

Meeting Minutes
Durham Agricultural Commission
April 10, 2023

Commission Members Present: Bryan Cassidy, John Carroll, Alberto Manalo, Anton Bekkerman, Dan Winans, Ray LaRoche, Paul Rasmussen, Dave Langley, Holly Philbrick, Theresa Walker
Commission Members Absent: Ellen Karelitz, Lee Alexander, Ellie Lonske

I. New Business

A. Conservation with COLSA students – We were joined by one student, Dylan File, a junior, interested in sustainability and environmental policy. Ag Comm members explained the purpose and role of the agricultural commissions in New Hampshire and described Ag Comm projects. Bekkerman asked Dylan to suggest topics of concern. He replied that he lives at the Lodges and there is no recycling program for residents. Rasmussen said the landlords will be more inclined to provide recycling services if the tenants ask for it.

B. Minutes of the March Meeting – Winans moved to accept the minutes of the March meeting LaRoche seconded the motion. The motion passed with Cassidy abstaining.

C. Comments on the Master Plan Climate Action Chapter – Langley recommended adding goal statements regarding encouraging individuals growing food and encouraging neighborhood scale and collaborative agriculture. Bekkerman recommended adding a goal statement regarding reviewing existing conservation easements to identify opportunities for agriculture. Walker will submit these edits to Michael Behrendt.

D. Earth Day – Langley said he and Karelitz are pulling together several activities to offer at the town's Earth Day event, including planting lettuce seeds in a cup, a no-dig garden bed demo, the Oyster River foodshed map, and more. He has also purchased children's coloring book about do dig gardening to giveaway.

II. Old Business

A. Ag Comm Initiatives

- Redefining agricultural activity – Langley met with Audrey Cline to discuss her use of the livestock stocking spreadsheet. Cline supports this project. Walker and Langley will put together a demonstration of the spreadsheet as applied to several neighborhoods in Durham. LaRoche asked if horses would be allowed downtown. Langley replied the spreadsheet could block horses from being housed in the RA and RB zones. Bekkerman suggested adding manure management to the spreadsheet. Cassidy said different types of land exist in every zone and we need to leave room for possibility.
- Bee Friendly Program – Walker read a report from Alexander saying he will be helping the Wagon Hill Farm community garden with bees and a hive as last year's beekeeper cannot. He has met with the Conservation Commission and Land Stewardship Subcommittee about sharing the management of the Xerces Society/Bee City USA program
- Garden and Farm Mentors – Cassidy said he is thinking about offering a broom making workshop.

III. Other Business – The group agreed that our next meeting will be a work session and potluck dinner.

IV. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 8:25pm