

Harwinton Agricultural Committee Special Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2023

In attendance: John Bigos, Gene Heavens, Spencer Luthy, Gretchen Mathis, and Michael Orefice, chairman. Absent: Mark Gauger, Patty Sederquist, and alternate Brooke Cheney.

The Harwinton Agricultural Committee held a special meeting at the request of Mr. William Koval, 789 Hill Rd., who was concerned that his neighbor to the south was engaged in agricultural practices that violate current zoning regulations. Mr. Koval indicated that the business, Delicias da Fazenda, 797 Hill Rd., may be in violation of the setback rule. Mr. Koval believes that because the business was established in Dec. of 2022, the setback rule for the Keeping of Animals (6.5) should increase from 50' to the regulated business distance of 150'. Mr. Koval presented an A2 survey map that shows the hoophouse structure, that is used to house animals, is less than the required 150' distance in the Zoning Regulations. He indicated that he has been in contact with Torrington Area Health and has attended Harwinton Zoning meetings since March 2023.

Mr. Koval stated that the Hock family that owns the 10+ acre property had farmed the property and raised cattle there for several years prior to the Delicias da Fazenda business. Currently, there is a manure pile on the property line that encroaches onto the Koval property and is getting larger. There doesn't seem to be any manure management practices put in place or designated use of the manure pile.

Mr. Koval indicated that Mr. Hock stated at a Zoning Board meeting that 600 dozen eggs and frozen chickens are brought onto the property each week. He also indicated that cheese and bags of corn are also being brought in. None of which are raised or grown on the property.

Mr. Koval stated that Tom Standsfield of Torrington Area Health and Willow Lake, AGMIR supervisor, were contacted and are still working on the case. He also indicated that Nathan Wilson from the CT State Department of Agriculture is supposed to assign someone to conduct an inspection. He doesn't believe the inspection was conducted yet.

The business, Delicias da Fazenda, owned by Ricardo and Veronica Oliveira, advertises on Facebook as a Food Wholesaler at the address of 797 Hill Rd., Thomaston, CT. However, there is no such address in Thomaston. There are multiple photos and videos on the site of animals, processed foods being made, bulk produce, and vacuum packaged meats. The business is registered with the town of Harwinton.

After much discussion it was decided that the Committee would forward recommendations to the Harwinton Zoning Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Orefice

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