

Franklin Agricultural Commission

Meeting Minutes from September 24, 2018

Municipal Building 355 East Central Street

In Attendance: Members Present: *Carly Fisher, Linda Noel, Tim Garboski, Jeff Perry, & Marian Szymanski.*

Guests Present: *Melanie Hamblin- TC, Jeff Nutting – Town Admin. , Susan Speers-Metacomet Land Trust, Cynthia Garboski – Farmer, Eamon McCarthy Earls- TC, and Darren M., Bob A. and Steven G. from the Rail Trail Committee.*

1. Opening:

- A.** Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm by Chairman Carly Fisher.
- B.** Roll Call: Five members of the Franklin Agricultural Commission were present.
- C.** Approval of the Minutes: The minutes from the 9/24/2018 were unanimously approved.

2. New Business:

- A.** Open Space in Franklin- Jeff Nutting (Town Administer), Susan Speers (a member of the Metacomet land Trust), members of the Franklin Town Council, members of the Rail Trail Committee, and Cynthia Garboski (a local Farmer and organizer of the Franklin Farmer's Market) participated in this discussion about open Space in the town of Franklin MA.

Jeff N. gave an over-view of the Town's Open Space plan and the history of Open Space in Franklin. Jeff N. has encouraged the acquisition of large pieces of land to keep them from being developed. He believes that Open Space in a town keeps the quality of life high for the residents. Jeff would like the Agricultural Commission to help the Town by contacting property owners of land that cannot be developed and encourage them to donate/sell the property to the Town so that they may stop paying taxes on unusable property. He suggested that we connect with 61A and 61B property owners and offer support, advice, and assistance if needed saying, "what doesn't end up as Open Space will eventually be built on". He also suggested that the Ag. Commission keep an eye out for available property that could potentially be added to the Town's Open Space

Susan Speers of MLT explained how Land Trusts function and described the importance of Town Officials, Agricultural Commissions, and Land Trusts working together – not independently – to protect Open Space.

Members of the Rail Trail Committee described the mission of their group and requested the Franklin Ag. Commission assist them in achieving their goals.

- B. Fairmount Fruit Farm- Members of the Franklin Agricultural Commission learned about the conflict between The owner of Fairmount Fruit Farm and Ever-Source energy company.
- C. Annual Report – Jeff N. informed the Franklin Agricultural Commission that we will need to create an annual report and presentation for the Town Council in 2019. We will need to describe the importance of the Franklin Agricultural Commission and describe our activities and accomplishments. Jeff Perry suggested that everyone on the Commission come to the November meeting with 2 or 3 suggestions for what the Commission should focus on in the coming year.

2. Old Business:

- A. Harvest Stroll Re-Cap - Members of the Commission described their experiences at the Event.
- B. Community Farm – A brief discussion took place between members of the Ag. Commission and a local Farmer with concerns that the creation of a Franklin Community Farm would take away business from local farmers.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned by Jeff Perry and Linda Noel at 8:55pm

Minutes submitted by: Marian Szymanski