

ENFIELD AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, May 11, 2021

A Regular Virtual Meeting of the Enfield Agricultural Commission was called to order by Chair Karen LaPlante Tuesday, May 11, 2021 @ 7:15 PM

ROLL CALL

Chair LaPlante took the roll.

Present - Chair LaPlante, Commissioner Cote, Commissioner Dynia (7:28), Commissioner Vose (8:07) Commissioner Wyzga, Commissioner Pfeifer-Hall, Commissioner Kober, Commissioner McGuire, and Commissioner Sacerdote

Also present: Georgie Driver – Staff, Laurie Whitten – Economic Developmental Director, and Karen Timpone – Recording secretary

Chair LaPlante empowered Commissioner Sacerdote and Commissioner Kober as voting members for this meeting.

Approval of Minutes - A motion to accept minutes of April 13, 2021 was made by Commissioner Pfeifer-Hall and seconded by Commissioner Sacerdote – 5/0/2 abstentions by Commissioner McGuire and Commissioner Wyzga

Public Participation – None

POCD Update – Items of Concern – Georgie Driver sent out the packets to EAC with POCD items from 2011 which touch on agricultural. She highlighted a few things for EAC to look at read. Since they are in the process of putting together the 2021 POCD this is some ideas to think about as to what the EAC would like to see in the next POCD. What are some goals and compare to what was accomplished in the old POCD. There are some charts with percentage of agriculture land, how many acres of agriculture land there is in Enfield. There are also state goals, number of farms, farming acres, sizes, etc., breaks down how we use our agricultural land in Enfield. Page 226 - talks about soils suitable for farming and the Farmland Preservation Program. She asked everyone to look it over and at the next meeting she would like to go over and she will take notes. Chair LaPlante stated that this has to be updated since some of the farms have been preserved since the last update and some were in two different towns. Some goals have been achieved from 2011 POCD and new goals for agricultural land should be set for 2021 POCD. Georgie read the 2011 POCD goals for agricultural land and if it has been achieved or if EAC wants to keep it as a goal for 2021.

Farmers to be on Boards and Commission. More representation on Boards and Commissions is needed. Develop an agriculture development strategy. Laurie suggested that when looking at goals also try to come up with possible means of implementation (grants, town council may fund, etc.) and timeframes.

Opening more farmer's markets in Enfield

Revise zoning to allow greater flexibility for agricultural land use

Establish a municipal farmland preservation fund (this has been done) and will be kept for 2021 to keep it going. EAC would like this to be able to be donated to and would like to see a separate fund with visibility.

Use the future land use land as the basis for farmland preservation.

Continue to assess working agricultural land according to use. Connecticut statutes that authorize the public act to allow tax assessor's agricultural real estate according to its use. Have a new futures map with more land to be preserved.

Georgie asked that the EAC look at these goals and comment on them, email to her and she will put them together for discussion at the next meeting.

Chair LaPlante would like to know the farms that are in 490 and the ones that are not.

Farmland Preservation - The budget for Farmland Preservation was not approved as far as Laurie knows. Laurie did ask for \$50,000 for the upcoming year for Farmland Preservation. She has not seen the final budget yet.

Unfinished Business –

Community Farmland Preservation Program – Commissioner McGuire stated that we have established the program and we have a farmer who has applied, the EAC ranked it, gave it approval per rules of the program and whenever the town is ready we can move forward. The State is going to want to know if the town is in a position financially to go forward. Until that gets straightened they cannot move forward. Per the rules there has to be a separate dedicated fund for this. As per Laurie the application was from 2017 and probably needs a new application. Laurie will find out how much money the Farmland Preservation Program has in its fund. Georgie will call the Department of Agriculture and find out the status of this farm application.

Discussion on New Agricultural Map – Laurie stated that the POCD will be creating a very generalized agriculture map. Commissioner McGuire suggested that Georgie ask Cam Weimar if they can produce an agriculture map on for us when she speaks to him tomorrow.

Correspondence / All Commissioners & Staff – None

Next Meeting Date - Tuesday June 8, 2021 (This meeting may be in person)

Adjournment – A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Dynia, seconded by Commissioner Wyzga – passed unanimously

The meeting was adjourned @ 8:16 pm