

**AGRICULTURE COMMISSION**  
**December 19, 2011 - 7:00PM**  
**Colchester Town Hall**  
**Room 3**  
**Minutes and Motions**

Present - Elizabeth Gillman, Leslie Curtis, Joanne Becker, David Wasniewski, Jeff Savitsky (alternate), Alex Savitsky,

Others Present - Stan Soby, Adam Turner, Chris Borque, Butch Przekopski, Doug Wray and others

Absent - Andrew Lyons (alternate)

1. Call to order –  
Chairman Gilman called to order at 7:01am.
2. Citizens comments

Butch Przekopski congratulated the members on their appointment and encouraged members to look at the tax issues facing framers and farms. He also encouraged the Commission to make resolving disputes among farmers a priority.

Chris Borque presented various materials on farming to the Commission. These were materials for the school system from the Ct Agricultural Education Foundation.

Doug Wray also congratulated the Commission members for serving and encouraged them to review the Agricultural Viability Report and use that as a guide for action. He urged members to make things better for Colchester.

Adam Turner reported on the Planning and Zoning Commission's (PZC) efforts to develop new Zoning regulations. He indicated the PZC was finalizing the drafts and would hold extensive public hearings in later winter/early spring.

3. Acceptance of minutes  
Motion to accept the minutes of the November 21, 2011 meeting was made by Joanne Becker and seconded by Alex Savitsky. Motion passed unanimously
4. Chair report

Chairman Gillman presented and overview of the Commission and outlined how she would like things to proceed. She expected meetings to be orderly and respectful and wanted to focus on getting things accomplished.

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*Nancy A. Bray*  
NANCY A. BRAY  
TOWN CLERK

5. Old business  
a. Status grant application

Adam Turner outlined the Towns application to the State under the Agricultural Viability Grant. He summarized the project as a determination of the economic impact of farming on the Town and looked hoped that it would get selected for funding. He thanked the Commission for endorsing the project at their November meeting. He indicated that the State was expected to make their decision on funding projects in February 2012. He also indicated that the Town expected to utilize Paula Stahl to complete the work.

- b. Discussion and possible action on bylaws.

Stan Soby explained the purpose of bylaws and explained their makeup and organization. He also outlined the States Open Government rules as well as summarized the Freedom of Information rules. He cautioned members regarding the use of email sent to all members as that would be a violation of State Open Government meeting rules.

Liz Gillman distributed copies of several commission bylaws and hoped that these could be used as model. It was decided that David Wasniewski would prepare a first draft of Commission Bylaws assisted by Leslie Curtis.

- c. Review of 2007 Colchester Farmland Viability Survey recommendations

Liz Gillman urged all members to review the report and become familiar with its recommendations. Joanne Becker wondered where the Commission should start to implement those recommendations that had not been acted upon.

6. New business  
a. Discussion of procedures for handling farmer's concerns and complaints

The Commission discussed the procedures for discussing issues among farmers. Included in the discussion was mention again of proper open government procedures. Members were concerned that farmers would not want to present disputes in an open forum. It was decided that the bylaws would include a procedure for reporting and settling disputes.

- b. Discussion of list of ideas from members concerning areas to work on this year
- 1) Change in 490A acreage requirements (L. Curtis)
  - 2) Future Location of Colchester Farmers Market (J. Savitsky and E. Gillman)
  - 3) Ideas from other Agricultural Commissions (D. Wasniewski)
  - 4) Liaison and updates from Farm Bureau (C. Borque invited by E. Gillman)
  - 5) Farm Signage (E. Gillman)
  - 6) Outreach to local farmers (A. Savitsky)
  - 7) Other suggestions from members

Each of the issues were outlined and discussed. It was decided that "action steps" on these issues would be determined and reported to the commission at future meetings. It was also reported that a meeting of the Connecticut Agricultural Commission Conference would be held on March 24, 2011.

7. Additions to Agenda

Motion to add correspondence to agenda made by Leslie Curtis, seconded by Alex Savitsky. Motion passed unanimously

8. Correspondence from the Slow Food movement

Leslie Curtis reported on the movement toward local food production.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Alex Savitsky and seconded by Jeff Savitsky. Motion was approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm