

Biddeford Conservation Commission

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

5:06 -

Attendees: R. Rhames, D. Rioux, E. Heumiller, M. Lowell, M. Atlas, P. Robbins

Guests: G. Mitchell, C. Ohman, A. Redfield (Farm Viability and Farmland Protection Manager_DACF)

- I. Major points of reference
 - A. Forestry section is lacking
 - B. Agriculture section will be workshopped
- II. Background
 - A. State compiles data and shares with municipalities, one in 2014 another in 2020. This provides a frame of reference for whatever the state agency thinks might be helpful to each municipality.
 - B. Farm Service Agency gets satellite data from state and can identify what it looks like
 - C. Things to ask FSA For
 - 1. List of permits (pfas related?)
- III. 1. What's happening section
 - A. Climate change needs to be more
 - B. Reference the loss of dairy farms (other negative changes)
 - C. Do we want to reference pfas?
- IV. 2. What community says
 - A. Try to pull a quote about the challenges and costs of running or losing a farm
 - B. "The rural landscape is due to agriculture"
- V. 3. Agricultural & Forest Resources
 - A. Alex to send updated farmland and tree growth numbers of acres enrolled in current use tax programs
 - B. Add something that shows a trend of the decrease of farming
 - C. Alex to provide follow up – Participation in active farmlands has dropped by x% between 2010 to 2016
 - 1. 2010 - 42 parcels
 - 2. 2016 - 27 parcels
 - 3. 2020 -
 - D. Link to GIS maps to more accurately show prime ag soils
- VI. 4. Forestry and Tree Growth
 - A. Plug in data from Maine Forest Service
 - B. Include # of hunting and fishing licenses sold to Biddeford to demonstrate the value of the forest habitat
- VII. 5. Challenges and opportunities
 - A. Add agricultural heritage of Biddeford (here or in Farmland in Biddeford section)
 - 1. Lots of dairy farming
 - B. Alex to send language to show "state level trends in agriculture"
 - C. Climate Change Section
 - 1. List NRCS resources for farmers to reference in addition (or in place of Healthy Soils Program language)
 - D. Rural Farm Zone Changes

1. If RF Zones get converted this is the order to consider changes
 - a) Working landscapes
 - b) Conservation
 - c) Recreation
 - d) Low density housing
2. Protecting natural resources and the operations that exist because of it is our priority

VIII. Goal 1

- A. Add responsible solar management under this section

IX. Goal 3

- A. Denis to suggest cluster development language to add ag soils as one of the things that needs to be subtracted from parcel before calculating developable area

**encourage farms to participate in programs that support viability