

Town of Lincoln
Minutes of the Agriculture Commission Meeting
Held on Tuesday, February 14, 2023 via Zoom teleconference

Members Present:

Voting: Louise Bergeron (co-chair), Ari Kurtz (co-chair), Nancy Bergen
Alternate Voting: Sherry Haydock, Karen Seo

Members Absent:

Voting: Ellen Raja, Lynne Bower, Linda Emanuel,

Visitor:

Rich Rosenbaum - responded to Louise's email soliciting information from backyard farmers.

7:03pm - Meeting commenced - Ari chairing

Approval of minutes

1/10/2023 minutes - approved unanimously subject to edits sent by Louise.

Gathering input from Lincoln 's backyard farmers

Louise sent the following post to LincolnTalk

Date: Mon, 6 Feb 2023 11:11:13 -0500
From: Louise Bergeron <louisebergeron@earthlink.net>
To: "<lincoln@lincolntalk.org>" <lincoln@lincolntalk.org>
Subject: [LincolnTalk] Looking for backyard farmers

The Lincoln Agricultural Commission would like to assess backyard agricultural activities in Lincoln and create a network of people engaged in homestead farming.

If you plant a garden, fruit trees, or keep livestock for your family, we would love to hear from you. The Commission's mission is to preserve and promote local agriculture, and we support small and large farming activities.

If you plan to start an agricultural project and have questions, feel free to contact us; members of the Commission can offer extensive expertise on various aspects of farming.

Please respond privately with a brief description of what you grow, harvest, or the animals you keep.

We look forward to hearing from our small farmers,

Louise Bergeron
Co-Chair
Lincoln Agricultural Commission
louisebergeron@earthlink.net

She received about 20 responses. The feedback will feed into Ag Com efforts such as workshops, finding solutions to problems, selecting topics for the newsletter, etc. The most frequently mentioned challenge was woodchucks.

Ag Comm Newsletter content

Louise proposed a plan for the Ag Comm newsletter (see Appendix 1) -- goals, 3 publications per year (spring, summer, fall), proposed topics and a schedule for producing the first newsletter.

The Ag Comm agreed to the plan with assignments for the first issue (Spring) as follows:

Description of a CSA	Ari Kurtz
Producing maple syrup	Linda, Nancy
Backyard farming	Louise, Linda
Current Lincoln farms	Karen
Spring animals	Sherry, Karen
Pictures	Sherry

Initial drafts are due by 2/28.

2/14/2023 Action Item - Ari to check on which farms will have CSA programs this year.

2/14/2023 Action Item – Ari to send Karen acreage for each Lincoln farm

Farm to Food Pantry program:

The Ag Comm voted unanimously to continue the farm-to-food-pantry program. The details will be decided later.

2/14/2023 Action Item – Ari, Louise, Karen to review the farm-to-food-pantry grant application used to recruit farms.

2/14/2023 Action Item – Ari to collect feedback from the Food Pantry and participating farmers on the impact of the Farm-to-Food-Pantry program

Sheep Shearing Video

Corey created a sheep shearing video. This needs to be reviewed by the Ag Comm and augmented with explanatory voice/text.

2/14/2023 Action Item – Karen to review sheep shearing video and work with Corey to add explanatory voice/text.

National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) conference on agriculture, soil and resiliency

Karen distributed a notice with links to offerings at the upcoming NCAT conference. Do Agcom members want to participate?

2/14/2023 Action Item – Karen to ask Patrice to add an entry on the Ag Comm web page for the upcoming NCAT conference.

Update on Farm brochure

Karen has drafted a message to be sent to farmers asking if they wish to be included in a list of Lincoln farms to be used in the Town Hall farm display, the Ag Comm web page, and maybe in an updated version of the Lincoln Farm brochure and if yes, requesting current information on their farms. She sent this draft message (See Appendix 2) and a list of contact information for Lincoln farms (see Appendix 3) to Stacy Carter (Conservation Dept) who had offered to contact the farmers.

2/14/2023 Action Item – Karen to contact Stacy Carter to find out where things stand with regard to the Town Hall agricultural display and collecting current information describing Lincoln farms

Government Programs That Help the Food Insecure

Sherry reported on several government programs aimed at helping the food-insecure and how Lincoln farms could participate.

- Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - This is a national program where the U.S. Dept of Agriculture provides money to low-income people via EBT (electronic benefit transfer) cards which are usable in grocery stores, etc.
- Federal Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FNMP) - The USDA provides funds to states to provide low income seniors with coupons that can be exchanged at farmers' markets, roadside stands, and CSA programs.
- Massachusetts Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) - This is a state program where the Mass Dept of Transitional Assistance uses the Federal SNAP cards to provides funds to low income people to enable them to buy fruits and vegetables from farms. The money gets replaced immediately --\$40-80/month. People must use the funds each month or they do not receive the next month's funds.

