



Killingly Agriculture Commission

WEDNESDAY, July 12, 2017

Regular Meeting

7:00 pm

Killingly Town Hall

172 Main Street, Killingly, CT

ROOM 102

Minutes

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK, KILLINGLY, CT
2017 AUG -3 AM 11:59

Elizabeth M. Wilson

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Attending: Frank Anastasio; Byron Martin; Christel Shaw; Virginia Keith

Absent with Notice: Jim Stevens and Tina Stevens

Absent without Notice: Cristina Salisbury

Staff: Ann-Marie Aubrey, Director Planning & Development

Town Council Liaison: Adam Griffiths, absent with notice

As the Stevens were not in attendance; Frank as Chairman, told Alternate Virginia Keith that she would be a voting member for this evening's meeting.

Discussion regarding various crops took place at this time.

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]

None

V. Adoption of Minutes – review / discussion / action

A) Regular Meeting Minutes of April 12, 2017 – Frank noted that the minutes of the April 12, 2017 meeting were tabled during the May meeting, and since the June meeting was canceled due to a lack of quorum, we will need to approve the April 12, 2017 minutes at our next meeting in August.

B) Regular Meeting Minutes of May 10, 2017 – Byron made a motion to accept; Virginia Keith seconded. Vote was 4 to 0, the motion passed.

C) Regular Meeting Minutes of June 14, 2017 – No minutes this meeting was canceled due to a lack of a quorum. Byron Martin and Ann-Marie attended a Planning & Zoning Commission workshop.

VI. General Business – review / discussion /action

A) 2017 Event Planning – Activities, ETC.

1) Classes

(*) Frank stated that he held a tomato growing class at the library, and that there were approximately 10 to 12 people that attended. Some new people that never attended an AG COMM class, so there were questions, and interaction, it was a fun class to teach.

(*) Byron updated – “Bees, keeping them alive and healthy” he already gave the class; however, this Saturday (July 15th) he will be doing a (another) demonstration for all the people that had originally attended his class. No advertising was requested. Demonstration expected to last approximately 15 minutes – there is still a lot of interest in bee keeping.

(*) Jim Stevens – has not contacted staff with a date for his proposed class regarding pigs /piglets.

(*) Virginia Keith – is in the process of getting certified in “organic layers” / chickens. This is the first time Virginia is raising chicks. She will be giving demonstrations at a local farmers’ market, not Killingly’s – would like to bring the demonstration to Killingly at a future date. Discussion ensued regarding organic chickens, and none GMO feed vs organic feed.

2) Other Events

Farmers’ Market is operating on Saturday mornings. Corn should be coming in soon, approximately 12 vendors on Saturdays. Farmers’ market at the Tomato Festival has room for 11 vendors. We need to determine which vendors will participate at the Tomato Festival.

There was nothing else new to report.

B) Open Space Land Acquisition Committee / Farmland Inventory

Nothing to report – next meeting is probably September

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

MNG is still working on the Veteran’s Garden, hoping to finish it up by early September, to have a ribbon cutting by late September. Their next meeting is tomorrow, Thursday, at 10:00. MNG agreed to take over Michaela’s Garden, so it got planted at the Library location. MNG is trying to do fundraising for the Veteran’s Garden, possibly try to do a fundraiser at “99”. MNG stepped away from planting planters along Main Street, problem with getting business owners to care for the beautification of Main Street (water and fertilize the plants). Discussion ensued regarding the planters along Main Street.

D) Killingly Community Garden – meeting / progress report

Virginia Keith – has a worker, that finished her Master Garden program and needs some community service hours (approximately 30 hr.) Ann-Marie suggested she contact Jonathan Blake because he deals with the community garden – Jessica Huey. KCG will be meeting tomorrow night at the garden. Special meeting to focus on finishing Linda’s giving garden finished to have a dedication done in September.

Chris talked about Jonathan giving the group a set of by-laws to review and to vote on within the coming month. Wayland has been working on a website, sounded like he had quite a bit done.

Frank received a message from one of the members regarding the underground water supply between the school and the existing input. John Colbridge thought this would be a great time saver; but now Frank received a message that the town is not going to approve it anymore. Ann-Marie stated it would be best to talk to Jonathan regarding this; however she tried to explain the situation the best she could.

