

Meeting Minutes  
Durham Agricultural Commission  
January 9, 2023

Commission Members Present – Ray LaRoche, Paul Rasmussen, John Carroll, Dan Winans, Bryan Cassidy, Dave Langley, Anton Bekkerman, Theresa Walker

Commission Members Absent – Lee Alexander, Holly Philbrick, Ellen Karelitz, Alberto Manalo, Ellie Lonske

I. New Business

A. Minutes of the December Meeting – Winans moved to approve the minutes with the correction that Alexander was absent from the meeting. Cassidy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Correspondence – Carroll shared the resource entitled “Food Systems Resilience for Local Government” and the group discussed using the report as the basis for a workshop with the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Sustainability Committee.

II. Old Business

A. Redefining Agricultural Activity – The group discussed next steps with the spreadsheet developed by Langley and agreed that Langley, Karelitz, and Walker will meet with Audrey Cline to review the spreadsheet and the Ag Comm’s interest in changing land use regulations to enable more backyard and cooperative food production across town, including animal husbandry. LaRoche suggested meeting with neighborhoods to review the spreadsheet. Bekkerman noted that homeowner association bylaws may restrict food production. Cassidy suggested meeting with associations in an effort to make them more comfortable with gardening and backyard farm animals.

B. Bee Friendly Program – Walker read a report from Alexander. He will be pulling together the annual report to the Xerces Society.

C. Garden and Farm Mentors – Cassidy is organizing workshops on fruit tree pruning to be held on farms in the area.

D. Oyster River Foodshed – No news to report.

III. Other Business – Bekkerman suggested a meeting in April with the Ag Comm and UNH students studying in agriculture related programs. We would meet on campus. The group agreed with the idea.

Langley is looking for folks to grow different varieties of heritage wheat on a trial scale.

IV. Adjourn – Carroll moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:55pm. Langley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.