Codman applied for and was approved for SNAP/HIP programs. The farm has the necessary software and equipment. The problem has been the need to have a staffed farm stand - Codman's farmstand is currently unmanned. Codman plans to provide an employee on Saturday afternoons to assist in purchases for theSNAP/HIP program. Lincoln Council on Aging (CoA) will handle the SNAP/HIP advertising. The plan is to roll out a pilot program in May that will run on Saturdays from 1-3pm. If the COA provides volunteers to help, the store might be able to process SNAP/HIP at other times.

Drumlin can accept SNAP cards.

For the FNMP, farm enrollment hasn't opened yet.

Farms can easily participate - They just have to apply.

Miscellaneous

Conservation Dept caught the person who was taking down the no-dog signs.

On the Umbrello field, Mohammed is using brewery grain waste and in 2024, will run a composting project. For now, there will be bucket composting. People will receive a bucket and beneficial organisms to take home. They will use these to compost scraps and then bring the compost back to the farm.

Next meeting is 3/14.

8:08pm-- Meeting ended

Appendix 1 - Proposed plan for a Ag Comm Newsletter

Lincoln Farming News

- Goals of the newsletter
 - Promote agriculture in Lincoln and engage people in farming activities
 - Raise awareness of AgComm efforts
 - Advocate for farming businesses and activities
 - Gather content for State of the Town presentation 2023
 - Entertain
- Three publications
 - April (Spring), September (Summer), November (Fall)
 - Publication: Website, Squirrels, send link on Lincoln Talk, printed copies at Library, Bemis, Real estate agents, twisted tree (both location), Town hall, others.
 - Decision to publish more widely to be determined based on interest, cost and how it looks.

Possible Content for This Year

- **Spring**
 1. General: History, how many registered farms, how many acres, what is grown, Right-to Farm bylaw in Lincoln (Ari, Karen, Others, Maybe get help from Sara Mattes)
 2. Homestead agriculture and Backyard farmers (Louise, Linda)
 3. CSA: (Ari)
 - History of CSA in Lincoln (Lindentree was first?) What farms, what is offered, how it helps farmers. Contact info to sign for CSA
 4. Maple syrup harvesting (Linda, Louise, Nancy)
 - Who does it: Drumlin (for what purpose), Codman (who), many backyard people.
 - Feature Nancy's effort: Tapping trees across Lincoln, How it is done, Some anecdotes (ex: people offering Norway maples), school program etc.
 5. Animal being born: (Karen, Sherry, anyone else who has baby animals)
 6. Water conservation (Louise)
 - Small paragraph about guideline, how this affects our farms if wells go dry. How farmers are also careful
- **Summer (Proposed)**
 1. Farm to Food pantry program
 2. Composting
 3. Effort in limited-till agriculture throughout Lincoln

4. Chestnut orchards
 5. Invasive species and pest control
 6. Challenges for summer 2023,
 - Setting up a new farm, pest control, animal control, invasive plants that were particularly bad, weather patterns, etc.
- **Fall:** Animals working on Farms (Proposed Thanksgiving edition)
 1. Working dogs (Ellen Raja, Codman, Louise, Linda, others) Training and what they provide
 2. Horses (equestrians in town)
 3. Barn Cats (Louise, Drumlin, others?)
 4. Pigs: Codman pigs digging out invasive plants in fields
 5. Chickens: Tick and insect control in gardens
 6. Livestock: manure
 7. Goat: Entertainment

Timeline for Spring Newsletter

Activity	Date	
Agree on concept	Feb 14	
Agree on subject for Spring newsletter and actions	Feb 14	
Draft for sections written	Feb 28	
Drafts reviewed by AgCom members and others	March 5	
Pictures taken	March 25	
Second draft formatted, reviewed and sent AgCom members and friends	April 10	
Review and corrections	April 17	
Printing and distribution	April 28	

Appendix 2 - Email sent to Stacy Carter (Conservation Dept) re: collecting current data about Lincoln farms.

Subject: Gathering info for promoting Lincoln farms
Date: Tue, 10 Jan 2023 01:33:12 -0500
From: Karen Seo <karen.s.seo@gmail.com>
To: Carter, Stacy <stacyc@lincolntown.org>
Cc: Karen Seo <kseo@alum.mit.edu>

Stacy,

Below is a draft email to send to each farmer.

