



TOWN OF ACTON AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes 27 Sept, 2022

6:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Present: Patrick Hearn, Peggy Hebert, Joe Hebert, Heidi Porten, Paul Simeone

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

Attendees: Acton Conservation Trust President Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Acton Conservation Agent Mike Gendron

Absent: Morene Bodner

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. Bettina introduced Mike Gendron, Acton's new Conservation Agent

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

Minutes were unanimously approved by roll call vote.

4. New Property in Consideration

No new property in consideration

5. Follow up with Kristen Guichard/Planning Dept on transfer of development rights and other ways to protect farmland from fragmentation

Pat summarized the key points Kristen mentioned in her Ag Comm briefing on transfer of development rights emphasizing there are ways that this transfer can be applied to non-contiguous parcels. Kristen suggested we meet with the planning department for further discussion of how Ag Comm might help promote practices that preserve farm land. Pat to get in touch with Kristen.

6. Comprehensive Ag Plan Progress

Work thus far reviewed and shared folders validated as accessible and working. Strong alignment seen between agricultural topics and Acton 2020 plan. Individual schedules have not allowed progress over the summer but there was agreement that we would tackle this over the 2022-2023 Winter meetings. The general plan for this plan emerged as follows. Pat will start to

assemble a starting point document based on Paul's general outline, 2020 plan references to Agricultural related topics, OSRP and Bettina's outline. Once an initial document is in early draft stages we can review it as a group and iterate until a mature draft is available for circulation to other Acton town groups for their input.

7. Presentation Materials for Future Outreach

Pat mentioned that the Ag Comm presence at the Acton Garden Club indicates an Ag Comm pamphlet that people could take with them would be very useful at public outreach events and that the Staples A frame poster holders are much easier than easels to set up for events. Also poster should be laminated to withstand rain, dust, etc. Susan Mitchell-Hardt mentioned a Land Trust handout was very helpful at recent events and that United Way took 150 pamphlets to for use in Welcome-to-Acton packages. She also suggested attending farmer markets and other farm related public events to gather insight and inspiration. All agree that we should pursue the pamphlet idea and laminated posters in A Frames.

8. Ag Comm Logo

Various logo concepts were discussed. There was consensus that a logo would be useful and that we should all compose a logo concept for next month's meeting. Paul will not be attending that meeting but he agreed to post early so we could include his thoughts in that discussion.

9. Oct 25th 2022 Meeting Agenda

Reading of Virtual Meeting Advisory

1. Citizen's Concerns
2. Approval of Sept 27th minutes
3. New Property in Consideration
4. Next steps with Planning Department regarding collaborative efforts towards using transfer of development rights or other means to prevent larger farmland parcels from excessive fragmentation
5. Comprehensive Agricultural Plan (For Nov meeting discussion)
6. Ag Comm Logo
7. Presentation for future Ag Comm Outreach; Ag Comm Pamphlet, Posters with A frames, etc.
8. Meeting Agenda for Nov 22nd

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:10 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>