



**Town of Cromwell  
Farmland Preservation Committee**

**SPECIAL MEETING  
7:00 P.M. THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 2009  
ROOM 219 CROMWELL TOWN HALL  
41 WEST STREET**

RECEIVED FOR FILING  
6-7 2010 at 3:15p M.  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
CROMWELL, CONN.

**CORRECTED AGENDA**

*Jean Ahegan Asst.*  
TOWN CLERK

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call and Seating of Alternates**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Public Comments**
5. **Old Business:**
  - a. Discuss Mandated Goals and Objectives:
    1. Study existing farms.
    2. Develop a farmland preservation strategy.
    3. Identify farmland properties for preservation.
  - b. Farmer's Market at Riverport Festival
  - c. Forming a Local Land Trust
6. **New Business:** None
7. **Communications:** None
8. **Approval of Minutes**
  - a. May 13, 2010
  - b. May 16, 2010
9. **Adjourn**

# Memo

**To:** Farmland Preservation Committee  
**From:** Craig Minor, AICP   
Town Planner  
**Date:** June 7, 2010  
**Re:** Farmland Preservation Committee meeting of June 10, 2010

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## 5. Old Business:

### a. Discuss Mandated Goals and Objectives:

#### 1. Study existing farms.

Please give some thought to the next couple of farms that you would like to visit, and when. Refer to the list of Cromwell farms that was distributed last month (copy attached).

#### 2. Develop a farmland preservation strategy.

At the meeting last month, the Committee members agreed to review the new draft zoning regulations to make sure they are "farm friendly". I distributed them electronically. Please come to the meeting prepared to have that discussion.

#### 3. Identify farmland properties for preservation.

This is still premature. I recommend you continue to table it.

### b. Farmer's Market at Riverport Festival

Selectmen Liaison Allan Spotts informed me the other day that the Riverport Festival Committee has agreed to let the Farmland Preservation Committee have a booth for free, to promote local agriculture.

### c. Forming a Local Land Trust

This idea came up at a recent meeting and should be discussed further. However, be advised that I recommend against it. A local land trust requires a lot of work to organize and maintain, and there are already active land trusts in Berlin and Middletown.

cc:  
file





## Farms in Cromwell

VISITED:						
Millane Nurseries	604 Main Street		635-5500	Nursery		51.92
Joseph & Evelyn Smigel	97 Berlin Road		635-0823	Greenhouses		14
John & James Adamowicz	70 Pasco Hill Road		unlisted	horse, cattle, hay		39
Edward Dlugolenski	74 North Road		635-0829	hay		13.4
Concettina Carnaroli	78 North Road		635-0817	hay		5.3
Mary Lassen	76 Nooks Hill Road		635-5256	Vegetables.		56
Marie Dowling	27 North Road	Amy O'Toole	635-3924	goats		
Michael Cannata	136 Nooks Hill Road		635-2600	stables, green beans, hay		8.2
Benedict & Kathryn Caruso	86 Nooks Hill Road		unlisted	Vegetables, chickens.		6.5

Farms in Cromwell

?	3219	\$1,925,000	2004	50 trucks, 50 tractors, 100 pieces of equipment.	
0	0				
39	1858	\$800			
3	1391	\$500			
4.3	0765	\$0			
3.7	3487				
8.2		"			
0	0789				<a href="mailto:upperfortyfarm@sbcglobal.net">upperfortyfarm@sbcglobal.net</a>



**Town of Cromwell  
Farmland Preservation Committee**

*REGULAR MEETING*  
7:00 P.M. THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2009  
ROOM 219 CROMWELL TOWN HALL  
41 WEST STREET

RECEIVED FOR FILING  
5/20 2010 at 12:03 P.M.  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
CROMWELL, CONN.

*Doreen M. Provo*  
TOWN CLERK

**MINUTES AND RECORD OF VOTES**

PRESENT: Chairman Scott Lamberson, Joe Corlis, John Whitney, Alternate Jonathan Penney

ABSENT: Sairah Sandhu, Ernest Pandolfe, Jr.

ALSO PRESENT: Town Planner Craig Minor, BOS Liaison Allan Spotts

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Scott Lamberson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**2. Roll Call and Seating of Alternates**

The presence of the above members was noted.

**Motion** was made by Joe Corlis, **seconded** by Scott Lamberson to seat Jonathan Penney. All were in Favor. *Motion Passed.*

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion** was made by Joe Corlis, **seconded** by Scott Lamberson to approve the agenda. All were in Favor. *Motion Passed*

**4. Public Comments**

Allan Spotts, the Board of Selectman Liaison reported that the budgets passed last night with a 2.6% increase, a mill rate of 26.84. Mr. Spotts explained that there was a Special BOS meeting next Wednesday night and that Farmland was on the agenda. Mr. Spotts suggested someone for the Committee be there to help with the discussion. Mr. Spotts also discussed the Farmer's Market concept for the Riverport Festival on August 28<sup>th</sup> and asked if someone could be at the Riverport Festival Meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> at 7pm to report if there is interest from the local farmers.

