

**Brooklyn Agricultural Commission**  
**Tuesday February 26, 2019**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Town Hall**

**MINUTES**

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

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

Anne Ennis, Chairperson; Charles Langevin, Vice Chairperson; Lou Brodeur; Sandra Brodeur; Joyce Meader; Stanley Karro was absent.

Also Present:

Jennie Kapszukiewicz – Chair of the Plainfield Agriculture Commission

A.J. Kerouac

Gavin Hunter arrived at 7:05 p.m.

**III. Seat alternate if necessary** - Joyce Meader was seated as a Voting Member for this meeting.

Motion was made by L. Brodeur to modify the Agenda to have discussion with Jennie Kapszukiewicz, Chair of the Plainfield Agriculture Commission, after Item II. Roll Call. Second by S. Brodeur. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

Discussion with Jennie Kapszukiewicz, (Stone Hill Farm in Plainfield) Chair of the Plainfield Agriculture Commission, took place at this time.

Ms. Kapszukiewicz spoke of the importance of encouraging/educating, maintaining and sustaining agriculture not only in Plainfield, but in the region. Some of the topics included the following:

- 1) Short and long-term goals and objectives for the Commission (they revisit this list every year). Ease of implementation and impact to the community are considered. The list includes:
  - Establish trust with the farmers.
  - Survey regarding the agricultural needs of the community.
  - Community Garden (not a priority due to the amount of work involved).
  - Preservation of open space and farmland.
  - Create a resource database for farmers and community members (webpage with specific tabs).
  - Working on Zoning Regulations (Right-To-Farm Ordinance).
  - Considering tax breaks for agricultural structures.
  - Create a history of Plainfield agriculture (not a priority).
  - How to connect the four districts in Plainfield to become one.
  - Created a logo and mission statement.
  - Participate in the VJ Day Parade (which is their primary outreach).
  - They try to do four community outreach programs each year and have included: beekeeping; tomato gardening; container gardening; Last Green Valey. They have a short meeting leaving time for the guest speaker.
  - Would like to participate in Walktober.

- Would like to have a Grown in Plainfield event.
  - Would like to participate in more children's events in the schools such as Read Across America and the Health and Wellness Day event. They put bookcases in the elementary schools and get literature offered from the Farm Bureau. They also are working on ways to raise funds to add more literature to the bookcases.
  - They work on establishing a budget. Currently they raise funds to support their ventures.
  - They have been discussing the possibility of establishing a permanent farmers' market area that could include a community park with walking trails to try to promote interest in agriculture. This could possibly be the place for a community garden.
  - They try to include those who don't have land and may only have a small balcony to work with.
  - Encourage new farmers to Plainfield.
  - Training for emergency personnel to handle barn fires and animal rescues.
  - Brochures and literature for the community.
- 2) Subcommittees (Fundraising)
  - 3) Scholarship (open to any graduation senior in the region pursuing a career in agriculture).
  - 4) Winter Market (this year will be their fourth annual) to be held next Saturday at Shepard Hill Elementary School. This is where they do fundraising for the scholarship (\$500 annually). They want to become an endowment (this is a goal of the Commission). They have 46 vendors participating (\$20 fee) limited to farmers and makers. They conduct exit surveys to find out how to make improvements. They average about 1,000 visitors.
  - 5) Working on a seed library.

There was discussion regarding what the Commission does with the schools, about getting a budget, about the Winter Market, about Farmers' Markets/SNAP, Canterbury Farmers' Market where they have created a fun atmosphere where people come to spend time (not just to shop), Right-To-Farm (chickens), Walktober.

IV. Review minutes:  
A. January 22, 2019

Motion was made by L. Brodeur to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 22, 2019, as presented. Second by C. Langevin. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

V. Public Participation

A.J. Kerouac spoke about how he is researching a permanent alternative for a Farmers' Market for Brooklyn (Fairgrounds). He is thinking about tiered fees for farmers/makers and charging vendors.

Mr. Kerouac suggested that a Community Garden may come more under the Housing Authority than the Agricultural Commission. They have the land along the River which is all cleared and they can get grants. There are many people in the area who could use it because they don't have yards. He stated that Quebec Square, LLC has a manager. He said they operate independently from the Housing Authority and he suggested that maybe they could hire a garden landscaper to oversee the Community Garden. Mr. Brodeur stated that they have brought up moving the Farmers' Market in the past and the vendors were not interested in moving to another location.

There was discussion regarding SNAP which the Brooklyn Agriculture Commission discontinued paying for because the vendors didn't want it anymore.

There was discussion regarding that there could be interest in people ordering what they want from the farmers and someone picking it up and delivering what was ordered, which is working in bigger cities. There was discussion regarding the time, effort and expense on the part of the farmers to participate in the farmers' markets.

J. Meader suggested that the first step for a Community Garden would be a needs assessment. She suggested a flyer to residents of Quebec Square. Mr. Kerouac suggested Twitter. Mr. Brodeur suggested the Town Newsletter.

VI. Old Business:

- A. Killingly Advisory appointment. – This is to be removed from the agenda.
- B. Community Garden. – This is to be removed from the agenda.

VII. New Business:

- A. Any new business to come before this meeting. – None.
- B. Last Green Valley – This is to be removed from the agenda.
- C. Election of Officers.

Motion was made by L. Brodeur to re-appoint the current slate of Officers:

- Anne Ennis – Chair
- Charles Langevin – Vice Chair

Second by S. Brodeur. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

D. Walktober Discussion.

There was discussion regarding a walk along the Quinebaug which is a historic area (Early Americans/Native Americans/manufacturing during the Industrial Revolution/dams. It was suggested that people can park at Allen Hill Tree Farm and take a wagon ride over Allen Hill Road and South Street. Although it is free, it was suggested that advance registrations could be taken for the wagon ride as space would be limited. Someone, with knowledge of the River, who can narrate and lead the walk is needed. Ms. Meader will speak with Bill Reed (Last Green Valley). It was decided that 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. would be a good time. Ms. Brodeur will take care of filling out paperwork.

Ms. Kapszukiewicz suggested contacting the Killingly Public Library because someone there has extensively researched the history of all of the mills in the area.

Mr. Langevin suggested that it would be good for the narrator to have knowledge of the following: Native American fishing wares on the Quinebaug, the mills, Early Colonial Mills along the River, flora and fauna along the River.

E. Discussion regarding possible participation with the Conservation Commission regarding Sustainable Connecticut.

Ms. Brodeur explained that this is on hold pending discussion and decision of the Board of Selectmen.

- F. Discussion with Jennie Kapszukiewicz – Chair of the Plainfield Agriculture Commission. –  
See Above.

VIII. Action Items for Next Meeting

Motion was made by L. Brodeur to purchase another sign for the Farmers' Market this year (cost \$800) to be placed across from the cemetery at the Fairgrounds.

There was discussion regarding location and that there should be no need to obtain a permit from the State for this location. The Commission also wants to put another sign near Brooklyn Farm and Pet (near the fire hydrant) next year.

Second by C. Langevin. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

Discussion regarding the Commission's display at the Brooklyn Fair to be added to next month's agenda. Ms. Kapszukiewicz expressed interest in participating with the Brooklyn Agricultural Commission at the Brooklyn Fair.

IX. Adjourn (Next meeting March 26, 2019).

Motion was made by S. Brodeur to adjourn at 8:08 p.m. Second by L. Brodeur. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,

J.S. Perreault  
Recording Secretary