



City of Auburn, Maine

Economic & Community Development
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Date: Tuesday, January 23, 2018

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PUBLIC MEETINGS NEXT STEP IN STUDY TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE AUBURN'S AGRICULTURAL AND RESOURCE SECTOR

AUBURN, ME. - Auburn desires to strengthen its natural resource-based economy (farming, timber, food businesses, etc.) and better integrate this sector into community planning and City-wide priorities. In order to do so, the City requires a better understanding of rural land owner needs and goals; the identification of opportunities for additional support and/or investment; and a greater understanding of existing barriers and potential solutions and strategies.

Rural Auburn has a unique Agricultural and Resource Protection (AGRP) zoning district, which has been in place since the early 1960's and contains over 40% of the city's land area that amounts to over 20,000 acres. The historical purpose and intent of AGRP zoning regulations has been to manage development and to promote food, agricultural, timber and natural resource production and uses. Today however, the nature and trends of farming and food production have drastically changed and a different set of growth opportunities for production, processing and supply chain operations may exist.

The Agricultural Committee appointed by the former mayor to guide this work has met three times to identify challenges and opportunities related to agriculture in Auburn. The consultant team hired to assist with research and recommendations has been gathering data to inform decisions, identify opportunities, and offer solutions to challenges identified by the committee and a wide range of stakeholders. The committee has scheduled the next two public meetings for February 1st and February 15th.

February 1st at 6:00 PM – City Council Chambers, Auburn Hall, 60 Court Street - **Data, Data, Data**. A consultant from Crossroads Resource Center will present economic and agricultural data and trends, both for our region and nationally, to provide the committee and the public with background information.

For immediate release, continued

February 15th at 6:00 PM – City Council Chambers, Auburn Hall, 60 Court Street –**Potential Solutions, Trends, and Recommendations.** The committee has identified a number of challenges to agriculture in Auburn. A consultant from Crossroads Resource Center will present potential solutions, trends and recommendations to provide the committee and the public with options to consider moving forward.

The general public is encouraged to attend either or both meetings. For additional information, contact Eric Cousens, Deputy Director of Economic and Community Development, at ecousens@auburnmaine.gov or 333-6601, ext. 1154.

For information about the Ad Hoc Committee on Auburn’s Agricultural and Natural Resource Economy, visit www.auburnmaine.gov/pages/government/agriculture-and-natural-resource-economy. For more information regarding the consultants, please visit www.crcworks.org.

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