

MANSFIELD AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Minutes of November 7, 2007 meeting

Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

Conference Room B, 7:30 p.m.

1. Acting Chairman, Al Cyr, called the meeting to order at 7:30
2. PRESENT: Al Cyr, Charlie Galgowski, Vicky Wetherell, Bill Palmer, Carol Stearns, Diane Dorfer, Ann Galonska
3. Minutes of the September 5, 2007 meeting were approved.

New Business

4. Historic Barn Inventory

Ann Galonska, Mansfield Historical Society Museum Director, explained the project being sponsored by the Ct. Trust for Historical Preservation (CTHP) and gave us the forms and background information about Ct. barns. She referred us to more details on the website www.connecticutbarns.org. This form would be used by volunteers to record information about each barn in the inventory. Ann had talked with Tolland volunteers who started a barn inventory and became overwhelmed by the scope of the project. They decided to start their project with only photos and addresses of standing barns.

Ann also noted that the Mansfield Historical Society has files of photos and notes on old barns (both standing and no longer standing) that could be used for reference. The files are organized according to addresses on the 1869 town map.

Proposed inventory project

Todd Levine of CTHP has offered to present a one-hour training session about Ct. barn types and history, as well as how to fill out the forms. It would be possible to sponsor this talk in January (a Sunday afternoon?) to kick off the inventory project. The committee proposed that the first step for this inventory would be collecting photos and addresses of standing barns by early May. Step Two would include a review the historical society's files.

Volunteers could be recruited in the historical society newsletter, with press releases and through the high school. It may be possible to have a booth at the town's winter festival. The inventory form could be available on the town website and at town

buildings. A barn tour next fall could help publicize this project and provide the public with a chance to see some of the historic barns.

Proposed photo contest

A photo contest (of local barns) was proposed to run from the end of January to April 30. Previously taken photos could be submitted. An award ceremony at the opening day of the historical society's museum (June 1) would tie into an exhibit of Mansfield barn photos (contest winners and old photos) and artifacts. Carol has a list of potential categories for the contest. Contest publicity could be combined with the barn inventory announcements.

To address a concern about focusing just on the past, the exhibit could include a time line showing the progression of barn styles (and tools) from historic to modern. It was recommended to request funding from town officials for prizes. The committee decided to meet again on December 5 to continue discussion of this project.

5. Proposed Property Tax Exemption for Farm Buildings

The committee discussed this Town Council proposal and voted to express their support for this exemption.

Old Business

6. Agriculture Lease Monitoring

The committee requested that Jennifer Kaufman forward information about how to fill out the monitoring forms for review at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.