

Final Minutes of the November 4, 2020 Charlestown Agricultural Preservation Committee

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:11PM by Committee chair Noel Rowe in the town council meeting room for social distance. Those present were Noel Rowe, Susan Barrett, Michael Merner and John Barrett.
2. A quorum was present.
3. The minutes of the previous meeting on 2/26/20 were reviewed. After discussion, Noel Rowe proposed and Michael Merner seconded approval. The minutes were unanimously approved.
4. OLD BUSINESS
Jane Durning was approved as an alternate CAPC member at the Charlestown Town Council meeting in March 2020. We welcome Jane to the group.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Pursuant to Charlestown Council member Virginia Lee's recommendation, all present at this meeting have reviewed several sections of the Charlestown Comprehensive Plan. In particular we read the sections on economic opportunity and energy as well as the land use section. The natural resources section is still ahead of us and will be reviewed the next time we meet. In general, we find again as in previous reviews that this plan clearly shows the town's collective love of what we have and our desire to preserve the open land, the clear waters and the dark night sky which we have the good fortune to live on and alongside and under.

In general, the CAPC sees the Comprehensive Plan as very favorable to agriculture and small business. We appreciate and support the goals of this clear and detailed look at our town. We commend all those who have worked very hard to put this in comprehensive plan together and hope it will be adopted by the town as soon as possible.

Noel Rowe commented on the need for the town to help new farmers get started in Charlestown. The town council should find ways to provide new farmers with land they can lease for 10 years. They should also make family compounds for farms possible so that family farms can stay in the family. There is also a need for summer help to work on farms and ways to affordably house the summer workers that help our farmers. Noel also commented on the solar needs of farms and that they can exceed the capacity for solar energy production currently being proposed in the comprehensive plans regulations. Noel said that he will write a letter to the Town Council about these concerns

6. ADJOURNMENT

Noel Rowe proposed and John Barrett seconded adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04PM.