



## **Agricultural Commission**

### **Remote Meeting Minutes**

**June 27, 2023**

**6:30 - 7:30 PM**

Meeting came to order at 6:30 PM.

Present: Eric Piper, Lucy McKain, Sherrill Rosoff.

Minutes for April 7, 2022, and September 13, 2022 reviewed and approved.

The committee brainstormed planning for Open Farm Day, October 1st. Lucy McKain offered the idea of a No Factory Farm Food Day for the Open Farm Day tour as a kick-off event. She suggested a small group of 20 on a first come-first serve basis in which our local farmers would donate and cook food. Donations would be accepted instead of charging for tickets. Lucy was offering her farm as the venue, and the event would be a brunch (five courses!). We would need to explore the idea with other farmers. Sherrill Rosoff suggested whether the brunch could be for seniors in town, working with the Senior Center, using the shuttle bus to bring them to Herb Hill. Conversation continued regarding logistics coordinating farm interest in the idea. The group decided to poll farmers about their interest in a Fall Harvest brunch as part of the tour.

The committee turned to Open Farm Day and how we could make the event more attractive including antique tractor displays, en pleine aire painting, and music. The Maker Farm had sponsored a string quartet on their farm performed as a pro bono concert. We have artists in town that could provide art events for visitors. Pepperell Community Media videos of the farms last year was very well received and if we had activities at the farms, PCM might be willing to return to video these events as well.

Discussion turned to Right to Farm signage. Lucy will follow up with Charlie Tully regarding the Dunstable Right to Farm signs and their size. It was hoped to have the signs designed, fabricated and installed by the end of the year.

Sherrill updated the members on a conversation with Charlie Tully regarding his plans for a commercial kitchen/processing center and possible food hun on his farm in Dunstable. He is not interested in Peer Fitz kitchen. He would move his store on Route 113 to his farm; he has begun looking at grant financing. As he is Chair of the Dunstable Agricultural Commission, he has

received a copy of the Stakeholder Engagement Report (Sherrill had sent copies to all local Ag Chairs).

Eric reported to the committee about the Massachusetts Farm to School program that gives school districts money to purchase locally grown produce and lightly processed foods. He mentioned that Littleton does this. Districts opt in by April of each year; the original funding was through ARPA but the State is trying to make this funding permanent and we should keep an eye on the bill so that we can approach the School District. The farmers will need to know our plans well in advance as they plan their crops. We could approach Margaret Scarsdale's office to have one of her staff update us on the legislation.

Discussion of Christmas in the Country was deferred. Sherrill Rosoff discussed the role of committee chairs regarding membership, diversity of opinion, and Select Board approval of new members and renewal of existing members. Thoughts on the subject are welcome.

Eric Piper motioned to adjourn, Lucy seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.