

PLANNING BOARD

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH, New Hampshire

Minutes of September 15, 2014

DRAFT

Members Present: Ivy Vann, Barbara Miller, Rich Clark, Tom Weeks, Jerry Galus, Audrey Cass and Alan Zeller

Staff Present: Peter Throop, Director and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development

Chair Vann called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. She noted this was a special meeting of the Peterborough Planning Board. “Normally this is a workshop night for us but because we have a Conditional Use Permit application we are using this time for a Public Hearing” she said. Chair Vann then recused herself and left the table.

Vice Chairman Tom Weeks (Mr. Weeks) began with “I would like to open this September 15th Public Hearing.” He introduced himself as well as the Board members and staff. Mr. Weeks then reviewed several procedural items including how the Public Hearing would progress (reading of the application followed by a presentation by the applicant, questions from the Board, questions/concerns from the audience, rebuttal and closure of the hearing with deliberation and decision if the Board felt it appropriate.) He looked up and noted that anyone interested in speaking should state their name for the record and that all questions will be directed through the Board. Mr. Weeks then read the application by Dancing Ground Farm, LLC.

Before the application was accepted by the Board as complete and any presentation by the applicant, Mr. Throop gave a brief overview of the Agricultural Business Enterprise petition ordinance brought to Town Meeting last May. He noted RSA 674:21 II which authorizes a town to adopt innovative land use controls such as conditional use permits and requires the inclusion of standards that guide (in this case) the Planning Board in administering the ordinance. He spoke briefly about conditional or special use permits in general, noting that they are intended to provide a planning board some level of flexibility in approving uses within the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Throop stated that the ordinance applied to the “rural district and agriculturally zoning parcels, or contiguous parcels under the same ownership or management, of

50-acres, or more” and described the uses listed in the ordinance, adding the permits would be “subject to the process and criteria in Article IX of the Peterborough Site Plan Review Regulations.” He then went on to explain that the language in Article IX addresses procedures and performance standards for Conditional Use Permits relating to the Wetland Protection Overlay Zone District. “Article IX does not provide guidance for issuing conditional use permits for uses such as farm to table cafes, retail, activities such as hay rides, or bed and breakfasts” he said. Mr. Throop also referred to RSA 21:34a and the definitions of agriculture and agri-tourism, pointing out that the stated definition of agriculture does not specifically reference agri-tourism within the definition.

Mr. Throop noted that during the public hearing on the petition ordinance (held in March 2014) the Board had stated that they believed the ordinance had technical flaws, referring to the issues identified above, and voted to not support the petition ordinance. He went on to note that the amendment was adopted at Town Meeting. After a consultation with the town attorney and town staff, he advised the Board that since the amendment passed, the town has a responsibility to find a reasonable way to proceed with the ordinance.

Chair Weeks asked for a motion to accept the application by Dancing Ground Farm as complete. **A motion was made/seconded (Zeller/Miller) with all in favor.**

Bryn Dumas introduced himself as the primary speaker for the farm. He also introduced his wife Carrie and his in-laws Dan and Ruth Holmes. He told the Board the he and his family were all residents who care about the town. He noted he managed a local farm and that his in-laws ran Sunnyfield Farm, “the only remaining dairy farm in the area.” Mr. Dumas noted his family’s involvement in the re-establishment of the Peterborough Grange, their involvement with Greenerborough and his belief that “agriculture was the fabric that holds our community together.”

Mr. Dumas explained his family had formed Dancing Ground Farm and a wedding event was planned for October 11th at the Four Winds Farm property. He explained where the farm was located and referred to a large aerial graphic outlining the event activity. He pointed out conservation easements and the areas excluded from the easement, noting “there will be no activity in the easement areas.” Mr. Dumas also pointed out one easement boundary line shown on the plan was incorrect and referred to a survey to show the correct survey pins and boundary coordinates for the easement. He further indicated that he had found the easement boundary markers in the field and had flagged them to prevent accidental encroachments into the easement areas.

