

Minutes of Charlestown Agricultural Preservation Commission Meeting October 8, 2019

Present: Noel Rowe, Susan Barrett, Michael Merner, John Barrett

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:07PM by President Noel Rowe.

2. A quorum was present.

3. The minutes of the previous meeting on 7/24/19 were reviewed. Michael Merner moved and Noel Rowe seconded approval. The minutes were unanimously approved.

4. OLD BUSINESS

Jane During has said she wants to be an alternate CAPC member. To that end Noel Rowe will contact Amy and get the paperwork started.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Pursuant to a letter from Roe LaBossiere about a Westerly Sun article concerning new Stonington ordinances to help farmers, John Barrett retrieved and brought these ordinances to this meeting. After much discussion, it was decided that Mike Merner will call Roe LaBossiere to discuss Rhode Island laws for farmers. According to Mike Merner, Connecticut has less beneficial rules. To improve these Connecticut rules, Stonington passed town-based improvements to them.

Noel Rowe presented a National Pest Alert bulletin about the Spotted Lanternfly (*lycorma delicatula*) This bulletin gives information about the origin, distribution, life cycle and identification of this pest. It also outlines its potential spread and impact. Lastly it goes into management efforts and techniques chosen to control this insect as well as a reporting mechanism with the various state departments of agriculture.

Sue Barrett spoke about snake worms which have found their way into Rhode Island. These worms probably get here from soils or products from outside New England but they are here now and have been in the United States for fifty years or so. This worm looks a lot like a big night crawler but, if you attempt to pick it up, it jumps away. This is how it avoids predators. These worms become a problem when their castings become too large a percentage of the topsoil. Basically, regular worm castings are sticky and hold water. The castings of these worms are very granular and loose. If anything tries to grow in these castings the roots will have a hard time getting a foothold. Plants look wilted as if in a drought situation. In forests they make the soil much less suitable for regrowth to take place.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Noel Rowe noted that we are still waiting for regulations on solar power development. The Charlestown Planning board reports to the Council which has noted that several other towns in Rhode Island have legal issues to deal with in this area. The Charlestown Council is waiting for the new Comprehensive Plan before discussing commercial solar development.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Michael Merner proposed adjournment and Sue Barrett seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15PM.