

**Brooklyn Agricultural Commission**

**Tuesday, March 23, 2021**

**7:00 PM**

**Webex Meeting**

**Minutes**

- I. Call to order – Anne Ennis, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.
- II. Roll call (5 Regular and 3 Alternates) – Anne Ennis, Chair; Lou Brodeur, Sandy Brodeur, and Stan Karro. Charles Langevin was absent with notice. Regular secretary was absent. S. Brodeur volunteered to take the minutes.
- III. Seat alternate if necessary – none.
- IV. Review minutes from last meeting, February 25, 2020 (due to CIVID)

Motion was made by L. Brodeur to accept the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 25, 2020, as presented. Second by S. Brodeur. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously (4-0-0).

- V. Public Participation – None.
- VI. Old Business – All old business from meeting on February 25, 2020, has been dropped due to COVID.
- VII. New Business
  - A. L. Brodeur was elected as temporary chair to handle the election of Chair and Vice-Chair for year 2021.
  - B. A. Ennis was elected as Chair and L. Brodeur was elected as Vice-Chair.
  - C. Discussion of implementation of Recommendations to be included in the Town of Brooklyn Plan of Conservation and Development for 2020 to 2030 followed based on those in effect for 2010 to 2020. S. Brodeur read information received from J. Roberson:
    - 1. Prioritize Key Strategic Farmland Parcels – there was a map in 2011 that showed “Active Agricultural Clusters.” J. Roberson could update this map for us to review to try to rank those parcels based on the possibility of possibly protecting for future farmland use.

2. Establishing Farmland Acquisition/Preservation Fund or other funding options has been accomplished.
3. Consider “Right of First Refusal” options for Key Farmland Parcels – dropped because this item is unrealistic.
4. Encourage educational and outreach programs to promote the further understanding of the benefits of locally purchased foods, local farm operations, and how agriculture can be continued to be supported in Brooklyn – our commission will be working with the Northeast CT. Regional Brand to help promote local foods and farms.
5. Ensure the Agriculture Commission is the primary Town Hall contact for farmland issues – ongoing. We will also be updating our page on the Town website this year to provide additional information to the public.
6. Encourage periodic Agricultural listening sessions – ongoing.
7. Review/Modify Zoning and Subdivision regulations for “Farm Friendliness” and consider establishment of appropriate guidelines for buffer zones – worked closely with Planning and Zoning to revise regulations and will continue to monitor this.
8. Encourage coordination with neighboring Towns/regions to support and preserve agricultural interests and promotion projects – considering working with the Plainfield Ag Commission to develop a “farm” trail that will resemble the wine trail. Also working with UCONN Extension to develop a Northeastern CT. Regional Brand.
9. Consider establishing a community garden – currently dropped.
10. Encourage the sales and purchase of Brooklyn grown products through the support of farmers’ markets and locally grown initiatives – plan to try to expand our farmers’ market to encourage more people to shop there. Also plan to check to see if there might be more farmers selling product from their homes in our area. Possibly do some Facebook Live interviews at local farms. We will continue to work with the Brooklyn Farmers’ Market to find new ways to encourage growth of the market.
11. Promote additional signage in key locations to support local farm operations, farm stands, and farmers’ markets – ongoing.
12. Designate locally important farm soils through USDA – the information is on the Town website. We may try to get this updated.
13. Encourage the use of properties both private and Town owned for viable agriculture production – may work with the Conservation Commission to review Town open spaces to see if we can encourage some agricultural production in those spaces. Also, possibly plant pollinator/rain gardens.
14. Consider transfer of development rights program with agricultural lands as sending zones – dropped.

15. Additional property tax reductions for certain agricultural properties and buildings – BTC 604 done.

16. Support regional and statewide efforts to improve agricultural viability – members of this commission attend events whenever possible to learn improved ways to farm and share this with local farmers.

D. Brainstorm ideas for this year's projects – none other than those listed above.

E. Any other new business – none.

VIII. Public Participation – none.

IX. Action items for Next meeting

A. Contact Plainfield Ag Commission about "wine" trail

B. Contact Conservation Commission about open spaces.

X. Adjourn – motion made by L. Brodeur at 7:30 p.m. Seconded by S. Karro. (Next meeting April 27, 2021).

Sandy Brodeur  
Acting Secretary