

Mansfield Agriculture Committee
May 3, 2016

Attendance: Vicky Wetherall, Terry Woolen, Ed Hall, Stacey Stearns, and Tom Wells (guest).

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. Terry moved to accept the April 20th minutes. Vicky seconded the motion, and it passed. The minutes from April 3rd were not available and will be saved for the June meeting.

Terry moved to change the meeting time to 7 pm. Ed seconded the motion and it passed.

The Common Fields plan was discussed. Stacey passed out a letter from UConn Extension Educator Joyce Meader. Tom Wells answered questions on his plan. He is also working with Jim Hyde from NRCS, and Nikki from Windsor NRCS on the conservation plan (the original contact at NRCS could not help him finish, and passed the project on to Nikki). Nikki said there is nothing wrong with planting there. Soil samples were taken on all of the land, manure is not being spread everywhere, in some areas Tom is only applying nitrogen. Jim Hyde is looking at "Field B" with Tom.

Vicky moved that the agriculture committee approve the plan recommended by Joyce Meader. Ed seconded the motion and it passed.

The Windham Chamber of Commerce wants someone to go talk about Mansfield agriculture. Jennifer is likely attending. Stacey and Terry are interested in going with her.

Celebrate Mansfield is being held on September 18th from 12-4 pm. We want to do a simple booth again, with a map of the town farmland and copies of the brochure. We need two people to staff the booth. The group decided to save this for the June agenda, as it is something we definitely want to do.

Walktober – Vicky will pursue this and get in touch with Bryan Kielbania about his interest in hosting again this year.

Farm to Table Event – Based on the meeting with the Economic Development Commission, it was determined that before we do anything, we want to figure out what the best thing would be for the farmers. They are filling out surveys for all businesses, and including agriculture. Ag Committee members can go with them for these site visits.

Vicky still wants to do a small farm to table event this fall, at one restaurant as a pilot project. Dog Lane Café was selected since they are already using local products. Ideally, the publicity and event date will happen at the same time as Jiff's program in the schools. Vicky will talk to Steve at the restaurant, and the date will likely be in October.

Event at Cranberry Hill in Ashford – Stacey talked to Art Talmage, and they need to move it to June 23rd or 30th. Either of these dates is fine with the committee, and Stacey will call him back and tell him whichever works better for him.

Farm to School Initiative – We want to keep working with Jiff. Vicky is going to follow up with her while working on the Farm to Table event.

Permanently Preserving Open Space – Terry went to the meeting, and we want to have Jennifer add in her thoughts at the June meeting. This will be a long process, but the conversation and steps needed have begun.

Terry moved to adjourn the meeting. Ed seconded the motion and it passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.