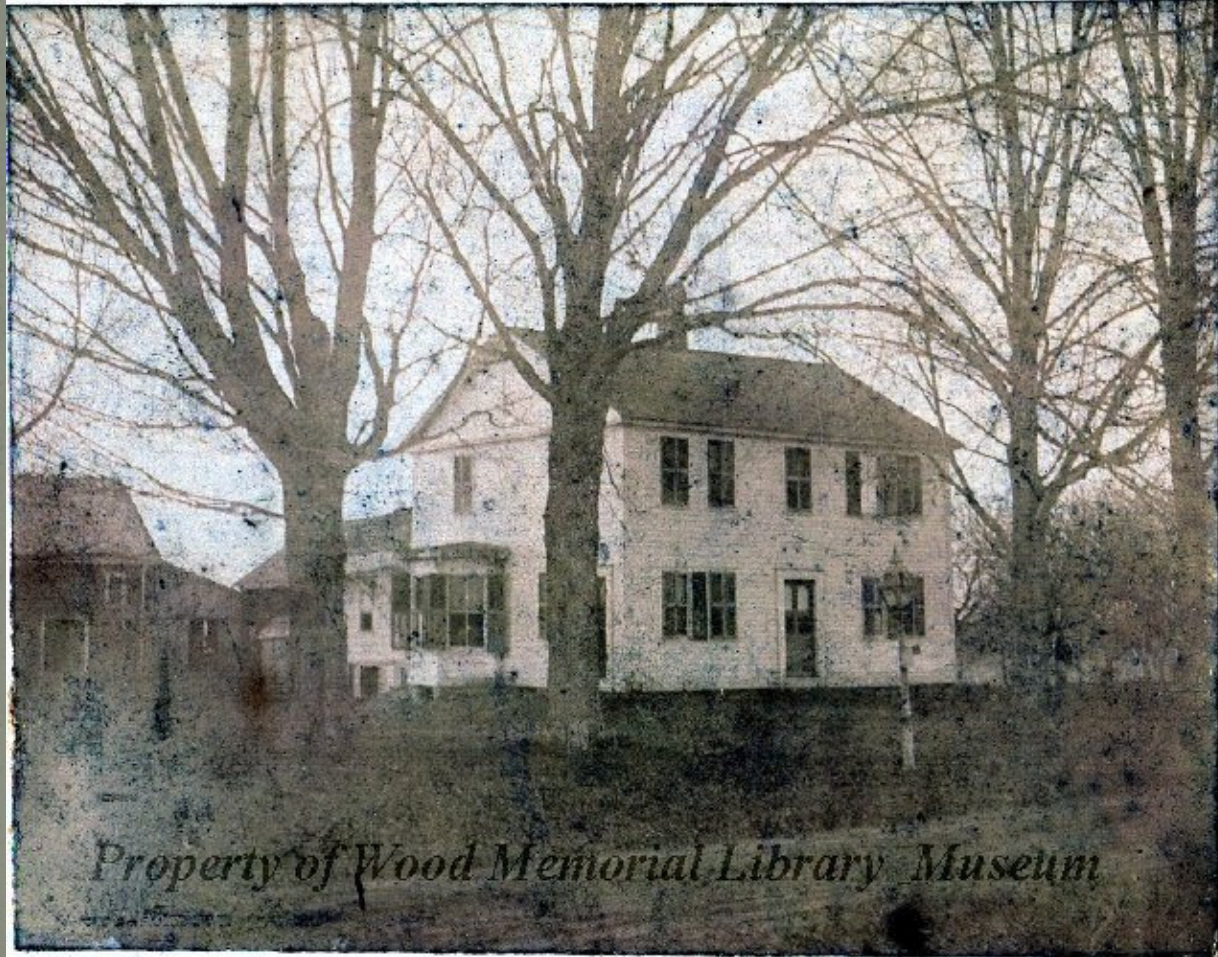


# South Windsor Agriculture, Arts & Nature Center (Priest Farm)

- Referenced--Town Plan of Conservation and Development
- Identified as a 'valuable asset' and 'value to the town' by:
  - South Windsor Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Commission
  - Open Space Task Force
- Potential for developing Community Gardens at this site
- Potential future home for the South Windsor Farmers Market
- The South Windsor Town Council supported this project and approved a resolution creating this Planning Committee



