

Plainfield Ag Commission Meeting: Nov. 4, 2021

Present: Bi-sek, Anna, Sadie, Ed, Erin

Communications with Kurt at Wolfree Farm: We've been asked by the Select Board (by mandate of our Right-to-Farm By-Law) to mediate the situation with the sound cannons at Wolfree Farm which Elizabeth reached out to us about. We plan to reach out to Kurt and offer him a third party ear to hear his side of the story and to offer our mediation services.

Action step: Sadie is going to draft an email to Kurt for the rest of the Ag Comm to review before we send it to him.

Barn inspections: Kate Nevins, the animal control officer, informed us that they need to perform barn inspections of every Plainfield resident with animals. The reasons are for emergency preparedness and for animal safety and welfare. We discussed this and were made aware of the inspection activity. Ed sent out the letter from Kate Nevins to each Ag Comm member. No further action needed at this time.

Forestry petition: we received a petition letter to be sent to our state legislators Neal and Hinds advocating for support of two bills currently in the state house, H.912 and H.1002, (preserving state owned forests to the standards of national reserves for the sake of slowing climate change. We were asked to add our name to the letter. We discussed the issue and decided to add our Ag. Comm. support to the petition.

Action step: Anna will add our name to the forestry petition.

Article about jumping worms: In the October meeting Anna was encouraged to write a short reminder article in the Plainfield Post about jumping worms. There were already several other gardening articles and notices being submitted. She will continue writing more educational articles.

Town composting: Sadie will reach out to Joan Wattman to discuss composting....

Mosquito spraying: Audubon recently sent out a letter recently about the issue. We discussed the harm of mosquito spraying. Emily Stockman will be doing an educational workshop at Sanderson School in the spring to follow up on the Plainfield's vote to opt-out of mosquito spraying as a public education program is required for us to opt-out again. No further action needed right now.

Letter of support for intact state forest bills:

Dear Chairs Dykema and Rausch,

The Agricultural Commission of Plainfield has voted to support H.912 and H.1002 and urge you to report these bills out of your committee favorably. Intact forests have been proven the best way to sequester

and store carbon, a most important function in our times of global warming. Our Commission has been very active in maintaining and restoring the trees of Plainfield and supporting our town's Tree Alliance. We have also initiated a number of local projects encouraging residents to plant and maintain native species of both trees and understory plants. We support the state efforts to keep our forests intact as a means of protecting and promoting native biodiversity at historic and sustainable levels, so important to restoring our environment of native flora and fauna.

These bills expand the reserves that we already have on public land and make those reserves permanent. This will increase permanent protection for intact forests on our land base from less than 1%, as it is now, to about 10%. We feel that this is a modest proposal during this time of climate crisis and the dangerous diminishing of biodiversity that human practices have encouraged worldwide.

Thank you,

The Plainfield Agricultural Commission

Anna Hanchett, chair Bi-sek Hsiao, Erin Kelly-Dill, Ed Stockman, Sarah Stull

Plainfield, MA 01070