

Agricultural Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 20, 2015
7:00 pm, 3rd floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

Present

Members: Melissa Greenbacker, Roger Passavant, Warren Herzig, Fred Mastele, David Zemelsky

Alternates: Joe Pasquale, Phyllis Naples

- 1) Meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm and roll call was taken.
- 2) Motion was made by Warren Herzig and seconded by David Zemelsky to accept the January 20, 2015 Meeting Agenda. Passed unanimously.
- 3) Motion was made by Phyllis Naples and seconded by Warren Herzig to accept the December 16, 2014 Meeting minutes. Passed unanimously.
- 4) Public Comment

David had invited members of the Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District to attend our meeting to discuss the condition of the Coginchaug River. Javier Cruz, Kelly Starr and Seth Lerman appeared before the Commission on behalf of the CRCCD.

They gave a brief overview of the existing Coginchaug River watershed based plan that their Commission was working on. They explained that the “specific mission” or focus of their project was that of water quality and the identification of bacteria sources.

After this brief overview of the project, the entire Agricultural Commission and the three CRCCD representatives had a lengthy dialogue as to the condition of the Coginchaug River, both regarding its physical condition as well as its water quality conditions.

It was pointed out that the Agricultural Commission’s focus was quite different from that of the CRCCD. Our emphasis has been on the physical disrepair and attributes of the Coginchaug River as evidenced by our site walks. Our hopes of “fixing” the Coginchaug were sparked by the fine work the State D.E.E.P. had done on the Allyn Brook. Regarding the difference in “focus” between the two Commissions, there does seem to be

some unresolved confusion regarding whether a better flow would improve or impair water quality.

Towards the end of this discussion, the CRCCD members recommended that we contact our local elected officials, such as our State Senators and Representatives. They felt a project of this size and scope would definitely require some help at the State level.

The Commission found Javier, Kelly and Seth to be extremely informative and very helpful. The Durham Agricultural Commission sincerely thanks them for their time and consideration in the matter.

5. Old Business

Due to the length of time spent discussing the Coginchaug River with the representatives of the CRCCD, Old Business was tabled to next month's meeting.

6. New Business

Election of Officers

There was a brief discussion among the Commission members in regards to the election of officers for 2015. Melissa Greenbacker made a motion "to keep the existing officers as is." Phyllis Naples seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Updates / Reports / Miscellaneous

- Melissa reported on the Farm Bureau Board of Directors - State Legislators Dinner.
- Melissa reported on a new Livestock Board / Commodity Group.
- Melissa reported on, and had handouts from, the Connecticut Farm Bureau in regards to a new "Tool Kit" that the Farm Bureau has put together titled "Advocating for Connecticut Agriculture in Local Communities."
- Fred reported on the new Equine Advisory Board.
- Warren reported on the Regional Agricultural Commission -
 - .the RAC is working on a pamphlet and website using the "Durham Grown" website as one of their models.
 - .Joan Nichols of the Connecticut Farm Bureau will attend the next meeting of the RAC.

- Warren reported on a Soils Conference to be held at the Extension Center on March 14, 2015.

- Warren reported that Joan Nichols would also be speaking at a Conference in the Town of Deep River on March 4, 2015. Her topic will be Public Act 490.

Groundwater Ordinance

David recommended that the Agricultural Commission draft a letter in support of the proposed Water Line Project that will supply water from the City of Middletown to the northern end of Durham. All members seemed in favor of the letter. David said he would work on it for our next meeting.

Motion to Adjourn

Motion was made by Phyllis Naples and seconded by Melissa Greenbacker. The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 pm.