

**Harwinton Agriculture Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2012**

*approved
5/8/12*

Present: Stephen Camp, Mark Gauger, Cory Iacino, Gretchen Mathes, Mike Orefice and Patti Sederquist.

Absent: Mike Audet

Call to Order:

Mike Orefice called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Agriculture Committee: Purpose of existence

The 2010 Plan of Conservation & Development recommended that the Board of Selectmen establish an Agriculture Committee. The plan suggests that the town be proactive in considering ways to preserve and protect prime agricultural parcels and forestland through grants, preservation programs and the like. It also suggests that innovative planning and zoning practices and techniques be considered to preserve farmlands, forestland, and agricultural land. This is in keeping with the rural character of the town.

Initial Charges:

- *To identify current agricultural practices in town
- *To create and recommend a Right to Farm Ordinance for the town
- *To establish ourselves as a resource/advisory to the public
- *To create and recommend agricultural language for Planning and Zoning Regulations
- *To identify significant parcels in town that may have agricultural potential
- *To identify potential funding sources

Election of Officers:

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the following were elected to serve as the officers of the Harwinton Agricultural Committee for a one year period commencing with the meeting of the committee scheduled for today, April 10, 2012, to wit:

Chairman	Michael Orefice
Secretary	Patricia Sederquist

Discussion:

The Committee had a general discussion regarding various approaches to the development of a Right to Farm Ordinance and the corresponding language that would be applicable for the agricultural practices in Harwinton. Ordinances and proposals established by other towns were considered as a good starting point.

Cory Iacino reported that she found no information upon an initial search into the existence of the Town Farm and Farming Preservation Advisory Committee that was reported to be in existence in Harwinton in the 1980's. She will continue to investigate.

Patti Sederquist is scheduled to meet with Joan Nichols of the Connecticut Farm Bureau for a one-on-one consultation session with an agricultural professional regarding Right to Farm regulations on Tuesday, April 17th to be held at Wamogo Regional High School. All committee members are invited to attend.

Chairman's Report:

The Agriculture Committee agreed to meet every second Tuesday of the month at Town Hall. Minutes to each meeting will be forwarded to the Town Clerk.

The committee is encouraged to submit language to Chairman Orefice that we feel is significant in the creation of our own town "Right to Farm" ordinance prior to our next meeting scheduled for May 8th, 2012.

Copies of materials and documents relevant to the topic were distributed to the Committee for their review:

Public Act 490: Connecticut's Land Use and Value Assessment Law, A Practical Guide and Overview for Landowners, Assessors, and Government Officials

Open Space and Recreation Plan for Worthington, Massachusetts

Planning for Agriculture: A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities

Sample of Right to Farm Ordinance draft

New Business: Next Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 8, 2012 at 7:00 pm.

Adjournment: Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Sederquist, Secretary