

**WOODSTOCK PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2019, 7:30 PM  
WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL, MEETING ROOM 1**

**MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order:** J. Gordon called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

**II. Roll Call:**

**Members Present:** Jeffrey Gordon, Fred Rich, Joe Adiletta, David Morse, Jeffrey Marcotte, Syd Blodgett, Gail Dickinson, Tim Young, Mark Blackmer, Dwight Ryniewicz, Nancy Fraser

**Members Absent:** ZEO Tina Lajoie

**Alternates Present:** Doug Porter

**Noted for the Record:** Quorum

**Others Present:** Delia Fey, Cindy Brown, Agricultural Commission Members

**III. Designation of Alternates:** None.

**IV. Chair's Report:**

Chairman Gordon thanked the commissioners and staff for their ongoing work with the Planning & Zoning Commission. A special town meeting is scheduled for December 19, 2019, at 7 pm; therefore, the PZC meeting scheduled for that evening may be moved to a different room. Discussion ensued regarding changing the time of the PZC meeting in order to attend the town meeting.

**Motion** was made by Gail Dickinson, and **Seconded** by Joe Adiletta, to change the time of the December 19, 2019 PZC meeting from 7:30 pm to 8:00 pm. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**V. Discuss Agricultural Issues:**

Chairman Gordon welcomed members of the Agricultural Commission and explained the need to continue discussions with them relative to improving planning and zoning regulations as they relate to agriculture in town. He stated that this was purely a planning meeting with the Agricultural Commission and not a formal joint meeting. Due to this being a planning/working meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission and not also an Agricultural Commission meeting, public notification of an Agricultural Commission meeting was not required.

Chairman Gordon stated that prior discussions had evolved between both commissions around farm stands, farm stores and other agricultural programs and events, including agritourism. Specifically, he felt that the regulations need to be updated relative to farm stores. Different regulations have been researched from various towns, as well as state level regulations regarding these permit matters. The information previously collected will be re-distributed to Commission members soon.

Stewart Morse stated that the Agricultural Commission had some ideas on the direction of agriculture and agreed that a more informal discussion with the PZC on this topic was important. Areas the Agricultural Commission shared with the PZC included:

- Recognize agricultural venues and their ability to be profitable businesses.
- Agriculture is an evolving enterprise, connecting more with the consumer, and requires diversification in order to be sustainable.
- Support orderly growth and remove the negativity of new business. Be flexible and nimble to support and foster growth.
- The importance of agritourism for the businesses and the town overall.
- Understand the long-term ramifications of a special permit.
- Be sensitive relative to costs associated with permitting (e.g., engineering plans), especially for small agricultural businesses.
- Understand the definition of agriculture as it is written on the state level as part of their agricultural requirements.
- Consider categorizing by event/activity for permitting process.
- Provide oversight of permitting process while allowing the process to be simplistic and concise—not overcomplicated.
- Define what is exempt for agriculture.
- Consider taxation issues when drafting regulations.

Areas PZC members spoke to included:

- Define permitting process for farm stands and farm stores. One currently exists for a farm stand, but not a farm store.
- Determine the definition of agritourism to include in the regulations (review the towns of Stafford and Simsbury regulations, and others, for possible wording).
- Important to hold public hearings, when necessary, for residents to share their opinions.
- Acknowledged the idea of categorizing by agricultural activity/event.
- Acknowledged the need to not overregulate but reminded everyone that the Commission is bound by state statutes.
- Clearly define commercial permits vs. agricultural permits.
- Classification of agricultural use vs. non-agricultural use.
- Focus on defining the topic, then determining the process and standards.

Chairman Gordon stated that the Commission streamlined and improved the permitting process for non-residential and special permits earlier this year. The Commission has continued to support local agriculture and businesses. For any permit process of any level, the Commission focuses on public health, public safety, and public welfare.

It was recommended the town attorney be part of the discussions on new and revised regulations specific to agriculture. Stewart Morse asked that the PZC keep the Agricultural Commission informed on draft regulations and other matters relating to the agricultural regulations.

## VI. Adjournment:

**Motion** was made by Tim Young, and **Seconded** by Dave Morse, to adjourn. **The motion passed unanimously.** The meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Cynthia Brown, Recording Secretary.

**DISCLAIMER:** These minutes have not yet been approved by the PZC.  
Please refer to next month's minutes for approval/amendments.