Mr. Dumas then reviewed their proposal to permit up to eight large events per year including weddings and seasonal farm events with between 75 and 175 attendees including staff and service providers and not more than twelve smaller events per year including farm to table dinners and educational events with less than 75 attendees including staff and service providers. He explained that after meeting with the neighborhood abutters the family had reduced the large events to a total of four per year. "We hear and sympathize with them" he said adding "we understand their concerns for increased traffic and noise on the road, and we hope this gesture alleviates some of that."

Mr. Dumas noted larger events included weddings and smaller events including meal-related get-togethers and educational events and programs. He explained seasonal events would be related to activities focused on things produced by the farm giving examples of apple tree pruning in the spring to a blueberry breakfast in late August. He told the Board the farm was a historical site with multiple uses (mostly agricultural) in nature "but also cultural in nature" he said. He pointed out the structures on the property, attendee and staff parking (78 spaces each 9 by 18 feet), traffic flows, storm water drainage, two wells (one active, the other inactive) and the portable sanitation facilities.

He showed the location of the band for the event facing the building to minimize the sound and that the music would end by 10:00 p.m.

Carrie Dumas stood and introduced herself. She noted she was just reading abutter letters submitted to the Planning Board for the record (copies of all correspondences were publically available in hard copy at the meeting). Ms. Dumas told the audience and Board members "we are not city people bringing city activities to this town" adding "I am sad and upset at the characterization that we would destroy the neighborhood. I like my quiet too and our highest priority is to have a farm and share some of that with the public." Ms. Dumas noted she loved to cook, prepare and serve local food and the farm would serve as avenue to gather and talk about food and farming. "It is a way to join the two" she said adding "and most of the events would not have music or loud activities, just a meal shared together, talking, or doing educational things." She told the Board they would not be advertising that they could host weddings "it will be a word of mouth type thing, with mostly people we know."

Mr. Weeks noted the reduction of large events from eight to four and asked if the remaining events would be the same scale. Mr. Dumas replied they would. Mr. Weeks had several other questions including any proposals for signs, noting "we have a sign ordinance in this town." A brief discussion about directional and parking sign on site followed. Mr. Dumas reminded Mr. Weeks that he had calculated the

parking space based on the building space and he had done it cautiously. Mr. Holmes noted several directional sign measuring 12 by 18 inches found in the Apple Barn for that purpose. Mr. Weeks replied “they will require permits.” Mr. Holmes replied “yes.”

Mr. Weeks then asked about a dumpster not shown on the graphic. He asked “where is the dumpster located and is it screened?” Mr. Dumas replied there was one dumpster on the property “but it is on site for the tenants, it has nothing to do with us.” He went on to say they would be using trash barrels for rubbish, recycle and compost material. Mr. Weeks asked “are you going to dump into dumpster?” Mr. Dumas replied “no, the dumpster is for the tenant and is not even close to the activity.”

Mr. Weeks noted town regulations for adequate setbacks and screening parking adjacent to the road and asked about that screening. Mr. Dumas pointed out vegetative screening along the parking area. Mr. Weeks asked “for the record are there any plans to cut any vegetation or current buffers to open up any more room for parking?” Mr. Dumas replied “we did remove 3 or 4 small pine trees to facilitate traffic flow but also with the intention that when there are no events we would use the area for grazing and agricultural type activities.”

Lastly Mr. Weeks asked about a reconsideration of having amplified outside music. “You had said 10:00 p.m.” he said. Mr. Weeks then asked if they would consider limiting the time to an even earlier time. Mr. Dumas replied “yes, that (10:00 p.m.) is what the Police Chief has recommended.” Mr. Weeks replied “based on the application and the regulations any music will have to be a secondary to the use you have asked for.” Ms. Dumas interjected “if you are talking about concerts, we really have no interest in that.” Mr. Week replied “I understand, I am just bringing it to your attention.”

