



AGRICULTURAL
COMMISSION
FOR THE TOWN OF
EASTON
CONNECTICUT

Commission Members

Jean Stetz-Puchalski,
Chair

Victor Alfandre,
Recording Secretary

Laurel Fedor

Sal Gilbertie

Irv Silverman

Alternates:

Lori Cochran Dougall

Ray Longo

INSTR # M2016000348
DATE FILED 05/25/2016 08:45:30 AM
CHRISTINE HALLORAN
TOWN CLERK
EASTON CT

Minutes
Meeting of the Easton Agricultural Commission
May 10, 2016 -7:30 p.m.
Town Hall-Meeting Room B

In attendance: Jean Stetz-Puchalski, Victor Alfandre, Laurel Fedor.
Absent: Lori Cochran-Dougall, Ray Longo, Sal Gilbertie, Irv Silverman.

I: Call to Order: 8:00 pm

II: Minutes: Motion to approve by Laurel Fedor, 2nd by Victor Alfandre, approved unanimously

III: Updates & Reports: Proposed Feedback on revisions and updates to 2006 POCD

- Debrief from 5/2: LF felt tone was positive and receptive and that P&Z recognized that we had expertise to offer. Jean Stetz-Puchalski (JSP) reviewed points made at 5/2 meeting (attachment). Emphasized cautions about use of unit metrics for animals and over reliance on special permitting. Victor Alfandre felt meeting was very positive. Tone was welcoming P&Z was receptive and clearly stated goal not to impede but support farming activity. P & Z committed to sharing the May 23rd draft of the Zoning regulations with this Commission and requested that we offer specific language for considerations by the P&Z Commission. Question from P & Z about DoAg capabilities to enforce state level regulation. Lori Cochran Dougall (LCD) will reach out to Steven K. Reviczky, State DoAg Commissioner, for a letter of endorsement to DoAg capabilities within the state.
- Discussed fulfilling request from P&Z for specific language for possible inclusion in POCD: assigned re-reading of current POCD. Reviewed town of Lebanon POCD sections on Ag and other towns who support Agriculture with specific language.
- Discussed fulfilling request from P&Z for specific language for possible inclusion in Zoning Regulations. This commission will work with the May 23rd draft, once in hand, to make specific recommendations based on research review on zoning regulations s from DoAg and other state and local resources. DoAg willing to review upcoming draft of proposed Zoning Regulations and make recommendations. JSP has also contacted CCM who will provide examples farm friendly Ag zoning regulations from across the state.

Resources for planning for Ag/farmland preservation:

- Report on progress with Town filing for Agriculturally Important Soil Designation: followed NRCS guidelines to get important farmland soils designation. Received confirmation on 5/3. Acknowledging First Selectman for completing process on 5/9/16. Will submit to P&Z, copy town planner John Hayes and work to post to website. This completes another important step in helping secure grants for local farmers. Katherine Winslow from DoAg is providing guidance on further steps.

Correspondence: see attached

Aspetuck Land Trust working to preserve Gilbertie's farm. LCD met with Tim Brady for feedback on zoning regs (attachment). 2 requests: adopt 1-1(q) and be sure to include equine and made reference to the word commercial. Tim Brady also submitted his copy of recommendations (attached) for changes to the proposed Agricultural Zoning Regulations from an advanced draft he was given.

IV New Business:

- Add link from DoAg linking farmland to buyers/leasers to website. <http://www.ctfarmlink.org/>
- Focusing on outreach effort to include full inventory list of farms with contact info.
- Encourage ongoing awareness and interaction from citizens and farmers as to the P & Z updates to regs for the purpose of transparency and positivity in supporting planning for Agriculture.

V Public Comment: None

Adjournment: 9:25 PM

Minutes submitted by Victor Alfandre, Recording Secretary *Victor Alfandre*

Notes from Tim Brady:

Tim noted that you both would like for me to reach out to Steve for a letter of endorsement to the DOAG's capabilities within the state. I will do so tomorrow.

Tim, as a farmer in town that the Ag Com represents, asked for the Ag Commission to consider two things this evening:

1. We recommend that P&Z adopt 1.1q (I believe we already are doing this but wanted to make sure I noted it)
2. We adopt equine as part of agriculture and part of the group of farmers the Ag Commission represents/supports (I support this if we go to a vote)

He also noted that he made an addition to his recommendations around the word "commercial" because the definition is "intent to make a profit." This would mean that P&Z would need tax returns, bank statements and all financial information. Security and privacy would be a concern with this. He would like our thoughts on this.

