

# Woodstock Agriculture Commission Minutes

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Monday, April 18, 2022

1:00 pm

Woodstock Town Hall Room A

**1. Call to order:** Chairman Stewart Morse called meeting to order at 1:00 pm

- a. **Members Present:** Chair Stewart Morse, Richard Norman, Doug Young, Emilie Hebert, Paul Miller
- b. **Members Absent:** Linda Auger, Rebecca Hyde, Jon Hermonot
- c. **Others Present:** Town Planner Delia Fey, Karen Swanberg, Elenore Provencal, Megan Hebert, Amy Monahan

**2. Seat Alternates**

- a. Richard Norman made a **\*Motion** to seat Paul Miller. **\*Seconded** by Emilie Hebert. **\*Motion passed unanimously.**

**3. Review of March Minutes**

- a. **\*Motion** made by Paul Miller to approve and adopt the minutes from meeting held on March 21, 2022. **\*Seconded** by Richard Norman. **\*Motion passed unanimously.**

**4. Affordable Housing Update**

- a. Delia Fey introduced herself and reviewed the Town of Woodstock Affordable Housing Plan presentation with the commission. Information included definition of affordable and attainable housing, state guidelines of affordable housing, types of housing in Woodstock and possible future housing options. Delia Fey has included a section on Agricultural Housing needs in the Affordable Housing Plan for the Town of Woodstock. She has requested information and input from the Ag community. Emilie Hebert will gather requested information from the town's dairy farms and return it to Delia and members present will also send feedback as requested. Delia also recommended attending the Planning & Zoning Meeting with any concerns.
- b. There was discussion about current agriculture housing, specifically the trailers used at Woodstock Orchards to house seasonal workers and the state regulated program (H2A) that currently oversees the housing of seasonal workers. Doug Young discussed the options for permanent structures to house his seasonal workers and will forward plans for labor housing that he has seen in Ag magazines to Delia Fey for her to reference.
- c. Paul Miller referenced the distance that his workers commute from Willimantic and Putman and the benefit to having local housing for farm employees. Many farm employees work more than the normal 40-hour work week and do not want long commutes. He currently has an employee looking for affordable local housing.
- d. Stewart Morse started the discussion about how to increase the affordable housing units in town, noting that only deed restrictions would change the affordable housing count. Further discussion included how zoning changes may need to be completed in order to allow for some alternate housing options.

**5. Public Participation**

- a. None

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## 6. Old Business

- a. WOLSAOF Report
  - i. The discussion to convey town property on Quarry Road to the Windham Land Trust has been tabled due to the interest of a private party in purchasing part of the land in question. The town will now investigate options and legal limitations of selling town owned land.
- b. P & Z Report- nothing new to discuss
- c. Other- none

## 7. New Business

- a. Other Windham County Ag Commissions
  - i. Stewart Morse did not attend the Stafford Ag Meeting but Megan Hebert was able to attend. She reported that all Ag related activities in Stafford and the surrounding towns do require permits. She also stated that if the activity is not listed under permitted activities, it is not allowed. A draft of the Stafford Zoning regulations pertaining to Ag Activities was shared at the meeting and can be found on the Town of Stafford website (click the "I want to" tab and then click "zoning regulations" under the view heading- ag activities can be found on pages 111-112 of the zoning regulations).
- b. Upcoming Program- nothing to report
- c. Affordable Housing- nothing to add from presentation & discussion
- d. Ag Zoning Idea's- nothing to report (see Stafford regulations mentioned above)
- e. State of CT Ag Report
  - i. A successful Ag Day was held at the capitol. Paul Miller and Richard Norman were in attendance. Kies & Jared LaVack were awarded the 2022 Outstanding Young Farmer Award from the Connecticut Agriculture Information Council.
- f. Woodstock Land Map Review- tabled until next meeting
- g. Other- Amy Monahan announced that she is working on the second annual Woodstock Locally Grown Day in August and looking at Saturday, August 6, 2022

## 8. Announcements

- a. None

## 9. Adjournment

- a. **\*Motion** made Richard Norman by to Adjourn. **\*Seconded** by Emilie Hebert. **\*The motion passed unanimously.** Meeting Adjourned at 2:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Amy Monahan. DISCLAIMER: These minutes have not yet been approved by the Agriculture Commission. Please refer to next month's meeting for approval/amendments.