Mr. Weeks also noted the plan should indicate where things will be located “for the record.” Mr. Dumas noted he would add labels of what is what and where to reduce confusion. Mr. Weeks concluded “tents too, it gives a better understanding of where things are located when you have it on the plan.” Mr. Weeks also suggested that if the permit were approved Mr. Dumas would need to work closely with the Fire Chief and the Code Enforcement Officer to address their concerns prior to the event.

Ms. Cass asked for clarification on the overflow parking with Mr. Dumas pointing out where they had originally anticipated it to be located (pointing to a field north of the road), noting “but decided not to do that” citing the easement language and the proximity to the neighbor’s driveways. Ms. Cass then asked about the easement research and boundary lines. Mr. Clark inquired as to the relative elevation of the

farm in comparison to its neighbors as well as the topography behind the main structure, the Studio Barn.

Ms. Miller asked about a traffic study mentioned. Mr. Throop indicated that a formal traffic study had not been completed and explained how he calculated the estimated existing traffic of 160 trips per day (based on the ITE standard of 10 trips per day per single family residence) using all 16 the homes gaining access from Four Winds Farm Road (from the intersection of Old Dublin Road) for his calculation. He noted that while an event could cause back-ups “when averaged over time, the infrequency of the proposed uses would probably not generate enough traffic on average to trigger a failure of the intersection with Old Dublin Road” he said, “or warrant corrective action, such as a 4-way stop sign or a traffic light.”

A description of the Four Winds Farm Road followed with mention of its Class 5, 20-foot wide lanes without much of a shoulder. Its blind curves, severe ditches and elevations were also described. Mr. Throop noted that the speed limit is not posted on the road, adding that he understands that the town speed limit on unposted rural roads is 35 miles per hour. He indicated that he understood that the Police Chief “does not recommend posting the limit in some of these locations as it sometimes leads to faster speeds than when there is no posted limit.” He also reviewed the process to have a speed limit reduced in a neighborhood, which requires completion of a traffic and speed study. “The Chief has indicated that he already has 6 requests for these studies pending” he said.

Mr. Galus returned to safety related to the traffic as well as access for emergency vehicles. “How do you plan on dealing with such things?” he asked. Mr. Dumas suggested the attendees would be instructed how to respond (regarding evacuation) to allow the fire companies to get in. He also noted the larger events would have a fire detail on scene and they would take instruction from those professionals. Mr. Galus noted “I am suggesting that just like with your parking, you set up an emergency plan.”

Mr. Weeks interjected that before performances at the Peterborough Players safety instructions are announced. “That is something you may be able to do” he said. Mr. Dumas pointed out the drive around access noting “it is pretty good access.” Ms. Dumas reminded the members that large events would have the fire detail “and we will do whatever they tell us to do.” Mr. Galus reiterated “just give thought to that, just like with the parking. This location is a tough location.” Mr. Dumas replied the large events could have parking attendants with Mr. Galus noting “that is a very good idea.”

Mr. Zeller inquired as to whether or not the Fire Chief has seen the plan with Mr. Throop replying "he has seen it, he has walked the site and has no concerns after looking at the plan and the fire access on the parcel." Ms. Cass asked for clarification on the number events requested with Mr. Dumas reviewing that for her.

With no more questions from the Board Mr. Weeks noted the receipt of three abutter letters that would be read at the appropriate time. He then opened the Public Hearing to the public and asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in favor of the application.

Swift Corwin III introduced himself and offered his support of the Dancing Ground Farm's request. He noted it was his wedding scheduled for October 11th. "The farm is a beautiful place with great people running it" he said and acknowledged the tremendous amount of work that had been done in preparation of the event and offered his appreciation for that work and the crew who completed it.

With no other comments, Mr. Weeks asked if there was any one who wished to speak against the request. Anne Meiklejohn introduced herself as an abutter. "We are the last house on the dead-end road" she said. Ms. Meiklejohn spoke briefly about the Town's parking regulations (Site Plan Review Regulations). "They are written in such a way that as the number of spaces increases the requirements to separate the spaces with landscaping also increases" she said. She also noted consideration of setbacks, wetlands and steep slopes before an approval may be granted. She went on to say "these requirements need to be met and I do not see it."

