

Durham Agricultural Commission

10 February 2020
Durham Town Hall

Meeting Minutes

Members present: Theresa Walker (Chair), Ray LaRoche (Vice Chair), Lee Alexander, John Carroll, Bryan Cassidy, Ellen Karelitz, Dave Langley, Suzanne MacDonald, and David Potter

Members absent: Dinny Waters (Town Council Rep), Paul Rasmussen (Planning Board Rep), Alberto Manalo, and Dan Winans

Visitors: [none]

I. New Business

A. Minutes of January Meeting – [postponed to next meeting]

B. Correspondence

1. Chair received a request from “NH Agriculture in the Classroom” for funding support. Chair suggested that \$100 be allocated. This was approved.

2. Chair received an e-mail from Firoze Katrak (former Town Council Member) re: the proposed Agricultural Regulations. This will be addressed along with comments/suggestions received during the Public Hearing and from Eric Sawtelle (Town of Lee AgCom).

II. Old Business

A. Proposed Zoning Amendments – There will be a Public Hearing at the next Planning Board Meeting (Wed., 12 Feb 2020)

B. Strafford County Farm Bureau Breakfast – On Sunday, 15 March 2020. Sponsored by Durham and Lee Agricultural Commissions it will be held 0730-1200 at Lee Grange.

C. Public Education and Outreach

1. Garden and Farm Mentors – Bryan Cassidy reported that 25 persons have responded to this initiative. To date, four persons have participated in outdoor sessions on blueberry pruning. More sessions are planned for apple trees, raspberries, grapes, etc.

2. Bee-Friendly Program – Lee Alexander reported that he has started compiling the annual recertification process for BeeCity USA. Hopefully, the process will be less complicated than last year.

3. Food Friendly Yards – Ellen Karelitz and Bryan Cassidy reported that six e-mail sessions have been posted, with two more to come. There will be a meeting at the Town Library on 12 March to share ideas.

4. Durham Farm Day – Scheduled for 15 August 2020. Alberto Manalo will contact UNH COLSA as to the best POC for demo at Woodman Farm Agricultural Experiment Station. Ellen suggested that Farm Day is an opportunity to conduct hands on demonstrations associated with the new Agricultural Zoning ordinance. Developing a PP Pres and website are also a possibility.

D. Farmers’ Markets – Most vendors seem optimistic about starting up this spring.

E. Land Stewardship Subcommittee - John Carroll reported that “trails” is currently the main focus.

F. Community Gardens – Suzanne McDonald reported that a new handbook is being written for the steering committee. A potluck dinner for gardeners is planned for 5 March; the registration date is 26 March; and, on 18 April the gardens will open.

G. Inventory of Farms and Gardens - no report

III. Other Business

A. John Carroll mentioned that he attended a workshop about silva-pasture agriculture (combined forestry and agriculture).

B. Bryan Cassidy mentioned about the combined Lee – Durham AgComm initiative on Backyard Farming.

IV. Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Recorded by Lee Alexander