

Brooklyn Agricultural Commission
Tuesday January 23, 2018
7:00 PM
Town Hall

MINUTES

I. **Call to Order** – Chairperson, Lou Brodeur called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. **Roll Call (5 Regular and 3 Alternates)**

Lou Brodeur, Chairperson; Charles Langevin, Vice Chairperson; Anne Ennis; Sandra Brodeur, S. Karro, Joyce Meader.

Also Present: Aaron Kerouac, Brooklyn Planning & Zoning Commission; Josh King.

III. Seat alternate if necessary – No Alternated seated.

IV. Review minutes from November 28, 2017 Meeting.

Motion was made by C. Langevin to accept the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 28, 2017, as presented. Second by A. Ennis. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

V. **Public Participation**

Aaron Kerouac represented the Brooklyn PZC and explained that he is soliciting feedback from the various Town Commissions regarding possible Zoning Map changes with the hope that the Zoning Map will match the proposed Draft Regulations when presented at a public hearing. The Agricultural Commission could weigh in on approximately 90 percent of the Town (Agricultural Zone). He suggested that they refer to the Resource Map (for inventory). There was discussion regarding maps/overlays. Mr. Kerouac said that there should be an updated map from the Conservation Commission showing the legally protected or effectively protected lands.

J. Meader offered that she could print maps at the Extension Center if she could get the file. Mr. Kerouac stated that he is trying to get Jana Roberson to make a master map combining Zoning, Agriculture and Aquifer. L. Brodeur suggested getting an overlay for the soil types from the USDA. J. Meader stated that she can get it, but she feels that the protected lands aren't as important to have because they are already protected. It is the prime soil types that are not protected that are very critical. Discussion continued.

Mr. Kerouac asked the Commission to consider if there are any areas that they would like to be included in the RA Zone and he explained that there are some areas that were zoned RA that had been changed to R-30, but have never been developed so, technically, they are still RA. He stated that he is going to asking for some of those to be changed back to RA (along the River). The only place that it wouldn't make sense to change back is East Brooklyn because it is too dense. He explained that the people that have houses back there already meet RA standards, so if it were changed back it would not affect anybody. It would just mean that you can have agriculture more than you can now (although it is wet back there), but in R-30 you are limited on what you can do. Mr. Kerouac explained the difference between RA and R-30 and stated that the case that he will make to have it changed back is that almost everyone there has a lot more than 30,000 s.f. (many of the lots are ten or more acres). All agriculture would be by right. The area he is speaking of is at the bend of Day Street and to the north (a utility company holding) to Pomfret. Discussion continued. Mr. Kerouac stated that this would help to keep those fields effectively protected.

Mr. Kerouac stated that the map will be going out to everyone by the end of the week and he asked that any feedback regarding zone boundaries for the Zoning Map be sent via e-mail. All of the feedback will be put on a list with no names attached as to who it came from so that everything will be debated fairly. These will be discussed at a PZC meeting in March.

L. Brodeur stated that the Ag Commission could discuss this at its February meeting and submit any suggestions they come up with before March. There was discussion that it would be better to do a presentation with a slide projector or Power Point.

S. Karro asked if there would be a list of changes. Mr. Kerouac explained that he plans to provide (to the PZC) a list of suggestions with yes/no boxes and those votes would be recorded in the minutes. S. Brodeur explained that right now, they are only looking for suggestions for zone changes and that the regulations would come later.

VI. Old Business:

A. Committee report for: "History of Agriculture in Brooklyn." – No Report.

B. South Brooklyn Solar project. Letter sent to Siting Council, vendor and local commissions. Held up letter due to frog episode and delay in project.

S. Brodeur provided copies of the letter that J. Meader had written regarding Pollinator-Friendly Solar Initiative and an e-mail correspondence between S. Brodeur and J. Meader dated December 14 and 15, 2017.

A. Ennis informed the Commission Members that she does not think that there will be a solar project on her family's property due to problems with run-off that they've encountered at another project in the Norwich area. Discussion continued.

The Commission Members discussed whether they should add that if the work were done in the fall, it could prevent erosion. Something should be put down on the ground for protection so that it is still good farmland when they are done. There was agreement that putting in seeding dates would be too restrictive of the projects.

There was discussion regarding a solar project on Route 6 (over the Rhode Island line).

There was discussion regarding the frog issue.

J. Meader will get the address for the CSC. The letter will also be sent to the Brooklyn Conservation Commission (Jeannine Noel) and the Brooklyn PZC, the Canterbury Selectman's Office (Chis Lippke), and the Canterbury Ag Commission.

C. Nothing new on Killingly Advisory appointment. Meeting scheduled for January 17, 2018 (snow storm). Mr. Brodeur believes that meeting may have been cancelled and has not heard if it has been rescheduled.

A. Ennis has not heard anything from Mr. Couture yet. L. Brodeur will send a letter of recommendation.

VII. New Business:

S. Brodeur provided copies of a sheet regarding Farm Family Emergency Response Training which was held on January 20th in Oxford, MA. She spoke with Debbie Tanner (Farm Bureau) to find out if the program (cost of \$20 pp) could be presented in in this area (maybe the Killingly

High School Ag Department). S. Brodeur had mentioned it to the fire fighters at their monthly meeting and they were interested in attending.

Ms. Tanner is waiting for a response from Joan Nichols. Ms. Brodeur will keep the Commission Members informed. There was discussion. It was suggested to find out if they could apply course credits (e.g. for logging license). The program is a six hour block of time. It would be best to do it before spring.

A. Election of 2018 Officers

L. Brodeur stated that he is not interested in running for an Officer position and he opened the floor to nominations for Chairman.

Motion was made by S. Brodeur to nominate Anne Ennis for the Chair position. Second by S. Karro. Ms. Ennis accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations.

Motion was made by S. Karro to closed nominations for the Chair position. Second by S. Brodeur.

Mr. Brodeur declared Anne Ennis as the Chair of the Agricultural Commission.

Mr. Brodeur opened the floor to nominations for Vice Chairman.

Motion was made by S. Karro to nominate Charles Langevin for the Vice Chair position. Second by S. Brodeur. Mr. Langevin stated that he would serve again. There were no other nominations. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

Motion was made by S. Karro to close nominations for the Vice Chair Position. Second by S. Brodeur. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

Mr. Brodeur declared Charles Langevin as the Vice Chair of the Agricultural Commission.

B. Any other business to come before this meeting.

J. Meader provided copies of and explained a survey for the Connecticut AgrAbility Program which works individually with farmers who have different levels of debilitating conditions to see if they can help their quality of life. They have resources for assistive technology. This program has been operating since the summer.

L. Brodeur offered to help with getting this survey posted on the Town's website. Discussion continued.

VIII. Action Items for Next Meeting

IX. Adjourn (Next meeting February 27, 2018).

Motion was made by S. Brodeur to adjourn at 7:48 p.m. Second by A. Ennis. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,

J.S. Perreault
Recording Secretary