



TOWN OF ACTON AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes Nov 17, 2020

6:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Present: Morene Bodner, Patrick Hearn, Heidi Porten, Paul Simeone,

Natural Resources Assistant, Zoom host, and recording secretary: Bettina Abe

Attendees: Acton Conservation Trust President Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Peggy and Joe Hebert, Acton Select Board Liaison Dean Charter

Regular Business:

- 1 Heidi convened the meeting at 6:08 PM
- 2 The virtual meeting information advisory was read in its entirety
The original Nov 10th meeting was interrupted by a Zoom collision. This 17 Nov meeting is to complete the original agenda posted for the Nov 10th meeting. The agenda for this 17 Nov meeting was posted in advance according to Open Meeting Law.
- 3 **Farm Signs**-Location of farm signs was discussed resulting in 10-15 potential locations that would be at Acton roadway entrances and particularly approaches that are near farms. Bettina will gather committee members email inputs regarding locations and summarize and in a table. A sign with town name, a tractor image and Right to Farm had general appeal to the committee and Bettina agreed to get quotes so that we could have a better idea of the cost of the total number of signs. An effort will be made to use existing posts to save cost. Morene questioned whether there was a budget allocated for Ag Com. This will require further investigation. Dean Charter suggested we get in touch with the Town Manager now while the next year's budget is being assembled and that we ask for a \$500 budget inclusion for the total of these signs. The decision regarding the signs will require select board approval. Dean also mentioned that Rt 2 signage would require Mass DOT approval and that would most likely be a lengthy process but this is not the case with RT 27 which is under town control
- 4 **Agricultural Plan**- Bettina discussed the sample Ag Plans from nearby towns and the Minuteman Area Plan that had been distributed as examples and to provoke thought. She also suggested we each write what we want as a table of contents in the Acton Ag Plan to help us prepare for next month's meeting. The newly minted Acton Ag parcels map was displayed. Kristen and Aaron of the Acton IT department put together this map for us very quickly. The map was based on the excellent spreadsheet provided by Susan Mitchell-Hardt who has been tracking Acton farmland for many years. Bettina has emailed maps to the Ag Comm members and has agreed to provide enlarged prints for those who would find it useful. Pat mentioned there are more farms that could be added so the map we have today may grow before the complete Ag Plan initial release.
- 5 **Next Month's Meeting Date Change**- Bettina requested we change our next meeting date to Dec 1, 6:00 PM so that we can accommodate Christa Collins of Sudbury Valley Trustees who has

been invited to speak on the topic of specific land acquisitions in Acton. The meeting date change was acceptable to all and Paul agreed to recuse himself for this part of the meeting.

6 Dec 1 Meeting Agenda

Virtual Meeting Advisory

1. Christa Collins Sudbury Valley Trustees
2. Approval of Dev 10th and Dec 17th Minutes
3. Citizens Requests
4. New Property in Consideration
5. Expanded Protection for Morrison Farm
6. Farm Signage
7. Ag Plan Discussions
8. Next Meeting Agenda

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:00 PM