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Elizabeth M. Wild



Killingly Agriculture Commission
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2016

Regular Meeting

7:00 pm

Killingly Town Hall

172 Main Street, Killingly, CT

Originally Posted: Planning and Development Office

REPOSTED: ROOM 102.

MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

A) Attending: Frank Anastasio; Byron Martin; Tina Stevens; Christel Shaw; Virginia Keith

Absent with Notification – James Stevens

Town Council Liaison – Adam Griffiths

Staff – Ann-Marie Aubrey, Director Planning & Development

II. Agenda Addendum

See Adoption of Minutes below.

III. Public Hearings (as called)

None

IV. Citizen Participation [limited to five (5) minutes per speaker for an accumulated time of no more than 30 minutes (unless extended by a majority vote of the Commission)]

Mr. George Lewis introduced himself; he lives at 14 Lake Road. He has concerns about a possible sawmill (portable or permanent) possibly starting up at 58 Hartford Pike. Concerns were about noise, that the village commercial area abutted a residential area, and that certain set back requirements should be met.

Frank explained that the AG COMM was an advisory commission only, and that all of the agricultural regulations were under review. That the town, through staff, was working on researching the State's definition of certain agricultural related terms.

Mr. Lewis thanked the commission for all of the good work that it has done and continues to do.

V. Adoption of Minutes

*At this time it was noted that an additional set of minutes were included – those of September 14, 2016. A request was made that those minutes be added (agenda addendum) to this agenda. The commission was unanimous in allowing the agenda addendum, and the minutes of September 14, 2016 were added.

A) Regular Meeting Minutes of October 12, 2016

B) Regular Meeting Minutes of September 14, 2016

Therefore, Byron Martin made a motion to accept the minutes of both October 12th and September 14th with the necessary corrections (mostly spelling and grammar corrections).

Tina Stevens seconded the motion and the vote was 4 in favor with 0 against. The motion passed.

VI. Old Business

A) 2016 Event Planning - review/discussion/action

ii) Classes

It was noted there were no set dates for any upcoming classes:

Byron Martin said he would consider another bee keeping class in early January.

Virginia Keith said she was willing to do a four (4) part class on organic gardening; soils, seeding; and later have people visit her farm. Her class will most likely be in March sometime. Virginia also stated that she is willing to write a pollinator article for the Green News; though due to size limitation for articles, it was suggested that she write a more detailed article, and that a link could be publicized in the Green News for people to go to the more detailed article.

Frank Anastasio said he had wanted to do a wine making class in the fall; however, there was a problem with scheduling and that class did not occur. He said that he could possibly do the class in the early spring, possibly sometime in May.

iii) Other events

The Grange is conducting a winter farmers market. Frank believes it is for four (4) Saturdays between November and December. Frank suggested that interested commission members verify the actual dates of the farmers market through the Grange as he did not have that information available with him at the moment.

Tunk City – Rena Mason from Tunk City (store) contacted Frank to ask how to conduct a winter's farmers' market. Frank had not heard if Rena was actually able to get any farmers for this season.

FFA – The FFA at the Killingly High School will be conducting their annual Christmas sale on Friday, December 2, 2016 at the High School cafeteria – it was suggested that everyone keep a look out for their advertisements – and try to show support by attending.

B) Open Space Land Acquisition Committee/Farmland Inventory

Byron Martin stated that OSLA in conjunction with the KCC is doing a review of a particular property in Killingly. Hopefully he will have more to report after the first of the year, as the OSLA committee will not meet again until after Christmas.

C) Mother Nature's Garden – meeting/progress report – review/discussion/action

Christel Shaw reported that Ginny has cleaned all of the MNG gardens for the winter; that MNG has hired a grant writer (at a very reasonable sum) to assist them in completing a grant to submit to Patagonia; that at their last meeting the sitting board members voted on Pat Monahan and Ann-Marie Aubrey as additional board members; that the board is trying to determine exactly what needs to be done to complete a proper weight study for the proposed flowering bridge; that the board is starting to plan a Veteran's Garden, that fundraising is going well, and the board is going to work with students from Ellis Tech to hopefully help with the construction plans (and construction) for the garden. Finally, that Ginny was having a photography exhibition at Maury's Pub on November 19th, and that with every certain amount of sales Ginny would be making a donation to MNG.

D) Killingly Community Garden – meeting/progress report – review/discussion/action

The KCG board was working on changing their by-laws to allow just three (3) officers be present in order to make a quorum; that KCG is looking for volunteers and please if you know of anyone that is willing to volunteer please let KCG know. The commission members suggested that the KCG contact other community garden groups to see how they get volunteers – Quiet Corner Garden Club; Brooklyn Garden Club. Christel also noted that the KCG has not had contact with Michaela's Garden and was trying to reach them; also it appears that the KCG has lost their student volunteers, as there has not been any contact with any of the student volunteers for some time.

- E) Killingly Zoning Regulations Section 585 "Agriculture" and Borough of Danielson Zoning Regulations Section 580 "Agriculture" language– review/discussion/action
At this time, it was requested to suspend the rules and allow Mr. Lewis to join the conversation. Frank Anastasio invited Mr. Lewis to join the commission at the table. Frank again explained that the AG COMM was an advisory commission and that they had no power. Frank explained the discussion about sawmills, and portable versus stationary. Mr. Lewis once again brought up his concerns about noise, and explained that he was so concerned that he bought his own noise meter, and though he realized his readings were not "official" readings he explained how his readings did or did not line up with what the DEEP had their requirements. He went on to explain that "distance" is an absolute issue regarding noise.

Frank explained that the work on the agricultural regulations was something that needed to be done, that when the original regulations went into effect the commission realized that within a few years a review would be needed, and that is exactly what is happening. Frank stated that the village commercial area was never addressed in the prior / original regulations and that is something that is being looked at right now. Trying to deal with questions as to what should we recommend? Yes, noise can be annoying – difference between a one-time noise issue and a constant eight (8) hours a day, seven (7) days a week noise. We (the commission) must look at such things as cutting and processing one's own trees versus bring in numerous trees from somewhere else.

Mr. Lewis thanked the commission for their time.

- G) Tomato Festival – review/discussion/action
Frank announced that the next Tomato Festival meeting will be held in January.

VII. New Business

- A) Green News – Newsletter – how to get more people involved – review/discussion/action
Another issue of the Green News was sent out. Must see if there is a way for us to contact people from prior classes and offer them the link to subscribe to the Green News via email. At this time Frank requested that the AG COMM allow him to spend \$50.00 to promote the Green News on Facebook by "boosting the post".
Virginia Keith made a motion to allow Frank to spend up to \$50.00 (and to reimburse him) to promote the Green News to people through Facebook. Tina Stevens seconded the motion; there was no further discussion, vote was 5 to 0 to allow Frank to boost the post. Motion passed.

VIII. Other Discussion Items

Discussion centered upon Killingly High School and how they encourage young people to become farmers; there may be a discussion occurring soon (USDA?) that will be open to the public and free – to discuss, and hopefully to have the decision made locally about what is to be taught at the Killingly High School AG ED department.

IX. Next Meeting - WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2016

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann-Marie Aubrey