



Killingly Agriculture Commission

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Regular Meeting

7:00 pm

**Killingly Town Hall
172 Main Street, Killingly, CT
Room 102**

Minutes

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Welcome/Introductions

At 7:08 PM by Chair Frank Anastasio, with Byron Martin, Frank Anastasio, Jim Burlingame and Alternates Sue Barry and Christel Shaw present. Alternate Adam Griffiths was absent with notification. Jim Stevens and Tina Stevens were representing Killingly at the Regional Ag Commission meeting occurring at the same time at KHS. Staff Linda Walden, Director of Planning and Development, was present.

Sue Barry and Christel Shaw are voting members this evening.

II. Agenda Addendum - none

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)] – none

Byron Martin moved to allow John Colbridge and the public to speak. Sue Barry seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

V. Adoption of Minutes

A) Regular Meeting of January 14, 2015

Byron Martin moved to pass the minutes of January 14, 2015. Jim Burlingame seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

VI. Old Business

A) Official Commission Logo – Lloyd Gevrey, graphic artist - review/discussion/action – March 2015 - Linda Walden explained she heard from Lloyd – he can't attend tonight but will be here in March.

B) 2015 Event Planning - review/discussion/action

i) "Third Ever Killingly Great Tomato Festival" – September 12, 2015

The meeting was cancelled due to a snow storm and the committee is now going to try to meet on February 23rd. The Killingly Cooks committee meets tomorrow morning and we will learn more then. Please encourage people to become volunteers.

ii) Classes – Frank Anastasio stated Virginia Keith had been excited about giving a 4 hour organic gardening workshop with a fee open to 15 people but has decided not to do it at this time due to the amount of work/projects on her farm. Frank has arranged with Sherry Harmon to give an introductory class on raising chickens in March, using a room at the High School. Sue Barry stated she will do a class on raising goats. The dates of May 16th, June 13 or the 27th were discussed. It will tentatively be June 13th if that doesn't conflict with any large events such as HS graduation. Staff will

check. John Colbridge asked about a composting class. Frank Anastasio said Ralph Chartier will do it, Carrie Carter will do it (both are master gardeners) and he will email them. John Colbridge said perhaps it could be held at the Community Garden after planting day which will be May 16th. Jim Burlingame has bedding, Jim Stevens has pig manure, staff will check with Rec and DPW if they have grass clippings with no chemicals. Byron Martin commented it is a challenge to teach because of the steady stream of food scraps, grass, etc. backyard piles receive.

iii) Other events?

Jim Burlingame said he will conduct a farm tour near the end of May, perhaps with sheep shearing.

C) Farmland Inventory – properties of interest update - review/discussion/action – Linda Walden stated there are no additional properties of interest right now, although she will continue to track the two we have discussed. The Conservation Commission needs to prepare a new list of properties for the Open Space Land Acquisition (OSLA) committee to review; therefore OSLA has not been meeting recently. The proposed Geer Road subdivision on prime farmland is scheduled for hearing at P&Z on March 17th. P&Z will get the Ag Commission's advisory opinion. Staff has also heard from the state archaeologist who is recommending a Phase 1 archaeological survey. The applicant will need to consider whether to do that.

D) Mother Nature's Garden - Water Street/Footbridge Project - Update - review/discussion/action – Meetings will be on the third Thursday of each month at 10 AM. They are working on by-laws, officers, for non-profit status. Rec has said Mother Nature can set up a display on Bike Night (August 20th) for donations, plans of the project, etc. Ginny Chase is seeking a welder for cost estimates if anyone knows someone in addition to Boudreau's to recommend. Byron Martin stated he has seedlings for the project from seeds Ginny provided.

E) Killingly Community Garden – update on February 4, 2015 meeting - review/discussion/action – Chris Shaw reported KCG met last week and they have a design for a new lay-out at the garden and plans for irrigation. John Colbridge explained the irrigation system in response to questions. Student interns will monitor the garden. Chris added the group is looking for a community seating area outside of the garden fencing. They have a goal of \$3000 for donations. Seed will be ordered soon – compact, easy to grow varieties. Carrie Carter is considering hosting a garden open house just prior to KCG's regular monthly meetings. Planting day will be May 16th; there is an increase of 5 beds. They are keeping beds for donations to the food pantry and free-to-the - public beds outside of the garden fence. Sue Barry stated she has goat and horse manure and asked about straw bale gardening. John Colbridge has tried it and Linda Walden asked if perhaps there could be a demonstration one at the garden?

F) Updating the "Killingly Grown" brochure - review/discussion/action - nothing new from the coordinator but March had been a target.

VII. New Business

A) Representative of Quiet Corner Fundraising Group – Frank Anastasio explained the background of the group, appearing on social media and then raising concerns soliciting donations, first on Kickstarter and then gofundme referring to town projects that were already underway. He added their intentions are good but it needs to be coordinated with us. Wayland from KCG attended school with the Quiet Corner Facebook author and had had some discussions with them. Staff explained members of the group were contacted and invited to participate in the existing committees and it was hoped someone would be in attendance this evening. No one is present. John Colbridge will speak to Wayland on Friday and if there is new info. on the group, he'll ask Wayland to email staff.

B) Protocol for Sponsorship of Classes - Frank Anastasio stated class sponsorship has been worthwhile and explained Virginia Keith was going to charge a fee (understandable for a 4 hour workshop). This is also a possible way farmers could get some revenue. What should the policy be? If a fee is charged, should the Commission assume the advertising costs? Byron Martin asked how it works with the town. Sue Barry stated Michelle Lyon is doing the soap class thru Rec. Questions were how is money handled, should we set up PayPal? Will attendance drop off if a fee is charged? How are registrations handled? Chris Shaw suggested charging a nominal flat fee for advertising and for staff time as a partnership. Staff will talk to Rec and Finance.

C) FY 2015-16 Town Budget Process – update – Staff reviewed the proposed Ag budget and explained the process. Her budget meeting is scheduled for this Friday.

VIII. Other Discussion Items

There was a brief discussion on comment heard at Day Kimball that there is a disproportionate amount of melanoma in this area and it is being tied to Ag spraying. Byron Martin commented on the difficulty honey bees are having surviving due to spraying. Not that much heavy spraying occurs here – it is almost a farming oasis. Frank Anastasio commented it would be important to see if it is occurring in clusters and if there is an employer - employee link associated with it.

IX. Next Meeting - Wednesday, March 11, 2015, 7 PM

X. Adjournment – at 8:35 PM upon a motion by Byron Martin, seconded by Jim Burlingame – unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Walden
Director of Planning and Development
Acting Clerk