

Harvard Agricultural Advisory Commission (HAAC)

Town of Harvard, MA

Minutes of Meeting January 27, 2021

Approved September 29, 2021

Present: Kerri Green (chair), Matt Varrell, Rob Traver, Christiane Turnheim, Rob Duzan, and Frank Carlson

Green called the meeting to order at 7:11pm

Green emailed minutes a bit late and some members and it was determined to revisit approval at the February meeting.

Green announced submission of FY22 budget request of \$1000.00 in December and FinCom has returned with a few questions relating to Harvard Grown website, signs, brochure printing.

Annual Report submission for FY20. Green suggested some topics, points to mention within the report submission. Harvard Grown initiative and the ACAP report. Members agreed it was a good opportunity to share our level of participation in the Climate Resiliency work over the past year. Green will put a draft together.

Harvard Grown

Brochure

Commission reviewed some edits to a reformatted 9x16 trifold size as it was priced the most affordable and wouldn't cause a major overhaul. Removed any farms/producers that aren't open to the public since this is the map that would be in the brochure. There can be another map used for by appointment only farms.

The back of the brochure needs some attention. Varrell suggested less text on the cover, and make it more appealing to the consumer to take one. Inner fold can contain more info, text, incentive to visit harvardgrown.org - on the back there could be a space that a farm can add their farm so people can remember where they picked it up.

Traver suggested more people, less distanced photos.

Carlson agreed a sticker could just go over the flower rather than make a designated box that might not be used by all.

To add additional farms to the brochure there would need to be another reformatting of the design. The website version can always be updated, but the printed brochure would need to be revisited prior to ordering another print run.

Website

Reviewed content suggestions from KLA to add to the website so it isn't a stagnant website, and that it stays relevant. Putting a schedule together of once or twice a month. A suggestion for each member to come up with a minimum of 3-5 ideas for content that could be put on harvardgrown.org

ACAP Report Priorities

Discussed how to go about determining the best way to tackle the ACAP recommendations in the report. Turnheim suggested taking the priorities that have been flagged with a X and put them in a spreadsheet for commission members to rank individually.

Green will send out a individual spreadsheet to each member to rank the 13 action items with a number system as to what is most important to least. 1-13.

Member Updates

Traver - Land Stewardship Subcommittee has a new interest in the way town owned conservation land is being used for Ag. Purposes. Adam Meier (a member of LSSC) will be connecting with those that lease town land for Ag. use and what is being produced, how much, and what practices are, etc. Turnheim asked how one even finds out what lands are available, or what the process is for leasing. It was suggested that we get in touch with ConCom and ask someone to come talk with us, about what is available and what the process is.

Turnheim - Apple Country Grant that was a small regional award (Harvard, Bolton & Devens) is wrapping up and a report will likely be delivered soon. Turnheim also wanted to bring attention to the fact that the online system for burn permits doesn't have a way to exempt 61A properties from having to pay. She said this was a third year in a row, and wants to advocate for a better process or new software. Duzan commented it is likely a budget issue. Turnheim even suggested a notice on the burn permit website that 61A land holders should contact the HFD office.

Varrell - Advocated that issues like Turnheim's regarding burn permits for 61A and his experience in relating to a project he is working on for a new building for his agricultural operation. Due to the way Harvard's zoning is written the he has to put his agricultural building into the circle that correlates to his lot type. As an agriculturally friendly town it really limits how an agricultural property is set up. Due to timing of his project needing to be completed by a deadline he is going to make it work but this is something Ag. Comm. should be addressing with PB or Zoning Commissioner. Varrell advocated for a list of questions we want to know the answers to and let them get the answers. Green will add another sheet to the response spreadsheet for Zoning related questions. Duzan pointed out that Zoning Commissioner only has jurisdiction over

anything that tips a building permit. Turnheim advocated for a place that provided information that didn't require you to dissect our protective bylaws, zoning or building code.

Carlson motioned to adjourn. Turnheim seconded. All in Favor.

Adjourn 9:08pm

Submitted: K. Green