

Agriculture, Land Use, Recreational Assets – Minutes via E-Mail 12/5/2012

When a portion of our group met after the 11/7 Planning Board meeting, we decided to begin our work via email rather than through a group meeting. So far six of our members (Ann Chaffee, Dawn George, Charlie Elrod, Laurie Roe, new member Joanna Green & me, Art Godin) have participated in this process. We have not yet heard from our other members (Debbie Teeter, Calvin Rothermich, Sharon Clarke, Matt LeRoux, Jeb Mead).

I took the plunge and submitted a proposed draft of the Comp Plan Ag section for consideration by our group.

Dawn and I had a good talk on the phone. Dawn has a lot of experience to draw from in evaluating the proposed language but has not yet suggested any revisions. Ann proposed a lot of changes to my draft document. Charlie made a number of suggestions which I have incorporated into my original draft.

Below are two documents. The first version with "Art" after the title is my original draft incorporating Charlie's suggestions. The second version with "Ann_via_Art" after the title is my attempt to represent Ann's suggestions. I hope that I've correctly represented everyone's input.

So our document is still a work in progress. I think the biggest point of contention is whether all language implying control by the Town of land use should be excluded, or whether the Comp Plan should state that active agriculture is the preferred use for land suited for farming, and that the Town should actively support agricultural enterprises.

I'll have copies of the documents at the meeting in case anyone has trouble opening it.

Thanks, Art Godin

Agriculture and Land Use (Art)

Overview

This introduction Will list basic information about Enfield's agricultural activities and trends, once the data is available.

Goals and Strategies

Goal: Preserve Enfield's rural character, open space and agricultural lands.

1. Identify Enfield's most viable agricultural lands and take steps to protect them from development, to reserve them for agricultural use and to preserve the rural landscape.
2. Allow limited cluster and road-frontage development as appropriate to conserve valuable farmland for continued agricultural use while allowing farmers and landowners to develop smaller lots.

Goal: Support Enfield's farm businesses.

1. Foster dialogue among local farmers and other community members to identify specific needs, obstacles and opportunities associated with local farm businesses.
2. Stage events to make agriculture visible to the general public and to underscore the value of supporting local, active farms.
3. Explore the feasibility of establishing an Enfield Farmer's Market.
4. Encourage the development of value-added, secondary agriculture-related businesses to help farm owners generate additional income, while protecting the Town's rural character.
5. Exercise flexibility with respect to signage, accessory dwelling units, greenhouses, roadside stands and other infrastructure important to farming operations and farm-related income opportunities.

Goal: Encourage agricultural and woodlot-management practices that protect the quality of land, air, water and wildlife resources.

Appendices

Town of Enfield Soil Maps, available from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NCRS), and Town of Enfield Ag District maps.

Agricultural Profile, inventorying existing agricultural activity in the Town. Some of the questions to be answered:

What is the number of acres in agricultural use in Enfield? How many of these acres are owned by Enfield residents?

How many of these acres are leased by Enfield residents or people from outside Enfield?

How many farm; exist in Enfield, broken down by type of farm?

Agriculture and Land Use (Ann via Art)

Overview

Not sure what would go here.

Goals and Strategies

Goal: Preserve Enfield's rural character, open space and agricultural lands by encouraging all forms of agricultural practices.

1. Encourage the implementation of best management practices for all forms of agriculture, whether large or small, conventional or organic.
2. Encourage those engaged in farming to utilize information available from universities, Cooperative Extension and private consultants.

Goal: Support Enfield's farm businesses.

1. Foster dialogue among local farmers and other community members to identify specific needs, obstacles and opportunities associated with local farm businesses.
2. Stage events to make agriculture visible to the general public and to underscore the value of supporting local, active farms.
3. Encourage the development of value-added, secondary agriculture-related businesses to help farm owners generate additional income, while protecting the Town's rural character.

Goal: Encourage agricultural and woodlot-management practices that protect the quality of land, air, water and wildlife resources.

Appendices

Town of Enfield Ag District Maps.