

watershed, and a recommendation on the recreational uses and limitations of the Pond. The Town made this application on behalf of the WPAC and the plan is being carried out by the DNR. The WPAC feels this plan is of the utmost importance to ensure that White Pond and its watershed will maintain its clear waters for the enjoyment of future generations.

Building and Renovations in the White Pond Area

A continuing responsibility of the WPAC is to work with the Building Commissioner and other Town committees in review and advice in regards to new construction (e.g., additions, landscape changes, etc.) in the White Pond Watershed to ensure that the health of the pond and its environs is preserved. A number of these reviews were performed in 2012 and the committee approved each with a quorum. Of particular concern to the WPAC is any activity that would have an adverse affect on the quality of the Pond water and surrounding habitat.

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT)

The WPAC has been actively involved in the discussions surrounding the BFRT, to ensure that the Pond is properly protected given that the proposed trail passes closely to White Pond. The WPAC is working with the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee and other groups such as Concord-based Friends of Rural Trails and the Friends of the BFRT. The WPAC feels it is important to elevate awareness of the impacts of the trail construction, activities, and increased visitor traffic on the health and aesthetics of the Pond, and on the wildlife corridor, while encouraging Town usage of this great asset.

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Jennifer Hashley, Chair
Charles Poutasse, Clerk
Bill Kenney
Dudley Goar
Susan Macone
Associate Members
Brian Cramer
Emily Wheeler

Since formation as a Town Committee in 2006, the Agricultural Committee has worked to promote agriculture in Concord.

The 2012 growing season was relatively successful. Despite many hot dry days with stretches without regular rainfall through the season, supplemental irrigation kept crops growing, thus most farmers had a very good year. Retail sales are strong. The passing of Pat McGrath was a sad event for the agricultural community and much has been discussed about the future of the farmstand (which has been managed this season by faithful volunteers and supportive customers) and the property he leased from the Town. The Agricultural Committee has provided input to the many groups and organizations considering the future of the house and property. The Ag Committee strongly recommends that a “farmer-in-residence” remain part of the character of the 40-acre farm property at this site to preserve the farmstead and provide much-needed farm housing in Town.

Ag Day

The Committee sponsored the seventh annual farmers market festival on September 15 on the Milldam. The annual “Ag Day” remains popular with townspeople and visitors and is a worthwhile public relations and promotional activity for growers who can then drive traffic to their farm stands throughout the season.

Guide to Concord Farms

This spring/summer, the Committee updated the Guide to Concord farms with over 21 listings of Concord farms and how to purchase their products. Informative brochures are available at locations throughout Town. It is a useful guide for residents and visitors alike.

Stone Soup Dinner

The fifth annual Stone Soup Dinner was held on September 30 and featured Concord grown produce prepared by Concord chefs and restaurants. The event was held at Verrill Farm and more than 330 people attended. The Stone Soup Dinner has its own Steering Committee and operates separately from the Ag Committee. Proceeds from the dinner contribute to a “Plant a Farmer” grants program to support new farmers in Town.

New Committee members

Jim Catterton stepped down after completing his term. Jennifer Hashley was approved as new Committee Chair. The Board of Selectman approved two new Ag Committee members: Dudley Goar and Susan Macone. Both bring new perspectives to the Committee.

Inventory of Farms, Agricultural Parcels and New Farmers (Farmland Matching)

The Ag Committee continued farmland identification in Town, identifying some 300 parcels of land that are either currently farmed, or once were farmed and have the potential to be put back in production. Not all of this land will be used for agriculture, but there is considerable room for expanded farming. The Committee also reviewed the NRC's licensing terms for agricultural parcels and made suggestions for enhancing the language relating to agricultural use of town-owned land. The Ag Committee is working with the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project (see: www.nesfp.org), a Tufts University Friedman School program that trains beginning farmers. New Entry operates a farmland matching service program that connects new farmers with farmland in the region. The Ag Committee and New Entry co-sponsored a mailing to landowners who own prime farmland soils and parcels of 2 acres or more of open land that could be used for farming. A landowner information meeting was held on October 10 at the Town House to educate potential landowners about making their properties available to new farmers. A panel discussion of farmers seeking land was represented.

Concord Community Food Assessment

Several members of the Concord Ag Committee served on the steering committee of the Conway School's Community Food Assessment for Concord. A report highlighting the importance of local agriculture, profiles of local farms in Town, and policy recommendations to further enhance the vitality of local food production and consumption in Concord can be found in the report: <http://concordfood.ning.com/>

In the Coming Year Farmland Clearinghouse

The Committee will continue to be involved in matching new farmers to underutilized agricultural parcels, Town, State, Federal, non-profit and private farmland to continue to utilize our resource base in the community for food production.

Other Issues

The Committee has discussed and will consider further: advocacy for continued agricultural use of McGrath Farm property and homestead; exploring policy rec-

ommendations proposed by the Concord Food Assessment report; farm-to-school local food sourcing; supporting new farmers; addressing livestock licensing requirements; agricultural worker housing and affordable housing in general for new farmers in town; and partnerships with the Farm at Concord MCI.

Concord still has an ample base of good, productive farmland. Active agriculture will succeed in Concord if the regulatory climate is supportive, if there are people who want to work hard to cultivate the land, and if there are secure markets for local farm products. Concord produces high quality vegetables, fruit, flowers, eggs, and meat, and there are ample opportunities to expand production and sell what we grow with continued community support.

CONCORD LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

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The Concord Land Conservation Trust (P.O. Box 141, Concord, MA) is a tax exempt, charitable organization established in 1959, with membership open to all who are interested in conservation of our natural resources. It complements other conservation efforts of the Town, state and national governments and offers an alternative and a balance to development in our Town.

The Land Trust works closely with its affiliate, the Concord Open Land Foundation. COLF generally acquires property that may be preserved only in part or used as a means for preserving other property. For example, at the end of 2011, COLF acquired through a bargain/sale and generous gift by Paul and Susan Ware 8.6 acres of property between the Ripley School and the Ridge behind Lexington Rd. COLF sold the portion of the