The consensus from our meeting is that the Ag Commission could help by reviewing Tim's recommendations that have been submitted to P&Z and the consultant to see if there are additional themes we should add to the list, language to consider or details that need to be noted and so on.... I would also like to see us take more language from the State in our recommendations we submit to P&Z. On a side note, I do think we need to put things in our recommendations that we can bargain with. For example, items we can say, we would be willing to let 'said' go or would not recommend said if you would consider the rest.....

We will need to fill the room again on May 23. IMHO, this is another opportunity for the Ag Com to reach out to the farmers. Would the Ag Com be able to help in this effort? I will reach out to Allison, Patti/Al, other homesteaders and Candee.

One initiative that would benefit the Ag Com would be for us to create an email list of farmers in Easton. A second, would be to consider using this email list to send positive news about grants, farmland preserved and other positive farming information thus creating the Ag Com as a resource to the area farmers outside of when issues arise. Ultimately, building the confidence our farmers have in this Commission. Farmers are busy and not historically at their computers much and while we have resources on our website, we could utilize a minimal proactive approach to generate knowledge around the assets that are available.

Date: 5-10-16



Celebrating *50 years* 1966/2016
of Preserving Land

To:
Jean Puchalski

Dear Jean,

From
Alice Cooney

Thank you very much for taking the time today to explain some of what has been going on in the effort to stand ready and support the process of saving Gilbertie's Farm.

CC
David Brant

As mentioned Aspetuck Land Trust is also continuing to explore that process and the information regarding your research, efforts and accomplishments is VERY positive.

Re
Gilbertie's Farm

In the near future I look forward to speaking with you more about the options and requirements involved.

Sincerely,

Alice Cooney
Aspetuck Land Trust
203-260-4737

Easton Planning and Zoning Commission
Easton Town Hall
225 Center Road
Easton, CT 06612

Re: May 2nd Feedback on the 2016 Town of Plan of Conservation and Development from the Agricultural Commission

Dear Members of the Easton Planning and Zoning Commission:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer input on the 2016 Town of Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD).

The Agricultural Commission offers the following ideas and items for your consideration as part of the new plan:

- The plan should highlight the valuable role agriculture plays in our town today and potential for adding value as we plan for Easton's future.
- Protection & preservation of farmland should be a prominent theme in this update of the POCD. The plan should offer clarity and commitment around building regulations for agriculture with the goal of protection & preservation of farmland and those engaged in farming (citizens and farmers alike).
- The plan should report on where Easton has taken steps to set up conditions that preserve, protect, and promote agriculture and explore where we may do better with planning for the future. We recommend a section in POCD dedicated to planning for agriculture.

Specific items of importance include:

- P & Z adopt the Connecticut statutory definition of agriculture and farming CGS 1-1(q) for the town of Easton which offers a clear and inclusive definition of agriculture.
- Zoning regulations to provide reasonable consideration for the protection & preservation of farmland as it exists today in Easton - smaller as well as larger parcels.
- Be cautious about over regulating:
 - Use of metrics guiding number of animals allowed per acre based on the outdated notion of grazing as primary food source/husbandry does not reflect current management practices.
 - Reliance on special permitting can be cost and time prohibitive to farmers and a deterrent to home owners and prospective homeowners. It can possibly put at us risk.
- Include agriculture in possible economic development plans
- Include agriculture in our conservation/open space goals
- Create a separate section for agriculture and opportunities to include specific goals to promote viable agricultural business, agri-tourism, and resources for the community.
- The plan should support expanded accessory uses for farmers to encourage economic viability and signage supporting
- The State of Connecticut recommends that the POCD report and map our Town's progress in formal support of agriculture: The benefit is the demonstration to the state Department of Agriculture that

we have a plan and have put into place supports for farmland preservation. This is a requirement for our farmers to be eligible for certain state level grants and resources.

- ✓ Established Ag Commission by ordinance
- ✓ Right to Farm ordinance
- ✓ Agricultural Study, Education and Outreach
- ✓ Farming on Town land – Lease to farmer
- ✓ Identified Easton's locally important soils through application to USDA NRCS for food, feed fiber and forage.
- ✓ Share how Easton supports qualifying farms through tax exemptions and how else we may support our farmers (e.g., PA 490, optional tax exemption for farm buildings (CGS 12-91c), additional \$100,000 exemption on farm machinery to bring the total exemption to \$200,000 (CGS 12-91b), 50% abatement of property taxes for certain farm businesses (CGS 12-81m), etc.).

