

## Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Michael Preserve

### **Why did SLCS buy this property?**

The Michael/Rogers house remained vacant for over five years. The property was on the market for over two years, with no buyers willing to purchase the buildings that had been neglected for many years. Prior to SLCS's purchase, the old wooden barn on the property, near collapsing, was demolished by the previous owner. In 2020, SLCS raised the charitable funds to buy the property to restore the entire parcel to a natural condition.

### **Will there be a parking lot?**

Originally, we thought it would be desirable to have some parking available. After hearing the neighbors' concerns, we decided against any formal parking spaces at this time, but SLCS will reserve the right to create a limited number of them in the future if, for example, parking is restricted on the pull-offs that have been used historically, or if requested by the road associations.

### **The buildings are NOT on the list on the State Register of Historic Places, but they were recently nominated and found to be “eligible” for the list. Does this matter?**

It matters because the people who lived in the farmhouse are important to the fabric and history of the community, and we intend to tell their story. However, the structures themselves have seen better days. Mold, sill-rot, insect damage, collapsing ceilings, buckling floors, leaking roofs, and overall condition of the structures, in addition to the location near the flowing stream all lead to the painful decision to let the buildings go, restore the property to a natural condition, and work to preserve the history of the families that lived there.

### **Why are the structures being removed?**

The structures are within 40 feet of Thompson Brook and the existing septic system is even closer. The buildings are in serious disrepair. A working group spent five months looking at options and uses for the building, but eventually determined that the house and buildings were beyond repair, and that the costs of a full restoration were not at all practicable. Lastly, restoring the property to a natural condition is clearly in line with our mission.

### **Was there an offer to renovate the building's exterior?**

SLCS did receive offers to undertake an exterior façade restoration, but they came with conditions that would restrict our ability to manage the property as a natural area for responsible enjoyment by members of the community. Given the poor condition of the structures, simply fixing up the home's exterior is not viewed as a long-term solution.

**Was a petition sent to the organization regarding saving the buildings?** We received a nine page petition signed by a group of neighbors stating their concerns about the removal of the buildings and SLCS promoting public access. We take neighbors' concerns seriously. We have since modified our plans and delayed activities on the property so that we could hear and understand their concerns. We participated in a meeting of the Intervale Pond Road Association to address their questions. And, we will be placing a conservation easement on the property as has been suggested. There are a majority of neighbors who support our decision and understand that our approach is consistent with our mission.