Referring to the graphic projected by Mr. Dumas, Ms. Meiklejohn said "I am not convinced that is how the parking will end up." Mr. Dumas replied that he was a member of the Conservation Commission and that he felt strongly about protecting the wetlands. Pointing to several areas of the graphic he said "the parking is how it is shown here" adding "the access road is gravel and grass and all parking is outside the town wetland restrictions." Ms. Meiklejohn noted "I am voicing my concerns and ask it be checked, in my opinion a site visit is needed."

Richard Lefko introduced himself as a resident of Cornish Road. "I am new to this" he said adding he had not had a reason to attend a meeting like this before. Mr. Lefko spoke briefly about the quiet neighborhood he had lived in for the past 17 years and noted "I can't see how this won't change with these events going on." He reviewed the number of events and attendees on the request and calculated a total of 2240 cars coming through the neighborhood during the course of the time frame of the events, noting his concern for safety and access or emergency vehicles.

David Bonacci introduced himself and his wife Loretta Laurenitis as abutters. He read a letter they wrote to the Board which described their quiet neighborhood of 20

years. Mr. Bonacci described the condition of the dead-end, winding and little-traveled road where many people enjoy walking with their children and dogs. He addressed their concerns about safety and traffic issues as well as their support of the agricultural and farming community. Mr. Bonacci reviewed the flaws of the amendment and suggested the three brief and very general paragraphs on agriculture in the Master Plan be updated. **The full content of this letter is date-stamped 9-15-2014 and is filed with the application (ACUP-2014-01).**

Mr. Bonacci also noted a town-wide garden show with a stop on Four Winds Farm Road. "It was a mess" he said adding "you couldn't get out of the neighborhood and it would have been utterly impossible for emergency vehicles to get up there." He also asked for clarification on several points. "For instance" he said "the music stops at 10:00 but when does the event end?" as well as "what (activity or event) is inside and what is outside?" Mr. Bonacci concluded by noting "this has nothing to do with the people setting this up. I am sure they are nice people, but we are nice people too. It has nothing to do with them personally, we just don't want our neighborhood to be a main thoroughfare." Mr. Bonacci reiterated the small rural road with its deep trenches and blind corners and urged the Board "please come up and take a look." Mr. Lefko interjected "the sound travels because it *is* so quiet. If I could vote on this I would be voting no."

In reference to the remarks made about the garden tour Ms. Miller asked "was there off-street parking for that event?" John Odgers introduced himself and replied "no and that is relevant." He went on to note he and his wife had approximately 500 visitors to their gardens over the course of several hours. "It was overwhelming" he said adding "and I regret not warning the neighbors but we did not know how many people would come." Citing the parking would be off-road for the application at hand Ms. Miller said "so there is not a comparison then." "Not a direct comparison" replied Mr. Odgers "but you still have to consider emergencies." Mr. Odgers and his wife Maude also submitted a letter to the Planning Board but did not read it to the audience. **The full content of this letter is date-stamped 9-12-2014 and is filed with the application (ACUP-2014-01).**

Loretta Laurenitis introduced herself and read a letter to the Board. This letter noted her opinions about the amendment's troubled language and her belief that it was not written in compliance with RSA 674:21 II. She stated that while not intentional, the message from the Planning Board that the amendment was not enforceable misled the public to show their support for the farmers and agriculture in the community without any consequences. Mr. Laurenitis also provided the Board with Conditions & Standards of similar permits for the cities of Manchester, Nashua and Durham, New Hampshire for review. **The full content of this letter is date-stamped 9-15-2014 and is filed with the application (ACUP-2014-01).**

Mr. Dumas noted that food from local farm sources “promotes and encourages local agriculture and it is not unheard of for farms in this area to do this.” He noted the need of the local farms to diversify operations “and not just provide carrots, watermelon and corn.” Mr. Dumas touched briefly on the maintenance status of the buildings located on the property as well. Mr. Zeller asked about hours of operation with Mr. Dumas replying he was not sure “but mostly weekends.” He went on to tell the Board “we do have one event, we have a wedding scheduled for October 11th.” A member asked what would happen if their application was not approved. Mr. Dumas replied “it will happen, the question is whether or not it is a private affair or an event under the permit.”

Ian Meiklejohn introduced himself noting he had a follow-up statement about farming and its viability. Mr. Meiklejohn said from his frame of reference the applicant was asking to create a commercial business not so much to create financial viability but to make a profit. He asked Mr. Dumas “would you want this farm for farming if you did not plan the events?” adding “my thought is that you would say no.”

Mr. Dumas reiterated his intent for sustainable farming “not hundreds of hens or pigs in the fields.” Dan Holmes introduced himself and told the Board “we are in the process of obtaining permission to pursue different events to compliment what we are doing on the land.” He added “right now we have one thing (a wedding) but would like to raise crops and have farm to table dinners and other events to increase the value and sustainability of the farm. The intent is not to create an event business, it is to increase the value of the farm product.”

Mr. Meiklejohn interjected “a farm is a business like everything else. If it is not profitable, don’t do it” adding “events may make a profit for the farm but it is at a cost to the abutters.”

Ian McSweeney told the Board the average yearly salary of a farmer in the community is \$18,000.00. “That does not sustain paying insurance, mortgage or rent and taxes” he said adding “the working farmer wants to bring value-added products and farm related businesses in to make the farm viable.”

Mr. Dumas agreed as he reviewed several activities that had historically been done at the farm including an active playhouse with Shakespeare plays in the garden, a children’s camp and even an explosives business. Mr. Odgers interjected “but there were no abutters when those things happened.”

Jamie Trowbridge introduced himself and noted that all of the abutters to the farm property were present. He said “I accept the reality of farming, I completely accept that but the issue is the last time the property was worked as a farm the houses were

not there.” He went on to say he felt the ordinance was flawed and echoed Ms. O’Neill’s comment at an impromptu meeting after the public hearing last week that “*not all* parcels of 50 acres or more in the Rural District are created equal.” He concluded by noting this was the first application of its kind and asked “will this set a precedent?” adding “because right now it has so many holes in it you could drive a truck through it.”

Joanne Carr introduced herself as a member of the Conservation Commission as well as the Subcommittee that was created to address the amendment brought by petition to Town Meeting last May. She went on to say “speaking for myself I am very much in support of the original ordinance” and she acknowledged the difficulty of implementing it.

Ms. Meiklejohn stood again and said “I echo what many have said and that is that the objections have nothing what-so-ever to do with the people involved.” She went on to say “The Holmes have reached out to us and it is a hard thing to do because our interests do not necessarily match up.” She then read a prepared statement to the Board. The statement described the peace and tranquility of Four Winds Farm Road, the united and visceral reaction by the abutters on the road and three primary reasons the Planning Board should step back and consider the broad reaching ramifications of the application at hand as well as the amendment itself. She noted the Planning Board has placed itself in an increasingly precarious legal position by proceeding and suggested the Board choose not to take a course of action at this time. She stated for the record “I strenuously object to the time constraints and failure to conduct a publicly posted site visit of the proposed lots and venue in question as listed on the Conditional Use Permit for Dancing Ground Farm, LLC before holding a public hearing on the matter.” **The full content of the statement is date-stamped 9-15-2014 and is filed with the application (ACUP-2014-01).**

Ian McSweeney introduced himself as the Director of the Russell Foundation. When a member of the audience asked him what the Russell Foundation was Mr. McSweeney replied it was an organization whose focus is conserving and supporting the viability of active sustainable farm and forest lands in New Hampshire. “But you don’t live here?” asked the gentleman with Mr. McSweeney replying “no I do not” as he looked to the Board and said “the application allows the owner or leasee to apply.” Mr. McSweeney responded to several of the concerns he had heard from the abutters. “The Police and Fire Chiefs have been out there and written reports.” He also reminded the Board “the acreage (50-acre) is six times the minimum, and you can set the limits for (operational) hours and parking details.”

