

Town of XXX
Agriculture Working Group (or Task Force)
(or Farming, Forestry and Fishing Working Group)
Roles and Responsibilities

XXXX has adopted a comprehensive plan and land use ordinances which create the policy and regulatory framework for protecting the health, safety and welfare of our property owners and residents. In recent years, farming as a way of life has experienced a resurgence in our community and across Maine. (In addition, forestry and fishing remain important in our culture and landscape.) Community members have expressed an interest in reviewing municipal policies and ordinances relating to farming (forestry and fishing) with a goal of ensuring that the town is friendly to agriculture (these natural resource-based businesses) while continuing to protect the health, safety and welfare of all residents.

The Select Board has decided to appoint an Agriculture Working Group to undertake this work. The Working Group shall be comprised of members represented a broad spectrum of community members, including at least several active farmers.

Working Group Roles (*broaden to include other natural resource based businesses as desired*)

- Act as an advisory and recommending body to the Select Board, Planning Board and other committees.
- Review the comprehensive plan and land use ordinances for provisions that relate to farming in order identify potential barriers for farming and identify opportunities to modify the documents to better support farming.
- Propose modifications or amendments to the comprehensive plan and ordinances to better support farming while protecting the health, safety and welfare of all residents.
- Recommend and facilitate broad public participation and provide multiple opportunities for public input as each change is proposed.

Procedures

The following guidelines and procedures are intended to guide the Working Group in fulfilling its role in this effort.

1. The group should elect a chair and agree to a committee structure and process for decision-making.
2. A detailed work plan and timeline will be developed that reflects any priorities agreed to by the working group members and identifies appropriate places for public participation. This work plan and timeline will be distributed to the Select Board for comments.
3. The Working Group should strive to achieve consensus on all recommendations while remaining sensitive to diverse citizen views.
4. The Working Group should keep any proposed changes or amendments as simple and straightforward as possible while ensuring that all proposed changes meet minimum State requirements for land use regulation.
5. All meetings of the Working Group shall be open to the public with the appropriate level of public participation to be decided by the Group. At a minimum, an opportunity for public comment should be provided at each meeting.