

Lanesborough Agricultural Commission Meeting Minutes –May 3, 2007

**Attendees: regular members - Pete Gallant, Marv Michalak
alternate members - Aimee Thayer**

Marv, as Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m. in the Planning Board Room at the Lanesborough Town Hall.

Review of Minutes - The minutes from April 12th were reviewed by the commission. A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept them as written.

Old Business

- 1. Annual Town Meeting Warrant** - Prudy sent information in the form of printouts from several sources including Cornell and Vermont regarding the health effects of tapping Sugar Maple Trees. Pete said he had several other issues with this warrant article which he planned on discussing at the Town Meeting so Marv agreed to state the Agricultural Commission's objections to that specific item in the proposed by-law.
- 2. Mediation Workshop** - Pete gave a positive report on the mediation workshop which he and Prudy attended. He said it was useful and interesting.
- 3. Farm Inventory Survey** - Action on the final draft of the Farm Inventory Survey was postponed until the next meeting.

New Business

1. Aimee passed out information on the details for the Agricultural Signage program provided by Mass Dept. of Ag Resources and the State Highway department. Marv took copies of the material for Diane as well. The possibility of applying for grant funding in the future to assist interested farm operations in town in obtaining consistent signage was discussed.
2. The Commission briefly reviewed the Fiscal 2008 recommended land valuations generated by the State Farmland Valuation Advisory Committee. These are the values provided to local assessors to assist them in determining assessed values of agricultural and forest lands. They are not binding as the assessors are given latitude to use their experience as well in determining values. Fiscal Year 2008 tax bills will be arriving in June and this will be the first assessment following the changes to Chapter 61, 61A and 61B provisions which became effective March 22, 2007. The commission discussed the possibility of holding an informational meeting regarding these changes for town residents and the assessors.

Adjournment and next meetings

Members confirmed the next meeting date for June 7th at 7:00 p.m. in the Planning Board Room at Lanesborough Town Hall and noted the Town meeting on May 8th and Town Election on May 15th.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to adjourn at 8:47 p.m.