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Elizabeth M. Wilson



Killingly Agriculture Commission

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2017

Regular Meeting

7:00 pm

Killingly Town Hall

172 Main Street, Killingly, CT

ROOM 102

MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm

In attendance – Frank Anastasio; Byron Martin; Jim Stevens; Tina Stevens; Christel Shaw

Absent with notification – Virginia Keith and Cristina Salisbury

Staff – Ann-Marie L. Aubrey, Director Planning & Development; Jonathan Blake, ZEO

Town Council Liaison – Adam Griffiths

II. Agenda Addendum

None

III. Public Hearings (as called)

None

IV. Citizens 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 members]

John Olenick – 58 Hartford Pike; He just wanted the commission to know that he disagreed with the minutes from the February 28, 2017 Subcommittee Meeting (already approved by the commission); and the minutes from the March 8, 2017 (to be reviewed tonight). Mr. Olenick did not state why he disagreed with the minutes at this time.

Mr. Olenick then handed the commission members a letter from AG COMM Alternate, Cristina Salisbury and requested that the letter be read into the record. (Staff did not receive copies of the letter.)

Frank read the letter and then gave a brief overview of what the letter said; the letter was from Cristina Salisbury; basically she wants to make sure that her suggestions regarding "farm products" to add wool and leather products to the list; and that under the definition of "sawmill" she want the words "including but not limited to lumber, cordwood, firewood, and woodchips." to be removed. (The commission discussed these two requests when they went through the proposed regulations. See below.)

V. Adoption of Minutes – review / discussion / action

A) Regular Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2017

Due to Mr. Olenick's previously stated objection to the minutes of March 8, 2017, Frank asked Mr. Olenick to explain his objection. Mr. Olenick explained that he had reviewed the Town Charter and looked into the duties of the commission and the members. It is his impression that any recommendation to, or changes to regulations should come from the commission members, and the commission members only.

Frank explained that as commission members they are volunteers and that as volunteers they do not have the time to research on regulations, and that they rely upon staff to do such research and to provide certain expertise when suggesting changes, etc. The commission makes their recommendations when the changes are brought forth to them, and then the commission votes the recommended changes – so the commission either approves or disapproves the changes.

Adam Griffiths explained that the staff does not tell the commission members what they are to do; the staff is there to facilitate and assist the commission members. The staff does not tell the commission members what to do, the commission members know what is expected of them.

Mr. Olenick requested that the commission members go that extra mile to find the information themselves. Stated the input should come from the commission members.

Byron Martin then made a motion to adopt the minutes of March 8, 2017. Jim Stevens made the second.

Discussion – There were two corrections – Christel Shaw explained that Kerrie should actually be spelled Carrie. Frank Anastasio corrected the spelling of Marcy Dawley's name to Dawley.

No further discussion, a vote was taken 5 to 0. The motion was approved.

VI. General Business – review / discussion / action

A) 2017 Event Planning – Activities, ETC.

1) Classes

Virginia Keith held her class and it was very successful. Commission members asked how many people attended, and it was explained that she held the number to students to less than 10.

Adam then raised the issue if we had received any information regarding the prior issue of farmers possibly charging for classes they presented. Discussion continued regarding the ability to charge for classes and how would the AG COMM / the Town deal with such an issue. Frank stated that Ann-Marie was to talk to Sean Hendricks (Town Manager) regarding this issue; and Frank stated that the Rec Dept had established a policy and he thought that the AG COMM had established a policy but it had not. Ann-Marie explained that she had talked to the Town Manager Sean Hendricks and he stated that the farmers giving the classes could charge for the classes; however, all of the money / checks for the class had to go directly to the farmers. The Town does not want to become an additional step before the farmers get their money for the classes. Mr. Hendricks also stated that he had no problem with the AG COMM paying for the advertisements for the classes, because the AG COMM was still putting the classes together. Byron Martin asked if there had to be a fee for the classes, and he was told only if the farmer giving the classes felt a need to charge the fee, the classes could still be free.

Therefore, Frank asked for a motion – so the commission could officially adopt a policy regarding fees for classes and for paying for the advertisements.

Frank requested a motion for the following – if we hold classes and farmers feel the need to charge for the classes, for example they give things to the people attending (talked about Virginia Keith and all the items she gave her attendees – basically a starter kit – and the time it takes to put a class together) – Frank then started over – “For farmers that hold classes through the AG COMM will then advertise for those classes within its means to promote it and any money charged for those classes will go directly to the farmer, without using the Town’s Finance Office to process the checks.”

Byron Martin made that motion. Jim Stevens seconded the motion.

Discussion – Adam made the suggestion that instead of the AG COMM “will” the AG COMM “may”. That allows the commission the discretion to determine what classes to pay the advertisement for.

Byron Martin made a motion to move the amendment; and Jim Stevens made a second.

No discussion on the amendment. Vote Taken 5 to 0 – the amendment was approved.

Frank called for discussion on the original motion as amended.

Ann-Marie restated the motion as amended - the motion was to basically allow farmers that put on classes through the AG COMM to charge a fee for classes they put on; and the AG COMM will still have the option that it MAY cover the fee for the advertisement for the classes (up to its discretion) and all fees charged by the farmer (for giving the class) will go directly to the farmer.

Frank called for a vote – 5 to 0 – the motion as amended passed. Frank stated that is our policy and we are sticking to it.

2) Other Events

Frank talked about the event being held on April 18th, Earth Day Celebration at QVCC 11:00 to 3:00 pm. Frank stated that the Conservation Commission is going and Mother Nature’s Garden is going, and Virginia is going to represent her own business. Frank still did a promotional piece for Earth Day for the AG COMM.