We also offered the following during our May 2nd feedback to the Commission.

Here are some of the ways in which Agriculture adds value:

- Agriculture plays a large role in building a sense of community in Easton. Farms provide a place to meet and greet neighbors. Realtors are known to visit farms and highlight the annual Farm Tour when selling Easton to prospective home buyers -- buyers who can afford Easton and share values. In fact, in the past few years we have heard of folks who bought homes in Easton after attending the Farm Tour.
- Agriculture provides our community resources for fresh food and fiber: Access to healthy locally grown food and supplies is available without having to leave Easton.
- Farmers make long term investments in the land and Easton.
- Agriculture creates stability in the community. Farming is a home based business where others may travel out of town for work. Farmers are ever present working and living in our communities.
- Land under agricultural use contributes to a reduced cost of community support services (COCS). Even when farmland is assessed at its current agricultural use value under PA 490, the COCS suggests that farmland generates a surplus to help offset the shortfall created by residential demand for public services. Review of the COCS studies done in Connecticut suggests that for each dollar of property tax revenue generated by working lands on average only 31 cents is required in municipal services versus the \$1.12 for residential.
http://www.ct.gov/doag/lib/doag/farmland_preservation_/2012_planning_for_ag.pdf
- Education for our children: Farming on Town Land project on Morehouse Plot A & B in front Samuel Staples Elementary School (SSES). Quotes from the evaluation feedback report conducted by the Ag Commission:

"My first impression was one of "awe". I can remember thinking how fortunate our students were to experience the growing stages of the crops on the farm. Where in today's fast-paced,

computer driven world would they ever have the chance to see a working farm first hand. The educational opportunities are endless for all of the grades. The farm provided a spring- board for discussions stressing the importance of farming in our world. The connection to 'keeping our world green' is crucial to our children's future. The children's natural curiosity and many questions were brought to the surface when they had the opportunity to actually see the growing crops in our front school yard." -- SSES Teacher

"I would love to grow our own fruits and vegetables then we can make health soups and salads and donate it to the soup kitchen in Bridgeport. The younger kids can make the soup and the fifth graders can serve it." -- SSES Student

"The students and staff at SSES were given a wonderful opportunity to work in partnership with the Easton farmers. Local farmer and former SSES parent, Patti Popp, could not have been more enthusiastic about the farming connection with our existing curriculum. We were most grateful for the many hours that she volunteered last spring to work with our students and staff on planting the pumpkins. Mrs. Popp created an outdoor classroom in which she provided superb instruction for our students; everyone left excited about the farming potential in our curriculum. Our spectacular school building was complemented by the glorious pumpkin patches and rows of lush corn fields that grew happily in the front of our building last fall. What an amazing drive we have into our school! The success of these well-tended crops served as a fine metaphor for our supportive and caring community and truly sets us apart from any other school." - Kimberly Fox-Santora, Principal, SSES

We leave you with these thoughts:

Agriculture has enjoyed a renaissance in this day and age. What used to be perceived as the old farming way of life is now seen by this generation as a part of what it means to live a sustainable life, eat healthy locally grown food and have an appreciation for the environment. Easton attracts homeowners who share this vision of "having it all" -- a little land, some back yard poultry to ward off the ticks and garden pests (e.g., Integrated Pest Management http://ipm.uconn.edu/pa_curriculum/about.php) rather than insecticides and poisons in the garden. People are drawn to communities where they can access fresh locally grown food and surround themselves with nature. So much of what this Planning and Zoning Commission protects is the Easton way of life. We see agriculture's influence in Easton—past present and future, not at all in conflict with progress. Agriculture can and should be part of Easton's future and this plan should reflect that vision for protecting livelihoods, in the case of the farmers, and a way of life for members of the community. Remember agriculture enriches the quality of life for everyone in town.

Individual members of the Agricultural Commission may have additional comments for the Commission.

We appreciate your request for additional feedback from the Commission and your willingness to share the May 23rd second draft of the proposed zoning regulations. We will work on pulling specific language for your consideration.

