



TOWN OF ACTON AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes 22 Mar, 2022

6:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Present: Morene Bodner, Patrick Hearn, Joe Hebert, Peggie Hebert, Heidi Porten

Natural Resources Assistant, Zoom host, and Recording Secretary: Bettina Abe

Attendees: Acton Conservation Trust President Susan Mitchell-Hardt

Absent: Paul Simeone

Regular Business:

Heidi convened the meeting at 6:02 PM

The virtual meeting advisory was read in its entirety

1. Citizen's Concerns

There were no citizen concerns reported.

2. Approval of the 22 Feb, 2022 meeting minutes:

Minutes were unanimously approved by roll call vote.

3. Expanded Protection for The Morrison Farm Property

Morene mentioned that we have been advised to delay the Morrison Farm protection and building preservation one year which leaves the property exposed. Activities to keep the momentum of the present plan include the following:

- Mid-year briefing for Select Board.
- Write APR
- Get quotes on Barn rebuild and house external tidying. Morene is presently working with a barn builder of high quality and we can two additional quotes for comparison.

4. New Property in Consideration

No new property in consideration but there is increasing concern regarding larger properties coming to market that are at risk of being subdivided. The group agreed we needed more information regarding what means are available for prevention of division of larger properties so as to preserve the rural nature of Acton. Bettina will request a short briefing from town planning staff to help us to better understand available tools.

5. **Stonefield Farm Update** Susan commented that there was a thoughtful and attractive new sign posted at the entrance to the farm that calls attention to the fact that land is now guaranteed to remain as farmland and the collective community effort that was responsible for this.

Bettina visited Stonefield farm with Terri Maitland and Usha of Boston Area Gleaners to further discuss the proper rail trail access so as to prevent undesirable traffic across private property or across farm active work zones. Bettina also showed a proposed two path walking trail extension across the farm south end that would avoid conflict and offer a summer trail across dry land and a winter trail across wetter areas. The wetter areas could eventually be provided with bog bridges to allow more multi season use. Bog bridges have been in done in that past via Eagle Scout Projects. Susan felt that this proposal would be attractive in satisfying the Fields-Pond grant requirements. Review with Gleaners and Fields-Pond will be needed to conclude.

6. **Comprehensive Agricultural Plan**

To make the transfer of Microsoft documents into the google cloud and google docs occur without formatting issues it is helpful to first create the document in word or excel and then place into a Google Folder. The files transferred to the Google folders will be converted to Google versions, without reformatting and can be viewed or edited by all. Transferring into these folders allows individual a more convenient method to create files and then share as a group without having to try to transfer (cut and paste) into a google doc which will often reformat. Heidi will make sure we all have folders. All Ag Comm members will have access to all folders.

7. **Arbor Day Ag Table**

Bettina mentioned that the Ag Comm table at the April 29th Arbor Day was not a good fit as the audience for the tree planting would be very limited. Pat will check with Acton Garden Club to see if it would be possible to have a table at their annual plant sale on May 21.

8. **April 25th 2022 Meeting Agenda**

Reading of Virtual Meeting Advisory

1. Citizen's Concerns
2. Approval of Mar 22nd minutes
3. New Property in Consideration
4. 6:30 PM. Kaila Sauer and Kristen Guichard (Planning Dept) discussion of Transfer of Development Rights and other means to protect larger parcels from subdivision.
5. Comprehensive Agricultural Plan
6. Ag Comm Table at Acton Garden Club May 21 plant sale
7. Meeting Agenda for Sept 27th (include Ag Comm Logo)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM

Linked relevant documents and meeting materials can be found in the Agricultural Commission's page on the Town website or through the following link. <http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-12706>