

Brooklyn Agriculture Commission
Tuesday, February 27, 2012
7 pm
Brooklyn Town Office

Present: Chair Cherie Poirier, Joyce Meader, Lou Brodeur, Sherri Vogt, Stan Karro, Charles Langevin,
Guests: Austin Tanner, 1st Selectman
Joel Rosenberg, Barrett Hill Farm

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Minutes: January 25th minutes accepted. (CL, CP)

Old Business:

- a. WalkOctober: J. Meader asked John Ennis, Kingswood Dairy Farm, to sponsor a walk next Saturday, October 27th for the public to view the dairy farm and nearby cornfields. Joyce will ask John for his decision by April 1st deadline. Rudy Rzenikiewicz offered to have his hayfields cut and allow the walkers to visit his farm, including the Brooklyn Restoration buildings. He may have beef cattle observing the walkers.

- b. Open Space Fund:

The commission moved that the Brooklyn Finance Committee increase the Open Space Funding from \$1/ person to \$2/ person. (CL, LB)

- c. Community Farmland Preservation Program:

- a. Tanner shared the town's receipt of the map created by NRCS of Brooklyn's Locally Important Farmland Soils. The map is missing a key to the various colored soil types pictured.

Brooklyn needs to prioritize farms interested in preservation. The commission members will review the example scoring sheets used by other towns, to create a Brooklyn scoring system to match the commission and state's priorities. Chair C. Poirier will call the CT Dept of Ag to learn more about the state priorities. J. Meader questioned if land producing livestock feed (hay and corn silage) be considered, as the program describes "preference will be given to food-producing farms that may be too small to qualify for the existing Farmland Preservation Program".

J. Meader will get a copy of the Conservation Commission's farmland overlay of the natural resource inventory map from Diane Wimmer, CC Chair.

Guest, Joel Rosenberg, Barrett Hill Farm, shared his desire to sell the development rights of 48 acres. The land on Barrett Hill Rd. includes four hayfields used by Mr. Peck, and a new orchard of Chinese Chestnut trees, planted by Joel.

The program will be described, with the scoring priorities, and sent to the Brooklyn farms, with C. Poirier's contact information for those interested. The commission will evaluate the offer, using the new scoring sheet, when created. Lisa Arends will be contacted about making labels.

- d. March 24th conference: First AGvocate "Growing Farms in Your Community" gathering will be held at Eastconn, Rte 6, Hampton, CT from 9 AM- 3:30 PM.

Included is a Cornell talk, "Assessing the Market Channel Best Suited for Your Farm Profitability" and a breakout session of livestock producers developing their product marketing plans. Call to register 860-450-6007 AGvocate@yahoo.com or www.AginfoTLGV.org/AGvocate

New Business:

- a. Healthquest: C. Poirier asked the commission to suggest a Brooklyn farm for a heart healthy three hour nutrition education event during September 14, 15, 16 celebration. A tent or other shelter would be needed for the event. The Brooklyn fairgrounds was suggested.
- b. Option for town to purchase the Ross' Egg Property on Rte 205: One area could be appropriate for a community garden, including water supply. The commission moved to support the town's purchase of the property. (LB, CL)
- c. The commission moved that the town adopt legislation exempting \$100,000 per farm building, and an additional \$100,000 farm equipment exemption from municipal taxes in Brooklyn. (LB, JM). J. Meader will email example wording for the ordinance, to be proposed after the budget settled.

Adjourned 8:30 PM

Sincerely,

Joyce E. Meader, Secretary