Many thanks,

The Easton Agricultural Commission

Jean Stetz-Puchalski, Chair

Victor Alfandre, Recording Secretary

Laurel Fedor

Sal Gilbertie

Irv Silverman

Alternates:

Lori Cochran Dougall

Ray Longo



Town of Easton

*Adam Dunsby
First Selectman*

*225 Center Road
Easton, Connecticut 06612
www.eastonct.gov*

*203-268-6291
FAX 203-268-4928
adunsby@eastonct.gov*

April 26, 2016

Thomas Morgart
State Conservationist
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
344 Merrow Road, Suite A
Tolland, CT 06084-3917

Dear Mr. Morgart,

The Town of Easton, Connecticut, has concerns for certain additional farmlands for production of food, feed, fiber and forage, even though these lands are not identified as having national or statewide importance. The Town thereby requests that NRCS conduct a soil survey to identify Locally Important Farmland within the Town boundaries.

We appreciate your assistance in this important request.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Adam Dunsby
First Selectman

Cc: Jean Stetz-Puchalski
Agriculture Commission, Chair

AD/jfh

May 2.

P&Z Meeting

Points for consideration:

1. Silverman:

- a. Employees Easton youth
- b. Employees Easton residents
- c. Provides a location for realtors to sell Easton – providing value to economy
- d. How many of Easton residents have taken visitors to Silverman's

2. Sport Hill Farm:

- a. Education – SSES (250 students engaged each year)
- b. Recruits many people from neighboring communities which provide added value
- c. Value within organic practices

3. Value of small to midsized farms

- a. Economic growth
- b. Education – provides access for youth and community to have knowledge of food
- c. Food – provides healthier foods
- d. These farms use less pesticides and herbicides than larger farms
- e. Opportunity for branding
- f. Opportunity for preserving open space
- g. Increasing value of Easton property

4. Our farmers:

- a. They cannot move their place of business
- b. We go to work outside of Easton. They stay right here and farm the land.
- c. This is their livelihood
- d. This is the economic value of Easton
- e. This provides an opportunity for branding

5. Quote: We can have strong local economies, green energy, a clean environment, healthy citizens and good food – all of these start with family farmers.

6. Marketing: What is Easton's Brand?

- a. Who – what makes us special
- b. What – attributes do we want to highlight

- c. How – through regulations, marketing and community organization (It is not hard)

What do you want from the brand???

1. Increased sales
2. property value
3. environmental protection
4. aesthetically appealing
5. safe community
6. good neighbors
7. happy place to live.

What is our current thread?

What has been our historical thread?

Agriculture....

How does (P&Z) use your position to influence the value of this community?

By understanding the brand, identifying trends and implementing regulations that facilitate growth within our brand (Agriculture) while protecting the integrity of the brand that is Easton.

For example, Hudson Valley. They identified what made them unique. They did not focus on arts alone. They saw farming as something that other neighboring communities were dabbling in but not owning.

Imagine Easton embracing agriculture as we have in our past. Adopting 1.1q, using our marketing efforts to highlight the quaintness of a modern farming community.

1. Weston example – has a town center yet is seeing a decrease in sales – noting that the town center is not what is selling the town. It is focusing on the farms in the paper – Dirt Road, Lachat
2. Westport – fighting to save the last three pieces of property being farmed- thus realizing the value of the property

Quote – Working farms should be preserve to protect our character, provide economic development activity and to provide a local food source - from Glen's website

Example of agritoursim - Value of Farm Tour – creates the essence of how we want our community to be scene.
This is promoting Agri-tourism

1. Community minded
2. Safe
3. Family oriented
4. Affluent
5. Welcoming
6. Organized
7. Friendly

Bio Lori Cochran-Dougall, 550 Morehouse Road, Easton

Bio for SME-

Board Chairman Jackson Hole Farmers' Market

Consultant – Virginia Good Food Good People not profit focused on economic development and security for small to mid-sized farms,

Downtown Roanoke Farmers' Market and Grandin Local Food Initiative advisor

Spokesman to State Senate – Requested presenter for small to mid-sized farm agritourism and the need for state and local support for these farms from a legislative standpoint. Essence the value the state sees in farming to the state of CT

Wholesome Wave consultant – lobbied on Capital Hill with Tom Colicchio, Sam Talbot, Michel Nischan and Nel Newman to secure food security elements and benefits that directly affect small to mid-sized farmers within the Farm Bill. We were successful in our efforts!

CTNOFA Board Member

CFE – past board member

Ag Commission member

Co-chair to Farm Tour for seven years

Co-creator of Crop-Ups – online ordering service for chefs to purchase local farmers product directly.

