

Auburn Agricultural Committee

Minutes: 1 25 22 Approved: 3 29 22

Location: ZOOM

Recorder: Dave Griswold

Staff attending: Jay Brenchick, Rosemary Mosher

Attending: Dave Griswold, Bill Sylvester, Kathy Shaw, Joe Gray, Katie Boss, Chris Carson, Pam Rousseau (Pam Rousseau is a newly appointed member)

Excused: David Bell

Absent: Ed Michaud

Guests: Dana Staples, City Council; Sam Boss, Jane Costlow, Adam Platz, Conservation Commission; Amy Dieterich, Regulatory Review Board

Call to Order: 6:06 pm

Public Participation: None

- 1. Rosemary Mosher, GIS Mapping Project Report:** Rosemary reported on progress made on the project to use Quick Capture App to develop a storymap on city GIS to highlight agriculture and forestry land use in Auburn. Quick Capture allows a photo and an ag category/description to be tied to a point on the map. 150 points have been logged, with cropland, pasture, orchards, community gardens etc. Some of the cropland points identify specific crops. A storymap includes text, photos and videos. Additional information and text will be needed to develop a storymap including a narrative about its importance. Rosemary will need text, project objectives, land use history and other supporting information from the committee. Once complete, the storymap can be added to the Ag page on the city website, and be highlighted in a press release and social media. Joe Gray is leading this effort. Others interested in using the App are welcome to access it through Rosemary.
- 2. Discussion of Mayor's memo of 12 21 21 proposing changes to Ag Committee and Conservation Commission, with impacts on Regulatory Review Board and Planning Board:** The committee and guests reviewed the draft proposal developed as a response to the Mayor's memo and Ad Hoc Committee on Committees discussions earlier in January. The proposal is due to Phil Crowell on 1 26. Sam Boss has been leading the

development of the proposal, incorporating ideas from Ag, Conservation, Community Forest and Recycle members. The reaction of the group was positive.

3. **Approval of Minutes:** 12 28 21 minutes were approved
4. **LD 1884:** Discussion about Rep Bickford's proposed legislation.
5. **Draft 2022 Work Plan:** Kathy presented a draft of items to be included in the committee work plan for 2022. It was well received, but time did not allow in depth discussion. Katie will map the plan items to the original Ag Committee ordinance for discussion at the next meeting.
6. **Food Forest at the Tot Lot:** there is work being done by another group to develop a plan for a Food Forest at the Tot Lot on the Fish Hatchery Road. A Food Forest is a permanent grouping of trees and perennial plants that complement each other for food production.
7. **Land Use Pamphlet:** Joe will send out the Land Use Pamphlet that he developed and has been approved for publication by City staff. It covers State tax programs for Farmland, Forest and Open Space. Once it is reviewed, the committee expects to endorse it at the next meeting.
8. **4 H:** There is an opportunity to start a 4 H Club in Auburn to raise awareness of agriculture and careers in agriculture.
9. **Farmers Markets:** Jay reported that the City is exploring event style farmers markets this summer, to take advantage of music events at Festival Plaza and Anniversary Park. Jen Beonig is leading the effort. Kathy is working with a group based in Lewiston that is looking for a permanent location where a facility can be developed.

New Business

1. **Urban Ag Grants:** Dave reported that the USDA has grants available for urban agriculture, but he had not had time to research details. Kathy said SWCDs administer this type of grant, but qualification is complicated. SWCD is short on staff as well.

Action Items:

1. Katie will review draft work plan and linkage to Ag Committee ordinance
2. Joe will send out the Land Use Pamphlet for review
3. Members will monitor progress on draft document addressing Mayor's proposal.

Next meetings: TBA

Pending agenda items:

1. Work Plan Review for 2022
2. Craft a vision for agriculture in Auburn and share with community

3. PFAS
4. Producer survey
5. Possible presentation by Blackie's manager about aggregation for School Department
6. Food Sovereignty Law
7. Good Food Council of L-A to discuss urban agriculture opportunities.
8. Maine Farmland Trust Easement presentation

Adjourned: 7:56 PM