

TOWN OF WEARE
Agricultural Commission
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November 3, 2011 - Meeting Minutes
*** FINAL VERSION ***

PRESENT: Wendy Stevens, Chair, George Malette, Vice Chair, Luke Drake & Jerry Little

I: CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Wendy Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm at the Weare Town Office Building

Luke Drake made a motion to approve the August minutes. Jerry Little seconded, Wendy Stevens was in favor. George Malette abstained, minutes were approved 3-0-1.

The Granite Beauty apple tree was discussed. The tree that was donated will have to be trained and reshaped. The commission agreed it was not suitable for planting at the Stone Building. The tree will be planted at a residence to see how it develops. The commission plans to purchase a new tree from Fedco in the spring to be planted together with the Baldwin tree at the Stone Building.

Drew Conroy of Weare, who is also a professor at the Thompson School of Applied Science has been contacted. A recent UNH article quotes him as saying he is “passionate about using ruminant animals to feed the world.” He mentions draft oxen in particular. We will invite him to come give a presentation on ruminant animals and his history in Weare at our potluck Saturday February 18th at Wildwood Farm.

A recent Concord Monitor article was discussed portraying Arthur Brennan as an organic farmer in Weare who “did organic before it was cool.” Wendy has contacted Mr. Brennan and invited him to our meetings.

Wendy shared a letter from the Boscawen Agricultural Commission. They are reviewing the Current Use structure with Rob Johnson of the NH Farm Bureau. The meeting is Thurs Nov. 10th 7pm at the Boscawen town office complex. The commission would like to review the Current Use RSA as we want to clarify the ability to place land, under 10 acres, in current use if it is being used for agriculture and produces at least \$2,000 per year in income. Wendy will check with Ben Cargill and the Farm Bureau. More information will be gathered about erecting agricultural structures on land in current use specific to RSA 79-F:4.

The Right to Farm Act was discussed along with its' inclusion in the Weare Master Plan. A particular sentence was reviewed. 3.11.1 PURPOSE: "...Farming and agriculture shall be protected from any unreasonable limitation imposed by municipal planning and zoning powers..." Jerry Little considered gaining more insight about this by having Lorraine Stuart Merrill, Agricultural Commissioner, as well as the Society for the Protection of NH Forests come out to discuss the importance of conserving agricultural land and clarify if an action of removing agricultural as a permitted use from an easement is considered unreasonable. He stated he believes SPNHF includes conservation of agricultural property an important part of their mission. The town meeting and town warrant articles were also discussed and will be reviewed.

George Malette mentioned that the Planning Board was discussing a 5 acre minimum requirement on the Rural Conservation Overlay District which includes prime soils.

The NH Farm to School newsletter was reviewed and it was noted that Ilsley Farm was highlighted in the newsletter.

Wendy made a motion to adjourn, George seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 8:31 pm.

Recorded & submitted by,
Wendy J. Stevens