Advisor for Wakeman Town Farm in Westport

Executive Director and Board Member– Westport Farmers' Market



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service
344 Merrow Road, Suite A
Tolland, CT 06084-3917
(860) 871-4011 – phone
(855) 934-2776 – fax

May 3, 2016

Mr. Adam Dunsby
First Selectman
Town of Easton
225 Center Road
Easton, CT 06612

RE: LOCAL IMPORTANT FARMLAND DESIGNATION

Dear Mr. Dunsby:

Congratulations on your efforts to officially recognize and designate Local Important Farmland soils in Easton. Identification of these soils is useful in the management and maintenance of the resource base that supports the productive capacity of American agriculture. This designation will help guide the future of Easton and help preserve the rural, agricultural lands characterizing your town.

Enclosed is the Local Important Farmland soils list for Easton. To make this list official, please sign the enclosed documents; return one to my office, and retain the other for your files. In general, the soils listed are stony phases of the same soil names already on the prime and statewide important farmland soil lists.

Also enclosed is a map for Easton indicating the areas of locally important farmland soils.

The Code of Federal Regulations, title 7, part 657, describes the procedures for establishment and maintenance of prime and important farmland soils. Local Important Farmland Soils must be identified and officially recognized by local officials and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The list of all important farmland soils (prime, statewide important, and local important) in Connecticut is maintained by NRCS in the Field Office Technical Guide and may be accessed through our website at www.ct.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/. Soils identified as Local Important Farmland are not Prime Farmland or Statewide Important Farmland soils; however, they are recognized as valuable soils for planning and farmland protection.

Congratulations to Easton for officially recognizing and designating Local Important Farmland soils!

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

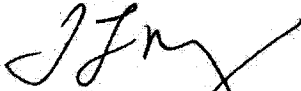


Adam Dunsby, May 3, 2016

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Please feel free to contact Barbara Alexander, State GIS Specialist, at (860) 871-4046 with any questions or for clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Morgan', written over the printed name.

Thomas L. Morgan
State Conservationist

Enclosure

cc: Barbara Alexander, GIS Specialist, NRCS, Tolland, CT
Cameron Weimar, Director, CT Farmland Preservation Program, DOAG, Hartford, CT



United States Department of Agriculture

Local Important Farmland

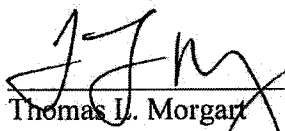
for

Town of Easton, Connecticut

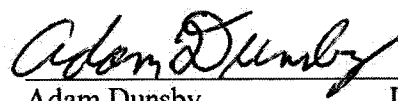
The Town of Easton, Connecticut, has concern for certain additional farmlands for production of food, feed, fiber, and forage, even though these lands are not identified as having national or statewide importance. According to the Code of Federal Regulations, title 7 part 657, these lands have been identified by the local agency concerned as *Local Important Farmland* and approved by the signatories below.

Map Symbol	Soil Name
46B	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes, very stony
51B	Sutton fine sandy loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes, very stony
61B	Canton and Charlton soils, 3 to 8 percent slopes, very stony
61C	Canton and Charlton soils, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony
73C	Charlton-Chatfield complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky
85B	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 3 to 8 percent slopes, very stony
85C	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony

The undersigned hereby designate the above named soil mapunits as *Local Important Farmland* soils and officially add these soils to the list of Prime and Statewide Important Farmland soils for the Town of Easton, Connecticut.


Thomas L. Morgart
State Conservationist
USDA-Natural Resources
Conservation Service

5/3/16
Date

 5/19/16
Adam Dunsby
First Selectman
Town of Easton, Connecticut

USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Agriculture In Easton

Possible Revisions to Zoning Regulations **(Revised Draft dated February 29, 2016)**

Submitted by:

Timothy Brady

President, Fairfield County Farm Bureau

Updated May 2, 2106

Updated May 5, 2016

Recommendations

April 22, 2016 (Updated May 5, 2016)