# The Farmhouse -- built in 1823





2023 will be the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary





# The Farmhouse – present day-side view





# The Farmhouse—Present Day





# Priest Farmhouse—present day





# Priest Farmhouse—present day





# Priest Farm—present day



## Town Council Resolution — Approved June 2015

Created a bipartisan committee for planning--the South Windsor Agricultural, Arts and Nature Center on the Priest Farm

- The purpose of the committee is to help create a project celebrating the farm heritage of South Windsor
- The farm can become a source of education
- The farm can create access to a beautiful open space near the center of town

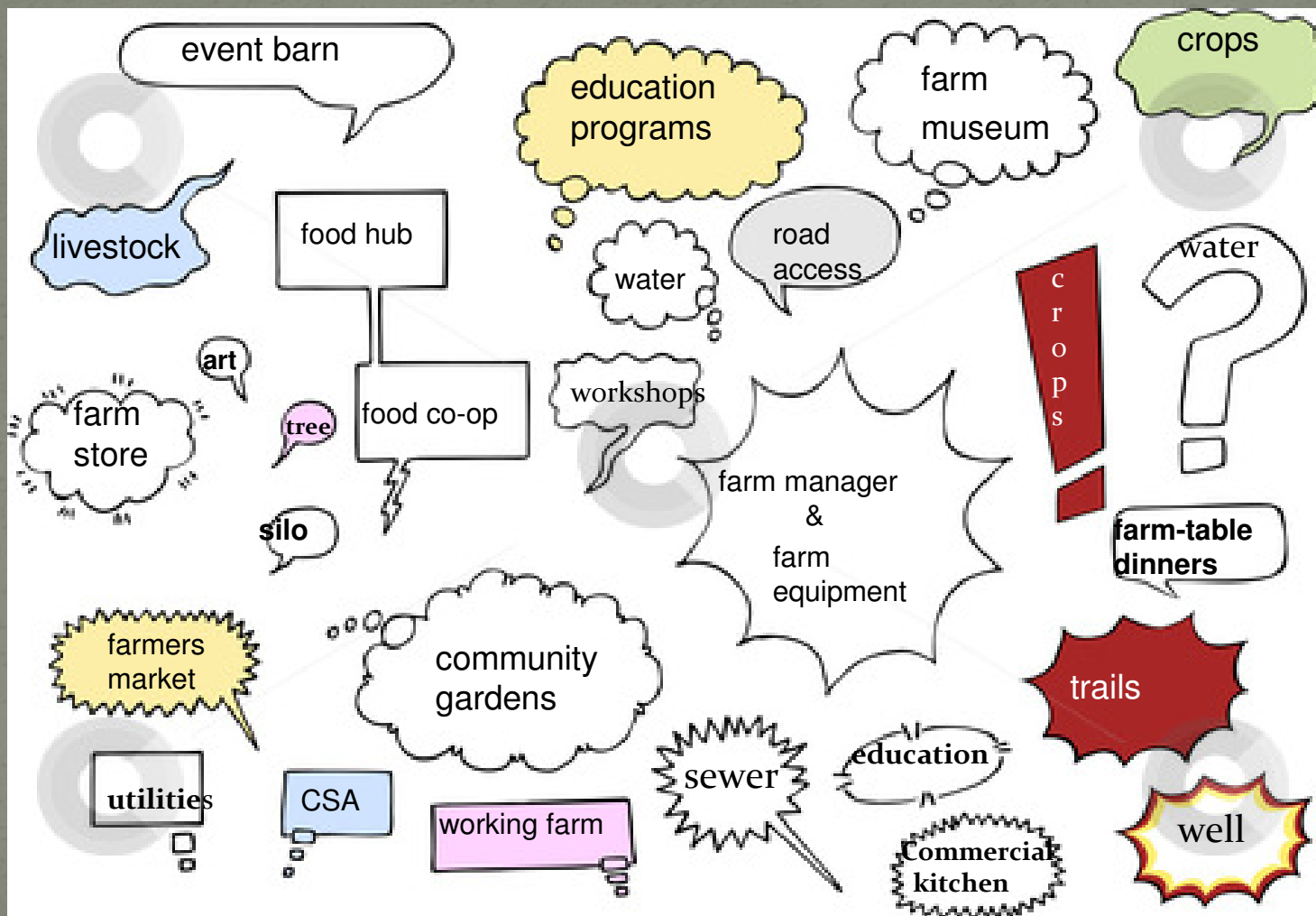


# South Windsor Agriculture, Arts & Nature Center

## Our Process:

- Monthly meetings have been held since June 2014
- We conducted visits to 5 Community Farms in CT
- We received grant funding for the initial feasibility study
- We Accepted the consulting team's final report