Mr. McSweeney referred to Ms. Meiklejohn’s prepared statement, her report of the abutters’ length of ownership in the neighborhood and noted “the Monahon’s are the

longest land owners in the area. He told the audience the extended family was aware of the application and they “are in full support.” He told the audience “the Planning Board went above and beyond in the notification process,” reminded them the larger events would have fire and parking details and in response to Ms. Meiklejohn’s reference to a three-ring circus he said “it is all to promote farm vitality, it is not a three-ring circus and there is no evidence that this will decrease property values.”

Mr. Lefko interjected that the vote was not a runaway. “It passed 470 to 376 votes” he said. Mr. McSweeney disagreed, stating “given that this was not supported by the Planning Board - that is a strong showing.”

Francie Von Mertens introduced herself noting she was on the Conservation Commission and had participated on many land use Boards. She explained she felt bad because she had encouraged the voters on her e-mail advisory list to vote for the Amendment. “I don’t like telling anyone what to do and I spent a lot of time on the email” she said adding “and I don’t believe in zoning by petition but by going through the Office of Community Development and having public hearings.” She went on to say that “voting it through even if it was not able to be implemented was still an expression of support for the farmers,” and that is what she had advocated in her email. “I feel like I misled people” she said. She also noted that the Planning Board was working to address the problem with an ordinance amendment “and will capture what needs to be captured while protecting the abutters.”

Nancy O’Neill introduced herself and read a letter to the Planning Board. She explained the heart of the matter was a balance between zoning and appropriate uses in the Rural District. She asked several questions that began with “did the voters realize that” and contended that “not all parcels of 50 acres or more in the Rural District are created equal.” **The full content of the letter is date-stamped 9-12-2014 and is filed with the application (ACUP-2014-01).**

Mr. Dumas replied “there are allowed uses on a farm that would impact all the things you bring up” adding “you say you sought out the rural lifestyle. The very nature of a farm is commercial, we rely on growing and selling product and if we are not allowed to support ourselves, how can we exist? You sought out to live next to the farm and now you want to cut the legs out from beneath it.”

Chair Weeks reiterated the ongoing concerns that increased traffic and noise would disrupt the character of the neighborhood. Ms. Dumas interjected “so would 20,000 chickens and 400 pigs” adding “I am just making a point, everyone else is getting to do that.” She went on to say “we have a 40 year lease, we are not the owners but we are committed, we are going to be there a long time and we will be paying taxes too.”

Ms. Laurenitis stood stating she had several questions. She noted there were many permitted uses in the Rural District and asked “so why is a Conditional Use Permit required? Is it because these events go beyond what is already allowed?” Mr. Dumas replied “yes, but I am just making a point in that allowed uses also create traffic and noise. That is my point.” Ms. Laurenitis asked for clarification on what the total number of activities per year would be (uses by right and conditional use permitted uses). “I am just trying to clarify that you have applied for 12 small events beyond what is in the state regulations but what is the total amount of activities?” she asked. A brief discussion about state regulations and town restrictions followed.

Ms. Laurenitis suggested the issue was money generating events and asked about a commercial kitchen at the farm noting “you have kind of talked about it but it got brushed aside.” Ms. Laurenitis asked if a commercial kitchen were installed if the applicant planned on renting it out. Mr. McSweeney replied “that is not a part of this application.” Ms. Laurenitis continued by reviewing a letter she wrote regarding her concerns about the lack of criteria for the amendment and touched her research of Conditional Use Permit Criteria from the nearby towns of Jaffrey and Rindge as well as the cities Durham, Manchester and Nashua New Hampshire. “You (the Planning Board) asked me to provide that for you” she said. She concluded by reiterating the message to the public was that the ordinance was not enforceable and there would be no consequences other than showing their support for the farmers as a result. **The full content of the letter is date-stamped 9-15-2014 and is filed with the application (ACUP-2014-01).**

