

# Northampton Agricultural Commission - Minutes

**7:00 PM Tuesday February 27, 2018**  
**Planning & Sustainability, 210 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, City**  
**Hall Northampton, MA**

**Members:**

Chair John Omasta (JO)	Y	Chip Parsons (CP)	Y	Stan Zawalick (SZ)	X
Vice Chair Rich Jaescke (RJ)	Y	Tim Smith (TS)	X	Joe Rogers (staff) (JR)	Y
John Bobala (JB)	Y	Robert Vollinger (RV)	X		

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm

1. Public Comment – *There were no members of the public present during the meeting.*
  
2. Approval of Agricultural Commission minutes of January 30, 2018 – *A motion to accept the 01/30/18 minutes was made by CP and seconded by RJ. All were in favor.*
  
3. Status update of letter and materials for distribution to agriculture users related to shade tree procedures – *JR updated the commission on the status of the shade tree information mailings. Nearly 100 letters were mailed to people and businesses who have properties with agricultural interests within Northampton. Six letters were returned because of change of addresses. Those were noted and updated in the commissions new database. Members of the commission were happy to get this information distributed and hope that this type of outreach will be well-received and lead to increased interactions with members of the public.*
  
4. Debrief by commissioners who will have attended the Massachusetts Annual Agriculture Commission meeting held on 02/24/18. – *The MAAC meeting was attended by RJ and JO and nearly 70 people. They briefed the commission on the agenda and noted that the meeting was good and the attendees motivated. Topics covered included a presentation on food safety and farm trespassing, forest stewardship, and maple sugaring. Commissioners noted that the Food Safety talk by MDAR’s Mike Botelo and Attorney Frank DiLuna was particularly interesting and the commissioners discussed inviting the speakers to give a talk on the subject sometime next fall or winter.*
  
5. Discussion related to hosting a joint Agricultural Committee meeting with representatives from other towns to begin planning a 2019 regional meeting. – *The commission discussed developing a program for next year’s regional meeting. It was decided to extend an invitation to some of the surrounding Agricultural Commission to see if they could send a representative to a March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 meeting. The Commission is interested in developing potential topics for the meeting, ideas on speakers, and consensus on the time of year to hold the meeting.*
  
6. Update if needed on City-owned agricultural properties
  - Bleiman: Vacant
  - Elwell: DeWitt – Happy Valley Organics – *JR plans to visit the property soon to see how brush pile clearing has progressed.*

- Mineral Hills: Mayval Farm – *An email was sent to Mayval Farm to ask about planting plans for the upcoming season.*
  - Montview: MCCC
  - Cross Path Road:
  - Broad Brook (Linseed Road): Vacant – *There is no new news about a potential tenant for this property.*
7. Any other necessary business not established when agenda set – *The commission was contacted by Noah Baustin who will be farming on the Montview property. He wanted to know if the Commission could recommend some people who he could contact for help with tilling the parcel that he would like to plant this season. RJ offered to help him out if his other options did not work out.*
  8. Set next meeting date – *The next meeting will be held on 03/20/18. The first portion of the meeting will be a joint meeting with other Agricultural commissions to discuss plans for a 2019 regional meeting.*
  9. Adjourn – *A motion to adjourn was made by CP and seconded by JB at 8:30 pm.*