# Monthly Meetings: ideas, discussions...





# South Windsor Agriculture, Arts & Nature Center

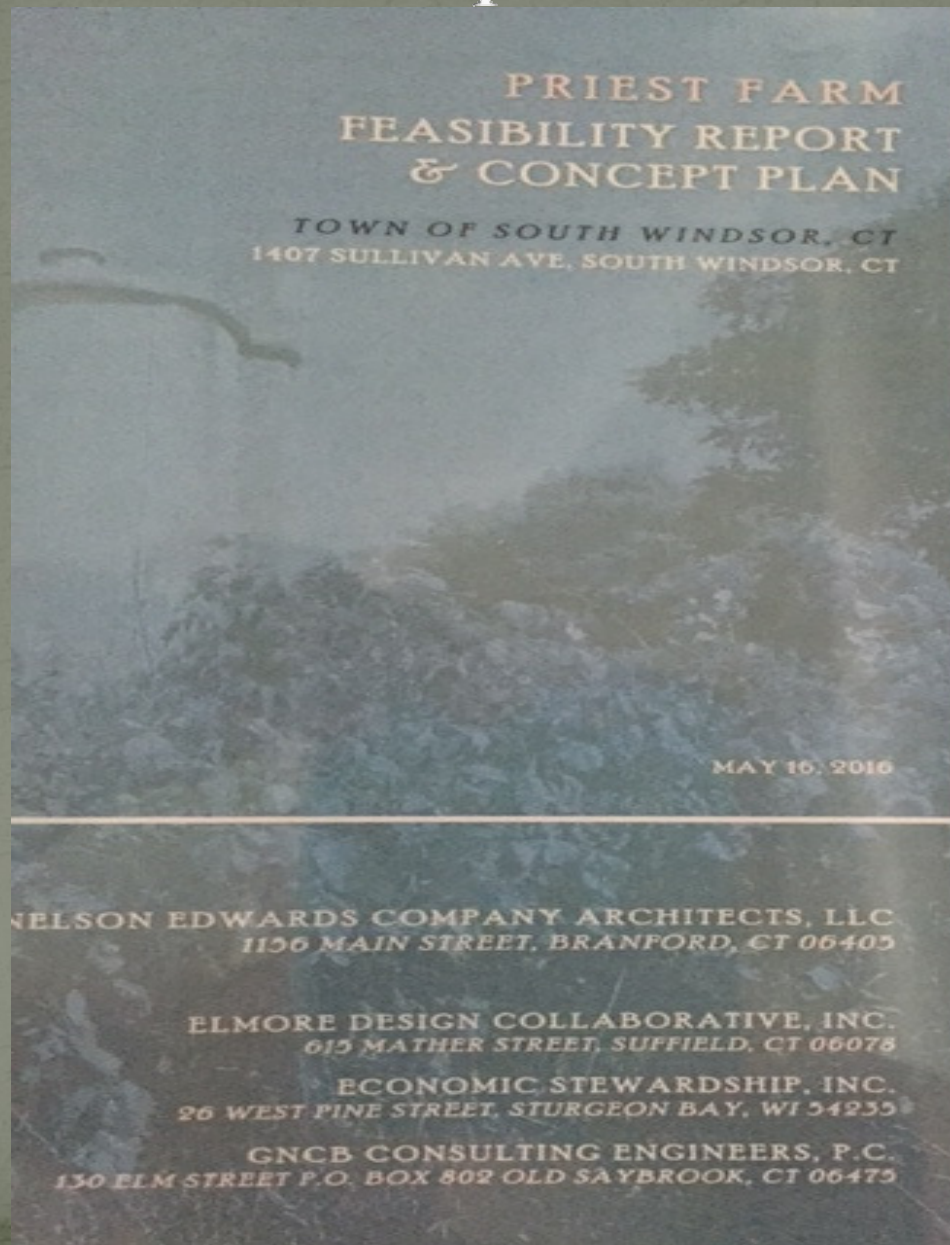
## The Community Farm Visits

- Auer Farm – Bloomfield
- Massaro Community Farm – Woodbridge
- Northwest Park – Windsor
- Strong Family Farm – Vernon
- Wind Hill Community Farm – Glastonbury

## Lessons Learned:

- Some farms owned by a town, some by a 501(c)3
- Some hired resident farm/manager
- All stated the need for financial sustainability
- All include educational programs as part of a successful community farm
- All include active farming and community gardens

# Consultant Report/Findings





# South Windsor Agriculture, Arts & Nature Center

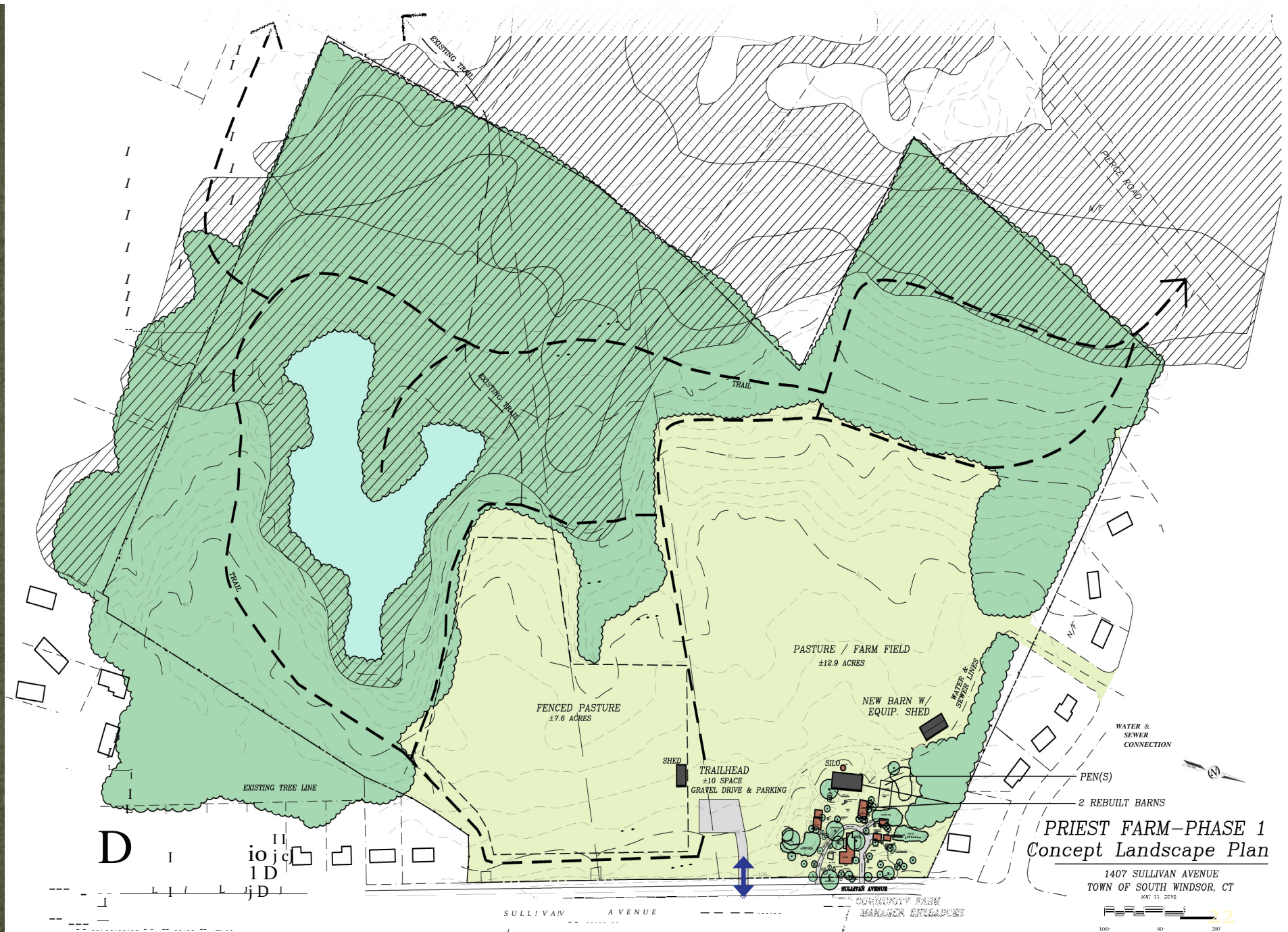
## Phase I

create trails- with historical markers,  
develop drawings/plans, rehab farmhouse,  
install water and sewer to farm, begin site work

fence pastures, install gravel drive and trailhead,  
site improvements around farmhouse

## Phase I Concept Drawing







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## Phase II

rehab SILO, establish produce & livestock plan, enclose pastures,  
clear area for community gardens, rehab & restore outbuildings,  
site work for outbuildings

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install water to community gardens,  
construct shade & picnic pavilion

## Phase II Concept Drawing





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## Phase III

construct a community event barn,  
install water & sewer for barn,  
install site lighting, gravel base for driveway and parking

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create business plan, food hub, commercial kitchen,  
event center, develop paved access to farm,  
develop museum partnership

## PHASE III Concept Drawing





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## 1. Phase I Estimate (\$700,000-\$820,000)

create Trails, develop drawings/plans, rehab farmhouse, begin site work,  
install water and sewer to farm, fence pastures, install gravel drive and trailhead, site improvements  
around farmhouse

## 2. Phase II Estimate (\$570,000-\$650,000)

rehab SILO, establish produce & livestock plan, enclose pastures,  
