

TOWN OF GRANBY
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

Notes

November 8, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Heather Lombardo, Ellen Whitlow, John O'Brien

Absent: Rachel Antonucci, Shirley Murtha, Liam O'Leary

Chairman Heather Lombardo called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Lombardo thanked Granby Grange #5 for hosting the meeting and welcomed the members and guests who were present. These included Kara and Phillip Marshall from the Grange, Peggy Lareau from the Granby Horse Council and Kate Bogli from Maple View Farm.

MINUTES

There being no quorum, approval of minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

DISCUSSION WITH GRANGE MEMBERS

Phillip Marshall gave an overview of Granby Grange #5. It was first organized in 1875 and has served as a community organization supportive of agriculture since that time. In 2022, Dave Roberts spearheaded an effort to revitalize Granby Grange #5, resulting in 29 new members. Efforts continue to find new relevance and connect with other organizations. A grant from the Hartford Foundation is enabling renovations to the building (212 North Granby Rd) including an updated bathroom and a new handicap ramp. The Grange held a successful Agricultural Fair on September 9.

OPEN FARM DAY

Feedback on 2023 Open Farm Day was quite positive. Kate Bogli reported that it was the most financially successful OFD event yet for Maple View Farm. Large numbers of attendees were present at many venues, as evidenced by three full parking fields at Lost Acres Vineyard.

Suggestions for next year include having more printed maps available at each site, more posters available for farmers to distribute in advance, and more digital advertising in towns other than Granby.

Discussion took place about improving an interactive on-line map and accessing more copies of the Granby Land Trust map for distribution or to be displayed (with QR code) at area farms.

RIGHT TO FARM ORDINANCE

Chairman Lombardo distribute a sample of a Right to Farm Ordinance from the Town of East Windsor. While CT has its own Right to Farm Laws which cover the towns, it is often thought that a town-adopted ordinance reflects on the Town's supportive stance toward agriculture. In general, right to farm laws protect farmers who are following accepted agricultural practices from lawsuits over five nuisances: odors, noise, dust, chemical use, and water pollution – (except pollution of drinking water supplies.)

A local Right to Farm Ordinance can be displayed on signs in town and can be useful to welcome new residents who wish to farm as well as remind residents that farming operations are accepted practices and must be accommodated. Members mentioned that a Right to Farm Ordinance would be useful in educating residents about safe driving in the presence of horses and tractors on our roadways. A Right to Farm Ordinance needs to dovetail with the town's zoning regulations.

Commission members will review the document. Further discussion and formulation of a local ordinance will be held at future meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Peggy Lareau from the Granby Horse Council mentioned that their group is also in the process of revitalizing. They are presenting a seminar on poisonous plants on Wednesday, November 15 at 7:00pm at the Holcomb Farm Workshop.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Stuck
Recording Secretary