

Franklin Agriculture and Conservation Commission

FRANKLIN TOWN HALL
7 Meetinghouse Hill Rd.
Franklin, Connecticut

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, April 19, 2018
7:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order: Chairperson Susan Allen called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chairperson Susan Allen, Vice Chair Alan Holmberg, Gail Miller, Craig Staebner. **Alternate Member Present:** Roland Mihok. **Alternate Member Absent** Chester Rynaski.
Mr. Mihok was seated as a voting member

2. Recognition of Visitors and Initial Inquiries:

CUSHMAN FARM/ PRESENTATION: Mr. Benevides of Woodard & Curran, Inc., provided a presentation on behalf of Quantum Associates and Cushman Farms. Joining Mr. Benevides was Mr. James Smith, Cushman Farms, and Mr. Brian Paganini and Mike Curtis of Quantum Bio-Power. The presentation provided an overview of a proposed project at the Farm that involves the construction of an anaerobic digester in two phases:

- Phase 1 will process cow manure generated on the Farm to generate electricity and beneficial use bi-products.
- Phase 2 will augment the on-farm cow manure with food waste that is hauled to the site from off property sources.

AG-CON members will continue to review the project and will hold a discussion at their next scheduled meeting. It was noted AG-CON is an advisory commission and may make a recommendation to Town Staff about this proposed project when asked.

AWARENESS / LOCALLY GROWN PRODUCTS: First Selectman Charlie Grant was present to discuss initiatives to raise awareness in the Town of Franklin of locally grown products. There is a lot of agriculture in Franklin as well as our neighboring towns. Mr. Grant respectfully asked if AG CON would be interested in supporting this initiative.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. March 15, 2018:

MOTION #1 (04-19-18): made by Alan Holmberg SECONDED BY Roland Mihok that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission approves the Minutes of March 15, 2018 as presented

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

4. Call for Additional Agenda Items: None

5. Correspondence: None

6. Old Business:

- a. **FRANKLIN HIKE 4/22/18:** AG CON is hosting a Franklin Hike event April 22, 2018 that will encompass a visit to the Mutluck Cabin, Beaver Lodge, Sandy Beach, a river viewing, and a walk along the River ridge Trail.

- b. **CONSERVATION EFFORTS UPDATE:** Towns of Franklin and Sprague are working together to raise money for an option for acquisition of property related to the Bombaro property. Grant has been received from DEEP. In addition, \$40,000 has been raised towards a \$100,000 goal for this option.
- c. **SJ35 PUBLIC LAND SWAP LEGISLATION UPDATE:** Generally, this resolution of protecting State owned public lands is driven by concerned people asking for a legal requirement that a public hearing be held for an activity associated to a developer or persons wishing to change the status of state owned public property. The requirement to enact a change into law is that it must pass the legislative approval process twice. The resolution passed once last year and in this coming year it will be placed on the floor in hopes of a second approval.
- d. **WCCC MEETING - 4/30/18:** Eric Hammerling, President of the Connecticut Forest Park Association will be advocating legislative changes to prohibit the State from selling public property without a due public hearing process.

9. New Business

- a. **PELTIER PROPERTY NEW FUNDING SOURCE:** There was review of pictures and maps showing protected land areas associated to the Peltier property and the Town of Sprague. There is the possibility that a funding source entity may be interested in the Peltier property. This entity is interested in property that contains water features. The Peltier property contains five natural water features throughout and abuts the Sprague land preservation area. The piece is a total of 53 acres with 33 acres in Sprague and 20 acres in Franklin.
- b. **FARM BUREAU:** None
- c. **UCONN/JOSHUA'S TRUST VOLUNTEER FOR FRANKLIN INVENTORY:** Casey Lambert is the UCONN student assigned as a liaison to AG-CON. Ms. Lambert is currently reaching out to surrounding Towns about Joshua's trust. There is interest in having Ms. Lambert assist AG-CON with the natural resources inventory.
- d. **AQUIFUR PROTECTION:** Susan Allen intends to review aquifer protection information near the old mushroom plant area.
- e. **CT TRAILS DAY 6/2 & 6/3/18 (CT FOREST & PARK ASSOCIATION):** Mr. Eric Hammerling, President of the Connecticut Forest Park Association is putting this event together.

9. GENERAL COMMENTS: None

10. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

11. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION #2 (04-19-18): made by Roland Mihok SECONDED BY Alan Holmberg that the Agriculture & Conservation Commission adjourn the meeting

VOICE VOTE: UNANIMOUS;

MOTION CARRIES

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Pollard

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