

## **Agricultural Committee Meeting Minutes - October 27, 2025**

**In Attendance:** *Franklin Agricultural Commission: Marian Szymanski , C.J. Koshivas, Matt Stolz, and Benjamin Rousseau. Jen Andersen Sweeney, Ed Szymanski, and Susan were also in attendance.*

**Call to Order:** The Meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM by Marian Szymanski

**Acceptance of the Minutes:** The Minutes from our August Meeting were unanimously accepted.

**New Business:** We were joined by Pete Westover, from Conservation Works, an organization that works with MDAR to provide support to MA Agricultural Commissions.

### **1. Making Franklin Right-to-Farm:**

Pete Westover shared a power-point presentation, some hand-outs, and suggestions on how to best go about making Franklin a RTF Town. Currently, 150 Towns in MA have already done this. Pete suggested the following steps:

- a. Meet with the Town Council and share the size of the Farm Economy in Franklin as well as all of the benefits of local farms.
- b. Work with the Town Councilors who are in favor of passing the Bill.
- c. Educate the Public and the Town Officials on the growing importance of farms and farmlands in Massachusetts.

### **2. Understanding the New Powers of Ag Commissions :**

Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions have been granted new right and powers. Pete went over each of them. Most exciting was that Ag Coms may now purchase and own land. Pete shared some suggestions on how to this:

- a. Put out a town-wide survey for all existing farms. Ask about their product and about any issues they are encountering.
- b. Identify any farmland that could be vulnerable to future development.
- c. Identify land that could be used for farming.
- d. Look to CPA funds, grants, and municipal appropriations for funds. Consider establishing a, "Farmland Fund" or an "Agricultural Fund" in Franklin.

### **3. Canning/Food Processing Center in Franklin:**

To begin the process of creating a community food-preservation space, Pete Westover suggested that we contact the folks at the Food Processing Center in Western, MA for info and suggestions.

## **Old Business:**

### **1. Adin Estates:**

Marian attended the Planning Board meeting, held on October 20, 2025. She gave a summary of the portion of the meeting involving the property at 543 Union Street. She shared that the Planning Board is still reviewing all of the plans and that they are still waiting for additional materials from those in charge of the Project. Concerns were shared by the Farmers, a Neighbor, and The Agricultural Commission about the effects this development could have on the Farm. The Developer, G& H Engineering, Capital Environmental, The Developer, and some members of the Planning Board stated that they do not share these concerns.

### **2. AgCom Promotional Materials:**

Members of the Franklin Agricultural Commission met with the town GIS Director, Kate Hinckley and GIS Specialist Natalie Regan-Lampert. They will begin to create our new brochure and a Digital Story Map as soon as the materials we have requested from all of the Farms in Franklin, arrive.

### **3. Re-Cap for "Pumpkin Fest":**

Twenty five children and their families took part in our annual pumpkin celebration held at the 10/10/25 Farmer's Market. All of the families brought either a pumpkin that they grew themselves or purchased one from one of the farmers at the Market. Everyone seemed to have a great time decorating their pumpkin!

## **Meeting was adjourned: At 8:21 pm**

Respectfully submitted

Marian Szymanski-