Town wide clean up, for Earth Day, taking place for the entire month. You can go and pick up green bags at the Economic Development Office; will ask for name and address.

Wednesday, April 19, 2017 – clean up based along Main Street – all are invited.

Saturday, April 22, 2017 – clean up scheduled for Cat Hollow – all are invited.

There was some discussion regarding the AG COMM budget for the upcoming year. There was further discussion regarding the whole Town Budget process. Adam wants to fund all commissions equally; doesn’t believe the commissions should be funded unequally.

B) Open Space Land Acquisition Committee / Farmland Inventory

Nothing to report, no meeting.

C) Mother Nature’s Garden – meeting / progress report

Ann-Marie – They are moving forward with the Veteran’s Garden, brush is cut, and trees are cut down at the location; the artwork is being done on the memorial stones; they will create the outline of the star from wood.

D) Killingly Community Garden – meeting / progress report

Christel – Noted that they granted the Elk's Grant for this year in the amount of \$2,000.00 (they have not received check yet); they are working on getting more volunteers; hope to use grant funds to help with the purchase of plants (if needed); expecting to clean up the garden sometime in April; planting will take place in May. Frank offered to go to the May or June meeting to advise the group, re: the bylaws which they still need to approve. Issue regarding the dissolution clause; they would like some direction from Frank.

Micheala's Garden// Petit Foundation – the KCG does not want to do that anymore. The Girl Scouts cannot handle the work for the garden anymore. Possibly offer it to the Library, or the Friends of the Library Group, see if they are willing to take over that project.

E) Tomato Festival – meeting / progress report

Volunteers from Web Industries and a private individual have stepped forward to assist us during the Tomato Festival.

F) Green News Newsletter – meeting / progress report

VII. Regulations – review / revisions / discussion / action

A) Town of Killingly Zoning Regulations Section 585 "Agriculture" – review / discussion / action

Review of draft copy dated April 12, 2017.

Page 1 and 2 no change.

Page 3:

Farm Products; added text at the end of the definition as proposed at last meeting by Cristina Salisbury.
...including, but not limited to, baked goods, wool products, and soap products made with farm products.

Staff explained that leather products were not included because it opened the door for tanneries which are not allowed in the Town of Killingly. (Tanneries in practice are prohibited use, under Section 510 Prohibited Uses in Town of Killingly Zoning Regulations).

Discussion proceeded regarding the exclusion of leather products.

Ag Commission agreed to leave the additional text as written above.

Page 4:

Processing; added to clarify difference from manufacturing.

Processing – Processing on farms is not considered manufacturing if the raw materials are grown on the farm and if the processing activities are on a small scale without the extensive use of paid labor.

Discussion proceeded regarding the definition of processing.

Ag Commission agreed to a modified definition below.

Processing – Processing on farms is not considered manufacturing if the raw materials are grown on the farm.

Sawmills; reviewed by the request of Cristina Salisbury letter to Ag Commission.

Sawmills – A mill or machine primarily engaged in sawing rough lumber and timber from logs and bolts. Including but not limited to lumber, cordwood, firewood, and woodchips.

Discussion proceeded regarding the definition of sawmills and item "F" on Page 9.

Ag Commission agreed to a modified definition below.

Portable Sawmill – A mill or machine primarily engaged in sawing rough lumber and timber from logs and bolts. The operation of which may include but not limited to lumber, cordwood, firewood, and woodchips.

Silviculture; added definition. Source CT DEEP – “Agriculture Forestry & CT IWWA” page 2, published October, 2016.

Silviculture – is the art and science of growing and tending forests for the production of wood and other benefits. Silviculture encompasses a wide range of practices intended to reproduce forest stands or to increase the growth rate, vigor and value of trees.

Page 5, 6, 7, 8 no change.

Page 9:

Ag Commission revised item “F” in conjunction with the changes to the definition of portable sawmill.
f) Portable sawmills or cord wood processing and processing of forest products are allowed on conforming Rural Development lots, or Low Density Zone lots that are a minimum of five acres in size, and operated by a farmer on land he owns or leases, providing such use is ancillary to the farming operation or is for the maintenance of the farm or expansion of crop land. All lots must have a buffer zone to maintain residential character and maintain the peaceful and quiet enjoyment of neighboring properties. See Section 585.6.d & 585.6.l for sale of forest products. The use of sawmills will require a vegetative buffer zone of seventy-five (75') feet from abutting residential zones and uses.

Page 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 no change.

Adam Griffiths asked for a copy of Section 510 Prohibited Uses in Town of Killingly Zoning Regulations. Staff will email Mr. Griffiths a copy for his review.

B) Borough of Danielson Zoning Regulations Section 580 “Agriculture” – review / discussion / action
- Borough – review / discussion / action

Ann-Marie will be sending the members a scanned copy of the Borough Agriculture (Section 580) by email for the Commission to review prior to the next meeting.

Frank explained to the AG Commission the basic process of approval for any changes of the Zoning Regulations in the Borough of Danielson. Any proposed changes should go before the Borough of Danielson Council prior to going to Planning and Zoning Commission.

VIII. Other Discussion Items – review / discussion / action
None discussed.

IX. Next Meeting - Wednesday, MAY 10, 2017

X. Adjournment
Jim Stevens made a motion to adjourn; Byron seconded.
Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ann-Marie Aubrey
Director Planning & Development

Jonathan Blake
Zoning Enforcement Officer / Planning Assistant