1. Remove acreage requirements as none are required by CT Statute 1-1q, PA 490, or by the CT Department of Revenue Services.
 - a. See 5600, p58. 1. Delete "maple syrup, orchard fruits, and similar consumable".
 - b. See 3330 P28. 2.a. Riding Stables
 - c. Guidance and Recommendations for Connecticut Municipal – Zoning Regulations and Ordinances for Livestock". (This guide was prepared in conjunction with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), Connecticut Department of Agriculture, UCONN, and Connecticut Farm Bureau, among other experts.) Page 9. Municipalities should make use of the state statutory definitions of agriculture, farming and farm. CGS 7-131v requires municipal zoning commissions to use the state's definition of agriculture when considering the impact of zoning regulations on agriculture. In addition, zoning regulations should not attempt to distinguish between "commercial" and noncommercial" farms."
2. Adopt livestock waste management principals as proposed in the "Guidance and Recommendations for Connecticut Municipal – Zoning Regulations and Ordinances for Livestock". Recommend that ALL owners of livestock adhere to:
 - a. "generally accepted agricultural practices related to the collection, storage, land application and removal of livestock manure and control runoff."
 - b. Livestock owners must comply with generally accepted practices through the Right to Farm Law (CGS 22a-430); CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection water pollution control statutes (CGS 22a-430) , and the State of Connecticut Public Health Code. Page 15, para 3.3
3. Animal Density. "Unfortunately, municipalities have often relied upon animal density formulas, regardless of their suitability of the site....formulas were originally based on pasture yield,...they do not take into account modern feeding and husbandry methods - including rotational grazing, measured feed rations (grown off site) and dedicated exercise programs." From Guidance and Recommendations for Connecticut Municipal – Zoning Regulations and Ordinances for Livestock", page 13, para 3.1. "Density formulas also create enforcement issues..." for ZEOs. Therefore, recommend:
 - a. Removal of "animal density data", and replace it with wording that addresses protection of the land (see paragraph 2. above).
 - b. Recommend deletion of density wording on pages:
 - i. 3300. P25. 5.d. Keeping of Other Animals (Residence)
 - ii. 3330 P28. 2.b. Riding Stables

4. Agricultural building (e.g., barns) setbacks – other than Farm Stores. Recommend:
 - a. Align agricultural setbacks with other town activities and uses (e.g., sheds, tennis courts, pools, and daycare);
 - b. 50' front setback, and 40' side setback.
5. Equine. Recommendations. Recognize that there are a variety of equine activities that differ dramatically in their impact and presence. The vast majority of equine properties are relatively quiet and low impact, are not engaged with the public at large, and the visitors are relatively infrequent. Recommendations for equine properties:
 - a. Be recognized as an agricultural activity as included in CT Statute Sec 1-1(q)
 - b. Require waste management as proposed in paragraph 2. Above.
 - c. From Guidance and Recommendations for Connecticut Municipal – Zoning Regulations and Ordinances for Livestock”, page p. “....In addition, zoning regulations should not attempt to distinguish between “commercial” and “noncommercial” farms.”
 - d. Setbacks:
 - i. Indoor riding rings. 100' from any property boundary.
 - ii. Riding rings or paddocks. 40' of any property boundary.
 - iii. All other setbacks align with agricultural use (e.g., 50' front, 40' side)
 - e. Activities:
 - i. Low impact (e.g., lessons, boarding). Less than 10 vehicles a day. No permit required.
 - ii. Properties (“commercial”) encouraging and seeking large and frequent public visitation. Including activities such as parties, camps, shows, clinics, retail stores, lessons for the general public, workshops, horse sales, indoor arenas. Events conducted on 12 or more days per calendar year AND resulting in a parking demand on any single day of more than 20 motor vehicles. Special permit required.
6. Simplify proposed regulation of farm retail activities. From Planning For Agriculture - A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities”, see page 38 for an overview on the topic. Recommendations:
 - a. Define Farm Stores as “is a type or retail outlet which sells produce and other production directly from a farm.” From Wikipedia.
 - b. Treat Farm Stores, Farm Stands, Farm Shops, Roadside Stands, and Truck Gardens as synonyms.
 - c. Better align Farm Stores with other proposed town regulations as respects building footprint size (e.g., 200 sq. ft. for a shed, 600 feet for a home office).

	Farm Store		
	Basic	Minor	Major
Title			
Size of Farm (acres)	<5	5 - 10	>10
Max Square Footage	200	500	>500
Setback from edge of roadway	20	20	20
Number of parking spaces	1, or as required.	Parking Req for use.	Parking Req for use.
Products for sale	Substantial portion	Substantial portion	Substantial portion
Foundation	Not req'd, but permitted	Not req'd, but permitted	Not req'd, but permitted
Granting authority	Permitted by right	By Permit (Staff)	Site Plan (PZC)