- Please feel free to edit this or let me know what changes you'd like me to make.
- **There will be an Ag Comm meeting this evening. Please feel free to join us and/or to let me know if there's anything you'd like me to bring to their attention.**
- For those farms in the brochure, I've included the brochure text at the end of this message. Just put the brochure text for each farm in the space indicated. Each farm would thus get a message intended just for it.
- Instead of sending individual messages to every farm, you could send individual messages just to the farms that are already listed in the brochure and send a single message to all the others.
- Do you think it would make sense to post a general invitation on Lincoln Talk and The Squirrel in case there are farms that we've missed?
- The Ag Comm was planning to list the farms on their web page, maybe with a link from the home page and the Conservation Commission's page. What do you think?

Thank you for your help,
Karen

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Hello, [farmer's/farm's name],

The Agricultural and Conservation Commissions are working together to promote agriculture in Lincoln by (a) creating a display at Town Hall on Lincoln's farms, (b) updating the existing brochure on Lincoln farms and (c) creating a list of Lincoln farms on the town's web site. If you would like to have your farm included please send us the following information.

If your farm is already in the brochure, that information is listed here for your convenience -- please copy/replace/update as appropriate into the template below:

[Stacy -- Either put brochure text for this farm here or put "NOT LISTED IN CURRENT BROCHURE"]

TEMPLATE:

- Required:
 - Name of Farm:

- Established (date):
- Town or private land (or both)
- Address:
- Description -- goals, products, services:
 - Short for the brochure (a line or 2)
 - (Optional) Longer for the display and web site (perhaps a paragraph)
- Contact information
 - Optional -- Contact person/people:
 - How to contact (phone, email, website, etc.):
- Optional
 - Photographs
 - Web site:
 - Whether open to public or open by appointment:
 - Other info:

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you for your help,
Stacy

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List of currently active farms listed in the Agricultural Commission brochure.

American Chestnut Foundation Propagation Project
 Est. 2003 Town Land
 290 South Great Road (Rte 117)
 Prospect: To restore a blight-resistant American Chestnut tree to its original range
 Contact Information:
 Kathy Desjardin
 Email: kathydesjardin@verizon.net
 508-278-3565
 open to the public

Breton Meadow Farm
 Est. 2010 Private and Town Land
 37 Farrar Road
 Products: miniature sheep (Ouessant), fleeces, lamb, mutton
 Contact Information:
 Web: www.bretonmeadowfarm.com
 781-259-0563
 Open by appointment only

Brown Family Tree Farm
 Est. 1964 Private Land
 78 Old Sudbury Road
 Product: Christmas trees
 Contact Information:
 Email: Margie.brown@gmail.com
 781-259-8184 By appointment only

Codman Community Farms

Town owned buildings and land, operated by Codman Community Farms, Inc. since 1973

58 Codman Road

Products: Farm Store - Meat, eggs, maple syrup, local cheeses and milk;

Hay, firewood, compost, PYO flowers

Services: Garden plots (annual lease), community events, educational programs

Contact Information:

Email: info@codmanfarm.org

Web: www.codmanfarms.org

781-259-0456

Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary Mass Audubon

Est. 1955 Private Land

208 South Great Road (Rte 117)

Products: Summer and winter CSAs, Farmstand - vegetables, meat, eggs, wool

Services: Educational programs, special events, Audubon Shop

Contact Information:

Email: drulinfarm@massaudubon.org

Web: www.massaudubon.org/drumlinfarm

781-259-2200

Lindentree Farm

Est. 1993 Private and Town Land

10 Old Concord Road

Products: Certified organic vegetables & small fruit

Sales only by CSA membership or at Lincoln Farmers' Market

Contact Information:

Owners Ari Kurtz and Moira Donnell

Email: lindentreeca@gmail.com

Web: www.Lindentreefarm.com

781-259-1259

Lovelane Special Needs Horseback Riding Program, Inc.

Est. 1992 Private Land

40 Baker Bridge Road

Services: Therapeutic horseback riding program that serves primarily children with a wide variety of special needs. Private sessions and summer workshop opportunities. Wait list.

