

**ENFIELD AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**  
Tuesday March 8, 2022

A Regular Meeting of the Enfield Agricultural Commission was called to order by Chair Karen LaPlante in the Enfield Town Hall, 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, Connecticut on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 @ 7:03 PM

**ROLL CALL**

Kathy Vose took the roll.

Present – Chair LaPlante, Commissioner Cote, Commissioner Pfeifer-Hall, Commissioner Dynia, Commissioner Vose, Commissioner Wyzga, Commissioner Kober and Commissioner McGuire

Also present: Georgie Driver - Staff and Karen Timpone – Recording secretary

Absent – Commissioner Sacerdote

**Approval of Minutes** - A motion to accept minutes of February 8, 2022 was made by Commissioner Cote, seconded by Commissioner Dynia – Discussion – Commissioner Vose had two corrections for the minutes one under Public Participation take out the first “him” and it should read “to talk to him” and under Reports of Officers, Committee and Staff – the word “purse” should be pursue. Both changes were noted and approval of the minutes as amended was approved unanimously – 8/0/0

**Public Participation** – None.

**Correspondence** - Chair LaPlante got an e-mail from the Town Manager regarding a grant application (up to 50 million for the Connecticut River corridor) some of it has to do with River testing – Chair LaPlante thinks the Connecticut River Conservancy, municipalities that have sewer overflows, and similar groups will go for it. It is through The National Fish and Wildlife and Long Island Sound Foundation. The northern states, CT and NY are approved for any of the types of grants but MA, NH and VT are restricted to certain things. Some of the things of interest to us is the nutrient flows into the rivers and streams, high nitrogen level, etc. Chair LaPlante thinks that possibly The Department of Ag will go for it and then give smaller grants. Commissioner Pfeifer-Hall suggested they ask Nelson to take a look at it and see what he thinks.

Georgie informed the EAC of some changes which including Economic Development Department no longer under The Planning Department.

**Review of the Bylaws** – The start time states it is every second Tuesday directly after ECC meeting they will take out directly after the ECC. Georgie will draft up any changes to the Bylaws for the EAC to vote on at the next meeting. She asked that if there are any other changes to email her before the next meeting.

**Approval of Invoices of other Financial Matters** - Commissioner McGuire asked if the EAC can make a donation to the Farm Bureau as Joan Nichols donated her time to come speak about the 490 program and offered to work with a lot of farmers individually. They also donated some of the 490 booklets. Commissioner McGuire asked if we could purchase the booklets or send a donation as a thank you to Joan for the presentation. Georgie does not think the EAC has any budget/funds for donations. She does think there are some grants coming out in the spring that they can possibly apply for. Commissioner Cote did speak to Laurie about a budget and she did say if the EAC would like to go for training the town

would pay for it but as far a budget there is none for EAC or ECC. Commissioner Cote suggested they ask for the \$100 for the books.

**Reports of Officers, Committees and Staff** – Chair LaPlante reported that they had the 490 meeting with Joan Nichols of the Farm Bureau at the Fermi Annex on Wednesday, March 2, 2022. Commissioner McGuire did speak to the Town Manager and they had been talking to a lot of the 490 people with appeals and they were down to only 16. Some have not filed the appeal yet but will be doing so before the deadline of March 18, 2022. She asked what the EAC's thoughts were regarding the meeting and they felt it was very informative. She also heard from the farmers who they also thought the meeting was very informative.

**Unfinished Business** –

a) POCD - Georgie handed out a list of all the goals from the past couple of meetings and said they should discuss implementation strategies.

The POCD are the goals they would like to achieve in the next 10 years -

The Town of Enfield should promote more educational programs to educate residents in the importance of Enfield's farm soils and encourage farmland preservation to help meet state goal of Ag percentage. Commissioner Cote would like to take out the word "try to" and just use match and put in the percentage. Georgie would like the EAC to see if the percentage is attainable for Enfield or they can use a specific percentage to increase it by, i.e., 10%, 25%, etc. They EAC will work on that to come up with a specific number/percentage. Commissioner Kober suggested taking some goals from the previous POCD. Commissioner Dynia suggested looking at similar towns to see what they are projecting for farmland preservation and open space. On the Assessors database there are 18,803 acres in the Town of Enfield. There are 574 acres owned by utilities but they are not necessarily preserved. They would like to find out how many acres are in The Farmland Preservation program and see how many potential ones there are. Commissioner Kober found in the 2011 POCD that there was 1,574 acres of protected open space in Enfield (7% of the town) with a goal to achieve 21 % of protected open space by 2023. This is all open space not just farmland.

Chair LaPlante asked if anyone would like to see a farm zone? Farming is allowed in any zone as of right now. Commissioner Pfeifer-Hall suggested that they work on smaller goals i.e., farm stands regulations to make it easier for farm stand businesses. Georgie suggested starting small with making regulation/text changes instead of zoning changes.

Promote farm friendly regulations.

Promote Agritourism - Commissioner Sacerdote said in the past they had a lot of damage to Easy Pickin's from the general public when they have pick your own which is considered Agritourism.

Promote Agriculture as an industry.

Commissioner McGuire stated some towns have a map of all the type of farms, ice cream, Christmas tree, farm stands, etc. The question is where to put the map/brochure or how to implement.

The last item regarding 25 acre what farms can preserve land will be under the ECC POCD.

**New Business** – None.

Chair LaPlante updated everyone on the 490. She took the 2018 and the 2020 evaluation and the 2021 after reevaluation. She removed the parcels that were developed or merged or something else changed, they lost a total of 62 parcels from a total of 158. The acreage that was kicked out of 490 (before the Town Manager got involved) was 1,089 acres. The total value of the lost acres was \$579,000 at the 490 value. The new assessment on those parcels went from \$2.022 million to \$15.798 million which were the developed ones and the 490. The remaining parcels that were not developed was \$6.4 million.

Commissioner Kober reported that he will be an alternate on IWWA starting next week. Chair LaPlante asked if EAC or ECC wants to discuss something that going on with IWWA and it is a public hearing, she asked if Commissioner Kober can participate. Georgie explained that as a Commissioner, it is strongly

advised no, but he would have to state that he is part of the Commission but he is not speaking for the Commission. Georgie suggested he recuse himself in that situation.

Next Meeting Date – Tuesday April 12, 2022

Adjournment – A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Cote, seconded by Commissioner Kober passed unanimously 8/0/0.

The meeting was adjourned @ 8:10 PM