7. Signs. These are important marketing tools for farmers. Allow for reasonable signage to help farmers sell their product on their own farms, thereby improving farm profitability, and the likelihood farmland will continue to remain undeveloped. From Planning For Agriculture - A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities", page 39, Recommend two categories of agricultural signs:
- Agricultural Sign. A permanent free standing sign, or an attached sign, no larger than 12 square feet, limited to two sides. One agricultural sign per farm, and farm store are allowed. Such signs shall meet all other performance standards regarding, illumination, etc. Setback from travel way a minimum of 8'.
 - Seasonal Agricultural Sign. A temporary sign subject to the same considerations as the "Agricultural Sign" except as follows:
 - One sign per farm and farm store.
 - One additional sign is allowed per 300 feet of frontage on the farm's public right of way.
 - Maximum number of "Seasonal" signs permitted is six.
8. Driveways. Allow a maximum driveway width of 25' at the public right of way to facilitate large trucks and vehicles (e.g., hay wagons, equipment delivery vehicles).
9. Agricultural Tourism, Ag-Tivities, Minor Non-Agricultural, Major Non-Agricultural Uses. See 5600, pgs. 58-60. This entire section is a new and major regulation of currently unregulated activities. As such, it has a major impact on farms, to include:
- Thresholds for Site Plans and Permits are so low as to require a plethora of filings. (e.g., Hayrides. Para 5. Who would organize a hay ride with an expectation of having no more than 10 vehicles in a day?)
 - Consider the fact that Paragraph 5., Major Non-Agricultural Uses is an oxymoron. If it is "Major" are the categories for 5.a. and 5.b. ever expected to occur?

- c. This proposed wording is inconsistent with many activities routinely occurring in town on non-agricultural properties. Easton does not currently, or propose to, regulate many for profit activities hosted on the Fireman's Green, Town Library, or even home offices (e.g., Dr Greenburg), all of which attempt to draw more than 20 vehicles a day. And, often times the Fireman's Green involves parking on public streets. Aspetuck Land Trust parking is an issue for its neighborhood; this would continue to be an unregulated activity.
 - d. Recommendations:
 - iv. Recognize that there is not currently a problem with the activities referenced in paragraphs 2., 3., 4., and 5.
 - v. Eliminate paragraphs 2., 3., 4. and 5.
 - vi. Regulate use via Easton's existing public safety resources (e.g., Police, Fire, Health)
 - vii. If there is a need to address this topic:
 - 1. Reduce and simplify the verbiage.
 - 2. Have the wording only apply for events and parking than cannot be hosted entirely on the farm.
 - 3. Substantially increase the thresholds for Site Plan and Special Permits
10. Site Plan and Special Permits (see Appendix, pg 3) requirements can be laborious and expensive. For example, A-2 surveys, site plans signed by a licensed professional engineer. Recommendation: if the Town deems it important to know that a farmer is expecting a large gathering, than it only requests information necessary to ensure the farm has planned a safe event. "Planning For Agriculture - A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities", page 41, "Ease the Permitting Process for Farms....Creating greater flexibility in the permitting process can alleviate many problems for farm businesses."
11. The proposed regulations contains draft wording that may unintentionally impact agricultural use. Possible examples include:
- a. Section 6200. Pg. 68 - 69
 - i. "Temporary Roadside Stands" - recommend usage of "Farm Store" for consistency. (See 6.b. above)
 - ii. Why is the restriction for "sale only of products grown on premises included? Why is this in the parking section?
 - iii. Prorate the parking requirement in 5. (e.g. 4 spaces/1,000 SF = 1 space per 250 sq ft of store)
 - iv. Section 6230, Standards.
 - 1. Recommend allowance for parking off the road, but alongside it, for Farm Stands (which are allowed to be 20' from the travel way).
 - 2. Modify para 4. "Parking areas for non-residential use" to include "non-agricultural" use as respects paving.
 - b. Section 7300 Earthwork Operations. Recommend modification that Agriculture be allowed to:
 - i. Accept earth (e.g., soil) and other materials (e.g., chips)
 - ii. Operate 7 days a week.
 - iii. Sort and crush materials on site
 - c. Section 6400 Landscaping, p 72. Perhaps should read not only "non-residential", but "non-agricultural" as well.

12. Enforcement of waste management (newly added paragraph in response to question raised at May 2 meeting). From Guidance and Recommendations for Connecticut Municipal – Zoning Regulations and Ordinances for Livestock”, page 15, para 3.3.
- a. Problems associated with a farm’s manure management should be referred to the CT Department of Agriculture first (CTDOAG). The CTDOAG may need to rule on whether the farm is following generally accepted agricultural practices. University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service specialist may be able to help with best management practices to address manure management issues. Concerns about water quality are within the purview of the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.
 - b. Note - Aquarian currently inspects all farms located within the watershed.

