

## **Concord Agriculture Committee**

October 10th, 2019, 7:00pm

Town House Lunch Room

Present:

Happy Goethert, chair

Emily Wheeler, member

Steve Verril, member

Brian Cramer, member

Melissa Maxwell, member

Lise Holdorf, clerk

### **Meeting called to order at 7:06**

#### **News about Concord Farms and Farmers**

There were two killing frosts last weekend.

Hutchins and Verrill had good winter squash harvests. Steve has 80 bins of butternut in storage. Hutchins didn't have a great potato harvest. They had hoped to plant their potatoes on the Hutchins farmstead, but the area where they had planned for potatoes was underwater, so they planted at Barrett's Mill. Barrett's Mill has had good luck with King Harry variety. Hutchins likes a new russet variety called Caribou.

Emily shared that Millbrook farm has set up a stand on Elm street between Papa Razzi and the Best Western. They are struggling with the construction on Cambridge Turnpike. She sent a picture to Melissa to post on Instagram to promote their roadside stand. The construction isn't likely to end until next year. Ricky Marshall suggested starting a GoFundMe page for them. Emily will draft an email to Jane Hotchkiss (Ag Committee select board liaison) about what the Town can do. Steve suggested a tax break for Millbrook. He said the town had paid some extra money to keep part of the road open.

#### **Ag Day Recap**

Ag Day went well in spite of the rain for the last hour. Hutchins made approximately the same amount of money as last year, but it was a little less than what they would have made at their regular market (they had apples and overall higher prices, so they should have made more). Verrill had their best year yet, Steve thought in part because they had baked goods. Verrill farm didn't bring scales - they sold everything by the bag and bunch. Barrett's Mill made a similar amount of money as last year. Traffic felt more steady with no big rushes like they had in the past. Saltbox did the same as last year. Colonial Gardens did very well. Ricky Marshall said they did well. Scimone had their best year yet.

The veggie car races and smaller games (bean bag toss and giant Jenga) were busy. A representative for Little Leaf Lettuce (the large hydroponic operation at Devens) set up in front of Engel & Volkers. She was loudly pitching their lettuce product, which is sold at big grocery stores. Emily talked to the woman and asked her to leave, which she did. Emily would like to underline to the Chamber of Commerce next year that sidewalk sales are permitted, but only for promoting the business that is there.

BJ Dunn said they were pleased with the event. They got 20 people to sign up for Friends of the Park.

Community Chest, the League of Women Voters and Gaining Ground were all also pleased.

Happy invited the folks from the Farm at Walden Woods to come to the Ag Committee to a meeting and share what they are doing.

The Concord Bookshop window is reserved for the week leading up to Labor Day and through the weekend. Emily thinks it has potential to be a more robust display next year. Happy suggested working with the library on the display too.

Emily brought in a copy of Discover Concord, which is a new free magazine. There was an article about farm and fall festivals, and it included information on Ag Day (though it called it the Food, Farm and Garden Fair).

It continues to be difficult to get events listed in the Concord Journal. None of the Ag Committee events have made it into the the events listing. The Garden Club got the Kitchen Garden Tours listed, however.

Liza Bemis will update the Ag Day website with new photos from this year and the date for next year's market. She is also still going to work on site optimization.

Emily thought that the Concord aspect of the event really came through this year. It seemed like the Concord-based non-profits enjoyed it.

Steve suggested kicking off the passport program at the Spring Forum. There was only one passport turned in. It might help to have more info about the website on the passport, and the ability to download the passport from the website. Steve suggested really playing up the buy local and supporting small businesses angle

Lise suggested a small punch card like the one from Deborah's. It might fit into a wallet but it was agreed that might be too small.

Hutchins had 12-15 people show up for their tour. One of the Hugh Cargill gardeners put a plug in for the tours at the community garden.

For the Spring Forum it was suggested that we publicize the door prize more, and maybe spread it out to more winners, as it was a lot of stuff. We should also be sure to take pictures and put it on the website.

Happy suggested creating a medallion for farms in Concord to display that says something like "proud member of the Concord Ag committee".

Melissa suggested working on music for next year's market. Lise suggested approaching the Concord Conservatory of Music to see if they would want to partner for some of the market. Happy suggested also asking the contra dancers at the Scout House

The budget for the event is in good shape. There so far has not been a police detail bill. If anyone needs reimbursement for Ag Day, submit receipts to Happy ASAP.

Happy suggested inviting the Stone Soup committee to Ag Comm to discuss cooperation on future Ag Days and funding. Steve suggested coming up with a proposal for the whole year. Happy suggested that Jen put together a list/timeline of what needs to be done for the dinner so

that the Ag Committee could see where they could fill in. Emily suggested Heywood Meadow as a site, Happy suggested Buttricks Mansion.

Banner - Happy said some people commented that they hadn't seen the banner as it was too high. She did see the Park's banner in West Concord - perhaps that's a better location for next year.

### **Spring Forum**

Bring ideas for next year's forum to next meeting.

Next meeting November 14th

Meeting adjourned 8:32

Minutes submitted by Lise Holdorf

Approved: Carolyn Goethert, chair

Dec 19,2019