

Harvard Agricultural Advisory Commission (HAAC)

Town of Harvard, MA

Minutes of Meeting January 26, 2022

Approved June 2, 2022

Meeting was called to order 7:06pm

Members Present: Kerri Green - Chair, Rob Traver, Christiane Turnheim, Matt Varrell, Franklyn Carlson

Others in Attendance: Chris Ryan - Town of Harvard, Tyler Godin - MRPC

Agricultural Commission Staffing Study Update

MRPC Representative Tyler Godin presented an update on the draft for the Agricultural Commission Staffing Study. Updates included:

- Addition of Maps & Graphics
 - MRPC Principal Planner suggested Godin incorporate maps from New England Land Explorer - a resource that offers GIS, charts & descriptive data. Could be helpful for scenario planning in regards to adaptation to climate change.
- Growing Places (GP) & Local Food Works (LFW)
 - Combination of several Initiatives including farming without Borders built of farmers & agricultural commissions. LFW is looking to create a Regional Food Campus for North Central MA with the help of a USDA grant.
- Interviews with Ag Comms
 - Susan Guiducci of Dartmouth Ag Com provided background on the history of her Ag Comm and what they have accomplished and different initiatives they have been involved with.
 - Additional potential interviews will be with Hatfield, Carver, Orange & Westminster.

Feedback:

- Chris Ryan made a few suggestions on additional organizations to reach out to.
- Traver thanked Godin for his presentation and work to date but emphasized the pressing concern that we need for assistance. And suggested when he talks to these organizations to ask "how do they get the job done".
- Green piggybacked that suggestion with specifically asking about where their funding comes from. Additionally Green asked how the maps and such would tie in with the final report, because as presented the maps and graphics don't quite fit the scope in which this study was

supposed to address. Godin said he understood the suggestion. Green also asked what questions he asking in his interviews, and he responded with a few from his list.

- Carlson asked how they get members/farmers involved with the commissions. Godin mentioned Dartmouth said they do some events and collaboration. Green also suggested finding out what kind of projects and initiatives they undertake.
- Ryan suggested trying to connect with MDAR and USDA to trying get a larger picture on grant opportunities or possible non-profit organizations.

Godin stated he was going to be working on the report for the next month. Green stated the next meeting would be February 23, 2022 and that if he provided it prior we could review/discuss as a commission. Godin will send to Green by February 18, 2022 to forward to members prior to the February meeting.

Ag Bill Update

Green provided an update of the Ag Bills discussion on the 18th with members present at that meeting. Following that meeting Green provided written context for Stu Sklar (Select Board Chair) to formulate a testimony in which he delivered on Friday, January 21, 2022.

Annual Report Submission

Members reviewed and discussed the draft Annual Report Submission. Turnheim went over a few suggestions she had sent to Green - add the list of top 5 actions determined by the Commission from the ACAP, along with mentioning the participation of Turnheim on the CRWG, Traver on Land Stewardship, and Duzan on the Open Space Committee. Members agreed with the addition of the suggestions. Green suggested a motion to approve the Annual Report Submission with the amendments and a final proof read by Traver.

Carlson made a motion to submit The FY2022 Annual Report with the amendments discussed and minor proof reading by Traver. Traver seconded. All were in favor.

Member Updates

Turnheim said the newly appointed Harvard Climate Initiative Commission (HCIC) is going to be creating a Climate Action Plan for Harvard that will oversee all the sectors of the town, and will also include agriculture. Turnheim said the commission's top 5 items from the ACAP were included in the draft, but there would be a more in depth discussion at the HCIC on 1.27.2022. Varrell mentioned treading lightly when it comes to agrivoltaics on pasture land. Green wasn't sure what the goal of providing CSA support from the town level would entail. Turnheim believes maybe some of the items listed were pulled from other communities but might not apply to Harvard and it's farms. Green pointed out local food initiatives

or local food policy that comes from the municipal level. Carlson pointed out the negative impacts from the federal level that is impacting school food programs and the food suppliers. Green said that something has to give with the regulations because the impact it is having on the actual food quality in the schools is awful. Green said if the town can have a Buy Recycled/Renewables Policy they could hopefully institute a Buy Local policy for the town or the schools implement a Buy Local Food policy. Turnheim said the HCIC will be discussing, and Green said she would try to join and listen to the discussion if she was available. Traver jumped in and emphasized the importance to have the Harvard bullets actually be Harvard bullets.

Chair Update

Green said she received a list of Open Meeting Law and Ethics certification and would forward it along.

Potential Discussion Items for Future Meeting

- Discuss potential proposals from our ACAP items WPI
- Harvard Grown Website
- Possible Ag Comm Sponsored Gathering/Events
- 61A Contact Outreach List via Letter

Adjourn

Traver made a motion to adjourn. Carlson seconded. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned 8:41pm.

Submitted: K. Green