From Department of Agriculture website

3-10-16

Definition of Agriculture (Currently accepted by Easton Conservation Commission and Used by Town Tax Assessor)

Connecticut General Statutes, Sec. 1-1 (q) Except as otherwise specifically defined, the words "agriculture" and "farming" shall include cultivation of the soil, dairying, forestry, raising or harvesting any agricultural or horticultural commodity, including the raising, shearing, feeding, caring for, training and management of livestock, including horses, bees, poultry, fur-bearing animals and wildlife, and the raising or harvesting of oysters, clams, mussels, other molluscan shellfish or fish; the operation, management, conservation, improvement or maintenance of a farm and its buildings, tools and equipment, or salvaging timber or cleared land of brush or other debris left by a storm, as an incident to such farming operations; the production or harvesting of maple syrup or maple sugar, or any agricultural commodity, including lumber, as an incident to ordinary farming operations or the harvesting of mushrooms, the hatching of poultry, or the construction, operation or maintenance of ditches, canals, reservoirs or waterways used exclusively for farming purposes; handling, planting, drying, packing, packaging, processing, freezing, grading, storing or delivering to storage or to market, or to a carrier for transportation to market, or for direct sale any agricultural or horticultural commodity as an incident to ordinary farming operations, or, in the case of fruits and vegetables, as an incident to the preparation of such fruits or vegetables for market or for direct sale. The term "farm" includes farm buildings, and accessory buildings thereto, nurseries, orchards, ranges, greenhouses, hoop houses and other temporary structures or other structures used primarily for the raising and, as an incident to ordinary farming operations, the sale of agricultural or horticultural commodities. The term "aquaculture" means the farming of the waters of the state and tidal wetlands and the production of protein food, including fish, oysters, clams, mussels and other molluscan shellfish, on leased, franchised and public underwater farm lands. Nothing herein shall restrict the power of a local zoning authority under chapter 124.

The "Right to Farm" Law – (Currently accepted by Easton)

Connecticut General Statutes, Section 19a-341

Agricultural or farming operation not deemed a nuisance. Exceptions. (a) Notwithstanding any general statute or municipal ordinance or regulation pertaining to nuisances to the contrary, no agricultural or farming operation, place, establishment or facility, or any of its appurtenances, or the operation thereof, shall be deemed to constitute a nuisance, either public or private, due to alleged objectionable (1) odor from livestock, manure, fertilizer or feed, (2) noise from livestock or farm equipment used in normal, generally acceptable farming procedures, (3) dust created during plowing or cultivation operations, (4) use of chemicals, provided such chemicals and the method of their application conform to practices approved by the commissioner of environmental protection or, where applicable, the commissioner of public health and addiction services, or (5) water pollution from livestock or crop production activities, except the pollution of public or private drinking water supplies, provided such activities conform to acceptable management practices for pollution control approved by the commissioner of environmental protection; provided such agricultural or farming operation, place, establishment or facility has been in operation for one year or more and has not been substantially changed, and such operation follows generally accepted agricultural practices.

Inspection and approval of the agricultural or farming operation, place, establishment or facility by the commissioner of agriculture or his designee shall be prima facie evidence that such operation follows generally accepted agricultural practices.

(B) The provisions of this section shall not apply whenever a nuisance results from negligence or willful or reckless misconduct in the operation of any such agricultural or farming operation, place, establishment or facility, or any of its appurtenances.

How to Request Local Important Farmland Soils Designation

1. The highest ranking elected official for your town makes a written request to the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service's State Conservationist,* asking for assistance in the identification of farmland soils of local importance, and explaining why they want this designation (examples: have areas that are farmed that are not prime or statewide important farmland; to enhance efforts in identifying important lands to protect, etc.).

*Thomas Morgart
State Conservationist
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
344 Merrow Road, Suite A
Tolland, CT 06084

2. NRCS receives the letter and runs an analysis of the soils and soil map units in your town that based on physical and chemical properties and agricultural limitations and potential, have the makings to be farmland of local importance. NRCS develops a spatial map layer that displays the new designated soils.
3. The list and map are sent to the town for review. If they are accepted, the highest ranking elected official signs the documentation and returns it to NRCS.
4. It then becomes official and may be used for planning and land protection efforts. Areas that have designated local important farmland soils are placed in Section II of the CT eFOTG at <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/treemenuFS.aspx> under soils information.

The entire process (provided at no cost to your town) can be completed quite quickly depending on the time it takes to route the paperwork and obtain signatures.