Basically, Sean is requesting the KCG to come up with some sort of secondary plan – possibly a water tank. Again, Ann-Marie told commission members to talk to Jonathan as he is the primary person regarding this water project.

Discussion ensued regarding the progress, or lack thereof, of the group's ability to get the garden organized and prosperous. Ann-Marie explained that someone had come into the Planning & Development Office to ask about the community garden and asked if it has been abandoned. Jonathan referred the woman to Wayland. Ann-Marie and Jonathan then went to the garden and took pictures of the garden, Ann-Marie showed the pictures to the commission members. There has to be some sort of effort made at the garden – it appears nothing is being done – which cannot be allowed to continue. There is no accountability – there needs to be some leadership – and the leader has to be organized.

Virginia Keith volunteered to go to the next meeting (the following night) to discuss what can be done and to help getting the garden cleaned up, and setting up a work date with KCG members. KCG does not have any agreements with the users of the lots. KCG is a subcommittee of the AG COMM. Frank did say there are issues.

Ann-Marie – “They are on a short plank, and they are ready to step off.” – can't say it any clearer.

Byron and Virginia went back to the leadership issue – there needs to be a check list – they need to have people accountable.

Frank started to talk about the Putnam Community Garden, all volunteers – 30 beds and all of them are being used. Maybe we should have our KCG visit other community gardens to learn how to be successful.

Chris asked what if they decide to walk away- Frank stated the AG COMM will have to get another group in town to take over the garden, and if there is no-one else willing to do it – then the community garden ends.

Frank stated that KCG's original mission was to provide free food to people – not provide people with the ability to grow their own food. Virginia stated they have to solicit for volunteers to work in the garden.

Frank – leadership and work crews/volunteers is crucial. Byron stated that the KCG needs to be told that the town administration is not happy. “That they are on a short plank, and ready to step off” Frank asked if the Elk's Grant could be used for personnel – possibly a coordinator – to receive a stipend. Stipend less than \$600 / (approx. \$599 most).

Frank talked about how the KCG wants to expand; however, Ann-Marie explained that the Town will not agree that the KCG be given any other town property if they cannot handle what they already have.

Frank wants the KCG members to attend the August 9th; meeting of the AG COMM. Chris will let them know. Frank suggested that our message should be we want to be helpful, we have some suggestions, so let's discuss it before it gets out of control. Don't want to discount what they have already done; however, you need to go one step higher in an organized way.

E) Tomato Festival – meeting / progress report

Frank – it seems like we are following the same planning as last year. The difference is this year the “children's activities tent” will be managed by a class from VO-AG – sophomore class – Frank and Marcia (Griffiths) met with Beth Knowlton and her students. Ann-Marie has a supply list that they requested and the sizes for the t-shirts. There will be one adult supervisor for each hour the activities are in place.

Frank than talked about the issue regarding live music – usually people played for free – however, now the people that we use to get are getting offers of payment from other activities. So how do we handle this? Do we come up with a way to pay some money to our entertainers? Frank is thinking \$100 for an hour to an hour and a half.

F) Green News Newsletter – meeting / progress report

Chris is hoping to get the next newsletter out by end of next week (July 21, 2017) so we can get another newsletter out in time to publicize the Tomato Festival. The latest she would like to get it out would be July 24/25. There was some discussion regarding possible articles for the next newsletter. We are up to a one hundred twelve (112) subscribers.

VII. Regulations – review / revisions / discussion / action

Due to the amount of time taken up by the KCG discussion – the discussion regarding the proposed regulations was tabled until the next meeting; August 9, 2017.

Ann-Marie and Byron gave a brief overview of the workshop session with the PZC commission.

Byron and Frank want to make sure that it is clear that the 51% is annual gross sales for a farm stand or farm store – not just one week or one month, etc.

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

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

VIII. Other Discussion Items – review / discussion / action

None

IX. Next Meeting - Wednesday, August 9, 2017

X. Adjournment

Approximately 9:05 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ann-Marie Aubrey, Director Planning & Development