clear area for community gardens, rehab & restore outbuildings,  
site work for outbuildings,  
install water to community gardens, construct shade & picnic pavilion

## 3. Phase Estimate III (\$4-\$5 Million)

construct a community event barn; install water & sewer for barn; install site lighting, gravel base for  
driveway and parking, create business plan, food hub, commercial kitchen, event center,  
develop paved access to farm, plan museum partnership

## Where do we go from here?

1. Secure the farmhouse—with Town Council funding
2. Secure the \$9,000 Eversource easement fee for house repairs
3. Secure Town Council input/support to continue the project
4. Involve surrounding neighborhood in discussions
5. Search grant funding applications and fund raising programs in planning for Phase I recommendations

### **Potential Grant Funding Sources:**

*Hartford Foundation for Public Giving*

*State Office of Historic Preservation*

*Connecticut Dept. of Agriculture*

*Connecticut Dept. of Economic & Community Development*

*CT Trust for Historic Preservation*

*The 1772 Foundation*

*Historic New England Foundation*

*South Windsor Community Foundation*



# OUR GOAL

Celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Priest Farm  
in 2023---and the Grand Opening of:

## The South Windsor Community Farmhouse

You can follow this project on the Town of South Windsor webpage:

[www.southwindsor.org/agriculture-arts-nature-sub-committee](http://www.southwindsor.org/agriculture-arts-nature-sub-committee)