

New Ag Use Committee Ideas from Last Meeting Poll

Farm Incubator Program – Can be done on farm already - Should there be a way to approve a comprehensive Farm Incubator school or program to include student or staff housing?

1344

Yes No

Farm Plot Leases – A question was raised at the last meeting regarding leased plots creating a subdivision. We have learned that 2 or more leases on a single parcel may trigger subdivision review. If this situation has occurred the City is unaware and has never asked for farm leases for this type of review. We have 3 options: **(Circle Preference)**

1. Leave as is. We are unaware that this has ever become an issue in Auburn.
2. Add language to the ordinance or draft a policy that allows for a waiver of most subdivision standards for leasing existing farmland for crops or grazing. This would make it easy for the applicant to submit a simple application and for the Planning Board to approve more than 2 leases as a subdivision if it became necessary to promote an ag use of land.
3. There may be a way to limit the extent of a lease to minimize the transfer of interest in a property. An agreement or use of land could be limited to the “use of soils or ground in the top 1-2 feet in a defined area for the purposes of growing crops or grazing animals”. Minimizing the transfer of interest in the property may strengthen the argument that it is not a subdivision when there are multiple agreements. The City has prosecutorial discretion in cases like this.

Value added processing – some allowances such as a slaughterhouse as stand-alone use already. The committee noted that they wanted to encourage farm or support/processing infrastructure. Very flexible allowances currently exist as an accessory use to a farm but limited as standalone uses. Should processing, storage or distribution facilities be allowed in the AGRP zone without any connection to an existing farm operation?

Yes No

Agritourism / Special events – There are some allowances at existing farms and at some point, in the spectrum of Ag to Recreation uses it may become a recreational use which is allowable with Planning Board Approval. Should we list Agritourism as its own use or possibly add to “Recreational or Agritourism use?”

What types of uses would be included in Agritourism? _____

Processing or slaughter facilities – Currently allowed with Planning Board approval as a special exception. Should this be moved to a permitted use vs. it’s current special exception status? Public notice and Planning Board Review was desired when it was listed as a special exception and allows for public input.

Yes No

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Greenhouse codes restrictive for roof loading requirements – This was identified at the meeting – There are some allowances for reduced roof loads due to snow melting but they require structure specific engineering or 180 day or shorter use in a given location. Wind loading substantially drives structural requirements. Should we pursue a building code exception with the State of Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code? Yes No

Minimum House Size – Local minimum standard of 700 sf is restrictive – State Code recently updated to allow for tiny houses and tiny houses might provide a temporary solution to farm labor housing if allowed. Should the Auburn code be amended to allow for smaller dwelling units? Yes No

If yes, City wide? Yes No

Limited to farm housing? Yes No

Solar Farms – Should solar farms be allowed in the AG zone? Yes No

Should their location be restricted to poor soils or currently forested areas to avoid displacing farmland?
Yes No