

Knox Agricultural Advisory Committee
Meeting of September 18th, 2019
Knox Town Hall

Summary

Members present: Jay Francis, Gary Kleppel; Joshua Rockwood, Ken Saddlemire
Members absent: Jessica Gaige, Betty Ketcham, Brian Wilson

7:00 Convene

Old business

Family Farm Day Review – Amy Pokorny

Hog & Swine Farming Update

Results of Planning Board review – Gary Kleppel

Prep for public hearing, Oct. 8th at 7 pm; AAC members need to show up

What comes next – Ken Saddlemire

Farm Transition Workshop – Gary Kleppel & Ken Saddlemire

Update on where we are

Getting the word out

Logistics – need to appoint members to arrange space, sessions, etc.

New business

Guardian Dog nuisance complaint – Joshua Rockwood

How can the AAC help? Should we be involved?

Guidelines for livestock management – Gary Kleppel

Comments and discussion

9:00 Adjourn

Old business

Hog & Swine Farming Update –Discussion centered on the results of the Planning Board -(PB) meeting of September 12th, at which the board voted 5-2 to support the proposed amendment to the town’s zoning ordinance that would treat hog farming in agricultural and ag/mining districts the same as any other sort of livestock production operation. Some on the PB suggested that the town should have some regulatory authority over hog farming. One PB member raised the question of setbacks for fencing. Kleppel, representing the AAC agreed that the committee would discuss that and provide advice to the town on that issue. In a post-PB meeting email discussion initiated by Supervisor Lefkaditis, it was agreed that (a) the town could not possibly afford to regulate hog farming, (b) county, state, and federal statutes already provide extensive regulation and oversight of livestock operations, and (c) the AAC would post guidelines to their page on the town’s website to direct farmers to oversight programs and inform them of existing regulations.

Farm Transition Workshop – It was determined that the date of the Farm Transition Workshop should be changed to January 25th.

New business

Guardian Dog nuisance complaint – AAC member Joshua Rockwood reported neighbor complaints about guardian dog barking and certain livestock issues. The committee discussed this and concluded that such activities, which might be considered a nuisance in a residential

district, were appropriate and expected in agricultural districts. It was suggested that a document be created to inform potential buyers of property of the activities and their consequences (e.g., spreading manure might create odors) that are permitted in agricultural districts but would be considered nuisances in residential districts. AAC member pulled up the NYS Real Property Law, Section 333, showing that such notification is required and that realtors are supposed to provide a signed acknowledgment to prospective buyers of property in agricultural districts. AAC members determined to study this issue further and to provide guidance to the Town as to how to proceed to minimize conflict between farmers and non-farmers in agricultural districts.