

## **Shelburne Agricultural Commission**

April 1, 2014 Minutes

Beth Manning, Chair

Carolyn Wheeler, John Herron (Jay), Kim Stevens, Christine Dwight, Prudence Wholey, Secretary

Guests from Open Space Committee: Linda Herrera, Larry Flaccus, Joel Dwight

Meeting called to order at 6:30 P.M.

Minutes of the 1-14-14 meeting were read and accepted.

Open Space Committee members presented their final draft for the state mandated 7 year plan. The Ag. Com. has some specific goals included in the plan. Also, one of the topics included in wildlife corridors in town. It was noted that some of the maps are outdated and need to be brought up to date so the state has a clearer picture of where they are. Also, the town needs to be more aware of where these are. Once the plan is completed, the town can apply for certain grants in respect to open space.

Larry Flaccus brought up the issue of wood-fired boilers. He told us that Mohawk Reg. high school has to replace their boiler and he feels that they should consider a wood-fired one. It would utilize wood from forests in the area, be competitive with fossil fuels, if not less expensive, and would be "greener". He asked if we would write a letter regarding the idea to Superintendent Bouniconti. Joel Dwight mentioned visiting a wood-fired electricity generator in Plainfield, Ct recently. He said it was a clean operation, with no obvious smoke emissions.

Several people brought the new sign regulations the Planning Board and/or the ZBA has drawn up. It seems that there will be major restrictions on signage along Route 2 and elsewhere in town. Permits will have to be applied for from the building inspector, off-premise signs will be eliminated, and tent signs and temporary signs will have to be applied for by permit as well. Folks feel that signs need to be where the products are sold. It was stated that these new regulations seem not to be well thought out. There are two meetings concerning the signage to be held.

Beth handed out the results of the logo contest. Four people entered, and we chose the winner, included with this email. She will check on how the winner will get the prize of

Shelburne-grown products the Ag. Com. members have donated. Also, we will try and have an article in the Independent and/or The Recorder about the new logo.

Christine Dwight mentioned that the Shelburne Farmers Market will again be on the Baptist Lot on Main Street. she said they will hold a meeting at the conference room at Greenfield Cooperative Bank on 4-18-14 at 3 P.M. She suggested that some of our board members try and attend. The market opens on May 2, the first Friday of May.

Kim Stevens brought up the new nutrient management plan, manure handling regulations that UMass has drawn up. She said that it will impact many dairy farmers in the area, anyone with more than 10 acres of land. No winter spreading, other restrictions on manure piles, incorporation of manure within 48 hours into corn fields or other annual crops. Grass is not included. She also said that NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) and MDAR website should have more information on this. Also, there is a meeting in Springfield, MA on 4-4-14.

He told us that if we use any restricted chemicals we need to keep logs up to Larry Flaccus told us that he just had a field audit of his pesticide license. date, labels on all containers, as well as storage areas locked. He said that some chemicals require a worker protection course, a standard education for all employees. He said the EPA website would have more information on this.

We discussed our next projects for the Ag. Com. We will get the logo in place so farmers can use it, work on getting our portion of the town website up to date, and try to have a dinner/meeting in the fall where people can meet the farmers, eat our products, and find out what is available in Shelburne. We hope that people will support our farms if they know more about them. Carolyn Wheeler will check on Fellowship Hall about a date for this. Also, the Grange will be asked to support and/or help with this project.

We discussed starting a revolving fund to pay for some projects for the Ag. Com. The Select board would handle the funds, it would have to be approved by town meeting, and we need to investigate it further. Open Space has a couple of funds they can use for different projects, such as purchasing land for open space or recreation.



Prudy will email the minutes to Bev Neeley with a copy to Charlie Heath, the town website manager.

The next meeting will be June 3, 2014. We will meet at the Shelburne Fire station from now on. The town hall has too many meetings held, and often we can't get a room.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Prudence M. Wholey