Quentin Peacock introduced himself as a resident of Four Winds Farm Road for 20 years. He told the Board he was delighted to see the appearance of the animals in the fields but felt the value of his home may go down if the application was approved. “I am 84 years old” he said adding “I still put in an hour or so of good work at our place every day.” Mr. Peacock told the Board he had applied to Scott Farrar (Retirement Home) and his only resource was the sale of his house. Citing the traffic and noise he said “I see the value of our house going down” and asked “what are we going to do? We have no other income than the value of our house.”

Mr. Odgers stood and said he had three questions. The first of which was “does the granting of the Conditional Use Permit allow them to sell or furnish alcohol?” Mr. Throop replied the Planning Board had no authority regarding alcohol “that is all through the state” he said. Mr. Odgers then asked “is it true the Planning Board has no concrete guidelines or criteria to judge the acceptability of an application?” Mr. Weeks replied “the applicant has to meet the current Zoning and Site Plan Review regulations that are connected or related to the use.” Mr. Odgers asked “so does this mean that an application for a McDonald’s (restaurant) can show up next month?” Mr. Weeks replied “that would not be permitted there.”

Mr. Odgers looked to the Board and said “in my opinion it would be more appropriate if the petition had been called the removal of all commercial activity restrictions from 50-acre and over (size) parcels in the Rural District.” He went on to note he felt the petition was unenforceable and that zoning regulations “have been pushed aside.” Mr. Odgers then suggested the application be tabled until the voters approve appropriate guideline for the Conditional Use Permit at next year’s Town Meeting. “There are supposed to be standards” he said. Mr. Odgers also suggested that if the application was approved (over the overwhelming objections of the abutters) that it be approved with an expiration date. “That would give the town time to refine the amendment so that it properly reflects the permitted agricultural uses on rural lands” he said. He concluded “those are my ideas.”

Mr. Clark interjected “the people voted it in.” Mr. Weeks reiterated the Zoning and Site Plan Review standards.

Bruce Birenbaum introduced himself as an abutter and said simply that he opposed the amendment for all the reasons presented by the other abutters.

Ms. Laurenitis raised her hand. Acknowledging her Mr. Weeks asked “do you have something new?” Ms. Laurenitis replied she did. She referred to the amendment and said “I am asking you as a Planning Board, what are the standards that you are going to use for this?” Ms. Von Mertens interjected that it has been recognized that the standards that are in the amendment were specific to the wetlands “so they are not really applicable.” Mr. Throop responded “while this is true, there are some standards in the ordinance, even though some may feel they are not adequate.” He noting that “the town had spoken and approved the Petition and we are trying to find a reasonable way to proceed while insuring public health, safety and welfare.”

Ms. Meiklejohn reiterated her feeling that the people were told the town did not think the amendment was enforceable “and that was the standard by which people cast their votes.” Mr. Meiklejohn agreed adding “the Board had proceeded with that knowledge knowing it was inconsistent with the current zoning regulations.”

Mr. Weeks suggested a Site Visit was in order. “I think it would be appropriate” he said. He noted there would be no discussion “just seeing the site, asking questions, getting general clarification and being shown things” adding “then we will reconvene and discuss.” Mr. Throop reminded the Board that several members of the public asked if the Police and Fire Chiefs could be present at the next meeting.

After a brief discussion Mr. Weeks thought it would be a good idea and suggested continuing the Public Hearing to September 29th beginning with a Site Visit prior to reconvening the Public Hearing.

A motion was made/seconded (Zeller/Galus) to continue the Public Hearing to Monday, September 29, 2014. A Site Visit will commence at 4:00 p.m. followed by re-opening of the Public Hearing at 5:00 p.m. at the Town House with all in favor.

Chair Vann returned to the table and asked if there any addition business. With none the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Administrative Assistant