

Woodstock Agricultural Commission

Regular Meeting, Town Hall, Room A, 1 pm, Monday, December 17, 2018

Members Present: Stewart Morse, Richard Norman, Paul Miller, Linda Auger, Rebecca Hyde, Lynn Weaver, Jon Hermonot. **Absent:** Doug Young

Public Present: Grace Jacobsen, Aria Gian Friddo, Aaron Johnson, Ethan Holcomb.

1. Call to order. Meeting called to order at 1 pm.

2. Seat alternates. Richard Norman moved to seat Linda Auger as a full member, Rebecca Hyde seconded, **All in favor.**

3. Review of November 2018 minutes. Richard Norman motioned to approve the October minutes as presented, Linda Auger seconded, **all in favor.**

4. Public participation. Three Academy students are attending the meeting as part of their Environmental Studies course.

5. Old business

a. WOLSLAFP report. A plaque was dedicated at the Town Hall, recognizing participants in land conservation through the purchase of development rights. The 82 acre Spalding Farm was recently preserved through the DoAg PDR program with help from NRCS, at \$3,300 per acre.

b. P&Z subcommittee report. The public hearing on the proposed sub-division regulation revisions will be continued this coming Thursday evening (the 20th).

c. Other. None

6. New business

a. Ordinance Review. The new assessor, Emily Carlone, will come to a meeting in in the next few months to review the situation with assessments and farm property.

After further discussion on the current ordinances, Lynn Weaver **moved** that we ask the Selectmen to request the town attorney to craft an amended ordinance to replace the current Tax Abatement for Dairy Farms and Fruit Orchards, expanding it to include all

farming activities allowed by the referenced state statute, and to confirm that the correct state statute is referenced. Richard Norman seconded. **All in favor.**

This concludes our discussion of the town ordinances regarding farming, since it seems the options for favorable tax treatments under state law have already been passed, with the above exception. We will move on to discuss Planning and Zoning treatment of farm use and activities.

b. Woodstock Land Map Grid Review. Map 6395. This section runs along the Pomfret border, roughly from 169 to Quasset Rd. It includes the airport, the Middle School and Academy South, and farmland owned by Castle Rock Farm, John Chapman, the Miller family, James Dean and others. There are 588 acres in total, broken into 40 parcels. 562 acres are in open space/farm/woodland classification for tax purposes. The waterways are Little Brook and Mill Brook, the elevation 420 ft along 169 up to 630 just above Quasset. It includes a good deal of prime farmland, and some wetlands.

7. Announcements / Other

Linda was on the town site and looked at the list of farms in town, it badly needs updating. Linda will discuss it with the town clerk, and try to get the inaccurate list removed. Stewart will start to review the Woodstock Grown Brochure.

8. Adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 2:20 on a motion and second by Lynn Weaver and Richard Norman.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Hyde, Secretary

(These minutes are subject to approval at the next meeting of the full Commission.)