Contact Information:

Email: mail@lovelane.org

Web: www.lovelane.org

781-259-1177

Matlock Farm

Est. 1650s Private and Town Land

Continuously operated by the Flint Families

Lexington Road

Products: hay

Services: Horseback Riding Program
Contact Information:
Hay sales: Ephraim Flint – 781-259-8402
Horseback Riding: Sarah Flint
Web: matlockfarm.com

Page Road Farm
Est. 1993 Lincoln Land Conservation Trust
37 Page Road
Product: Beef
Contact Information: Ken Bassett and Mary Helen Lorenz
Email: kbassett@sasaki.com

Raja Farm
Est. 1960 Private and Town Land
40 Old Sudbury Road
Products: Eggs, wool, lamb, knits, skulls
Contact Information:
Email: Rajafarm@comcast.net
781-259-9379 By appointment only

Stonegate Gardens
Est. 1996 Private Land Family Owned
339 South Great Road (Rte 117)
Products: Specimen trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, mulch, Christmas trees
Services: Container gardening, Floral arrangement
Contact Information:
Web: www.stonegategardens.com
781-259-8884

The Food Project
Est. 1991 Town Land
Intersection of Rte 126 & Baker Bridge Road
Products: 134 varieties of vegetables, fruits and flowers, CSA
Contact Information:
Web: www.thefoodproject.org
781-259-8621

Appendix 3 – Contact Information for Lincoln Farms

On Conservation List	Farm	Contact	Email	Phone	Farm Address	Contact's Address
	American Chestnut Foundation Propagation Project -- Hybrid tree planting field on Rte 117	Kathy Desjardin	kathydesjardin@verizon.net	508-278-3565	290 South Great Road (Rte 117)	
Y	American Chestnut Foundation (Germplasm Conservation orchard on Flims' Fields)	Mark Meehl	M_meehl@yahoo.com	H:978-664-6210/C:754-215-6383		232 Swan Pond Road, North Reading, MA 01864-1917
Y	Breton Meadow Farm	Karen Seo	kseo@alum.mit.edu	781-259-0563/C:617-285-6463	37 Farrar Road	same as farm
	The Pillar Farm (formerly Brown Family Tree Farm)	Margie Brown	margie.brown@gmail.com	781-25908184	78 Old Sudbury Road	same as farm
Y	Codman Community Farms	Pete Lowy	info@codmanfarm.org pete@codmanfarm.org	781-259-0456	58 Codman Road	same as farm
Y	Cupp & Sons	Gerry & Russell Cupp	cuppcuppp@hotmail.com	H:978-371-7066/C:617-799-8089		198 Shadyside Avenue, Concord MA 01742
	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary Mass Audubon	Scott McCue (new director)	drumlinfarm@massaudubon.org	781-259-2200	208 South Great Road (Rte 117)	same as farm
Y	Hannan Agro	Mohammed Hannan	mhannan@hannanagrofarm.com	617-959-0748		424 Windsor Street, Unit 2, Cambridge MA 02141
Y	Lindentree Farm	Ari Kurtz and Moira Donnell	lindentreesa@gmail.com	781-259-1259	10 Old Concord Road	same as farm
	Lovelane Special Needs Horseback Riding Program, Inc		mail@lovelane.org	781-259-1177	40 Baker Bridge Road	
Y	Matlock Farm	Hay sales -- Ephraim Flint; Riding -- Sarah Flint	ebflint@verizon.net	for hay -- 781-259-8402 or 978-760-3552	Lexington Road	P.O. Box 6034
	Kanner Family Orchards	Steven Kanner	KFO@orchardhealthcare.com <i>(obtained from Ari, not brochure)</i>			
	Page Road Farm	Ken Bassett, Mary Helen Lorenz	kbassett@sasaki.com	781-259-9544 (from Lincoln phone book)	37 Page Road	same as farm
Y	Peaches and Honey	Charlotte Trim	charlotte.trim@gmail.com	781-259-8711		108 Codman Road
Y	Raja Farm	Ellen Raja	Rajafarm@comcast.net	781-259-9379	40 Old Sudbury Road	same as farm
Y	Red Rail Farm	Kim Johnson	kajakakim@hotmail.com	781-259-0697	22 Red Rail Farm	same as farm
	Stonegate Gardens	Lynne Bower	lynn@stonegategardens.com	781-259-8884	339 South Great Road (Rte 117)	
Y	Sweet Spirit Alpaca	Bill Huss & Cheri Geckler	billhuss53@gmail.com	H: 508-358-2778/C:508-574-2228		
Y	The Food Project	Alex Pogony	apogony@thefoodproject.org	781-259-8621/C:360-927-0361	Intersection of Rte 126 & Baker Bridge Road	P.O. Box 705
Y	Verrill Farm (Mellitzer Field by Lee's bridge)	Stephen Verrill & Mark Amato	verrillfm@aol.com	978-835-5227		11 Wheeler Road, Concord MA 01742