

Agricultural Commission Meeting Minutes: Nov 23, 2009

Upcoming Meetings at the Community Building:

Monday Dec 14, 2009 7pm – speaker Rob Johnson, NH Farm Bureau
Monday Jan 11, 2010 – 7pm
Monday Feb 8, 2010 – 7pm
Monday Mar 8, 2010 – 7pm

Attending Commission Members: Bruce Dawson, Larry Moore, Melissa Moore, Carole Soule, Earl Tuson,
Alternates: Cory Clark, Per Garp

Meeting called to order at 7:00 by commission member Carole Soule.

1. Minutes of Oct 26, 2009 were reviewed. Item 2 was added to mention that the Loudon Ag website had been created. Minutes were accepted with this change.
2. Minutes will be posted on the Web site and published in the Loudon Ledger only after approval at a regular Commission meeting.
3. The Ag Commission webpage at loudonnh.org should use the same format as other commission and board webpages, including a list of members, contact information and email addresses.
4. It was agreed that meetings will be held on Monday evenings. Carole Soule will set up meeting dates for 2010.
5. It was agreed that guest speakers would only be setup for every other meeting. Meetings without speakers will be used primarily for Ag Commission business.
6. An update of the two issues presented to the Planning board was given by Earl Tuson:
 - a. The two Zoning Ordinance issues presented at the Zoning/Planning workshops include:
 - i. Dormitory housing for seasonal farm workers is allowed in the Rural Residential District but not the AFP district.
 - ii. Access through wetland buffers to surface waterbodies to allow management of irrigation systems is denied to farmers do to the 25 foot “no-cut” buffer.
 - b. Earl Tuson has attended the two Planning/Zoning workshops to present these issues. Discussion will continue at the next workshop.
 - c. The Ag Commission has been asked to meet with the Conservation Commission to further discuss access through wetland buffers.
 - d. Changes to resolve these issues may appear as warrant articles at 2010 Town meeting.
 - e. Per Garp suggested that the Commission look into the land development regulations, due to the definition of Commercial Agricultural Enterprise contained in that document.
7. Carole Soule attended a Loudon Business Association Meeting held at the Loudon Country Club. A joint meeting with the Ag Commission and Business Association will be considered. Common issues include:
 - a. A map of Loudon businesses
 - b. A listing of Loudon farms and items for sale
8. Carole Soule stated that she has been approached about a possible farmers market in Loudon. Discussion ensued. It was agreed that many Loudon farms would be uninterested in participating because of the additional work and time this would entail, whereas customers can currently visit these farms during their regular hours of business with only a short, scenic drive across town. A list of farms in Loudon who offer various products are listed monthly in the Loudon Ledger.
9. Carole Soule asked if “farm equipment” sharing was possible. This did not seem to be a good idea to most of the members present.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm.

The meeting was followed by a forum presented by the Capital Area Farm and Community Connection Forum. Approximately 28 people were present to meet local farmers, respond to potential projects and bring forth ideas of developing a local food network in the region. The forum ended at 9:20pm.