Brian O'Toole of 40 Court Street explained that he has been farming for over 30 years and he has been trying to buy a piece of property. Mr. O'Toole explained the hardship of competing for property to purchase with developers. Mr. O'Toole suggested that lots be put aside that could be leased for farming. Mr. O'Toole gave Hoffman Farm as an example. Mr. O'Toole also pointed out that the Fire District was planning on selling a piece of property, perhaps properties such as these could be sold with restrictions for farming. Chairman Lamberson reviewed with Mr. O'Toole his concerns and ideas for increasing farmland in Cromwell. Mr. Minor said that he would review if open space could be deeded for farming. The Committee discussed this new perspective of increasing farms and decided that they needed to gather more answers. This will be added to next month's agenda to explore even further. Mr. Whitney provided Mr. O'Toole some information on 1090s and that the tax assessor's office has all the information to further

answer his questions or any farmer in Town.

**5. Old Business:**

a. Discuss Mandated Goals and Objectives:

1. Study existing farms.

The Committee discussed that they were going to continue forward with the larger farms. Chairman Lamberson had received a letter from Smigel Farm and they were invited to visit on Sunday from 9-11. The Committee agreed to visit Smigel's Farm and Millane Nurseries on Sunday. Mr. Minor was going to follow up with Mr. Millane and Ms Smigel and confirm times.

2. Develop a farmland preservation strategy.

Chairman Lamberson reviewed the various avenues the Committee could take but he knows that the Town cannot purchase development rights because there are no monies available. The Committee discussed grant monies, but again there are no monies to get started off of many of these grants. Mr. Whitney discussed a book on grants he obtained from a conference he attended that may become a resource in the future. The Committee discussed whether it was appropriate for Cromwell to become a Right to Farm Town and have this passed through the Board of Selectman. The Committee decided to review the Town Plan and/or new zoning regulations and see if the Town is farm friendly. Mr. Minor is going to forward the information to the Committee for them to review. Chairman Lamberson stressed that they need to educate the Town about farming, if they are ever going to get funding. Chairman Lamberson explained that the situation with Hoffman Farm and the lack of communication has created a hurdle that the Committee must overcome. The Committee felt that Riverport Festival was a good avenue to begin to let the citizens know about the farms of Cromwell. Mr. Minor informed the Committee of the expansion of the growing plots on Hoffman Farm this year. The Committee discussed the possibility of signage for Farms to let people know they exist.

3. Identify farmland properties for preservation.

The Committee felt that this would come as they continue to talk with the farm owners. They would like to get their perspective.

**6. New Business:**

a. Farmer's Market at Riverport Festival

The Committee discussed what the cost of the space would be at the festival and whether there would be an interest among the farmers and public. The Committee did agree that this would be educational for the public. The Committee also discussed potentially helping support a farmer's market in the future open to local farmers held somewhere in Town, perhaps bi-monthly. The members split the list to call the farmers regarding the festival and gauge their interest.

b. Land Trust

Mr. Corlis attended a seminar regarding Land Trusts on April 16<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Corlis described the thousands of acres that are in a Land Trust particularly in the Granby area. Mr. Corlis described how the trusts decide what the land can be used for, how they set the baseline data and where to take the property to in to the future. Mr. Corlis detailed how heavily regulated a trust is. The Committee discussed that the creation of a land trust is more of a conservation issue.

7. **Communications:**

Letter from Ms Smigel inviting the Committee to her farm.

Mr. Whitney mentioned that the Cromwell Town Meetings are not listed on the Comcast Cable network.

8. **Approval of Minutes**

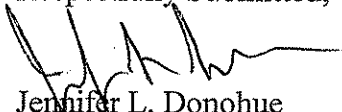
a. April 29, 2010

**Motion** was made by Joe Corlis, **seconded** by John Whitney to approve the April 29, 2010 minutes. All were in Favor. *Motion Passed.*

9. **Adjourn**

**Motion** was made by Scott Lamberson, **seconded** by Joe Corlis to adjourn at 8:09 pm. All were in Favor. *Motion Passed.*

Respectfully Submitted,



Jennifer L. Donohue  
Clerk

RECEIVED FOR FILING

05/24 2010 at 9:00 AM.

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

CROMWELL, CONN.

TOWN OF CROMWELL  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

*Gloria Prendergast, Asst.*  
TOWN CLERK

FARMLAND PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

SPECIAL MEETING  
9:00 A.M. SUNDAY, MAY 16, 2010  
STARTING AT 95 BERLIN ROAD  
CROMWELL, CT

MINUTES

Present: Scott Lamberson, John Whitney, Joseph Corlis, Sairah Sandhu and Alternate  
Jonathan Pinney.  
Absent: Ernest Pandolfe.

1. Call to Order:

Chairman Scott Lamberson called the meeting to order at 9:10 am.

2. Roll Call and Seating of Alternates:

The presence of the above members was noted. John Whitney made a motion to seat Jonathan Pinney, seconded by Joe Corlis. *All were in favor.*

3. Farm Visits:

a. 95 Berlin Road ("Smigel Farm"):

Evelyn Smigel took the committee on a tour of her property. She said the Smigel family has been farming these 14 acres since 1924.

She took the members into the one remaining active greenhouse (the remains of several other greenhouses and an abandoned showroom are on the premises) containing flats of vegetables, ornamental grasses, and flowers for retail sale to established customers; a small area where she is growing peas and onions now, and later this year will plant corn and then pumpkins; and two small barns. She has no employees but a few family members who do not live in Cromwell anymore occasionally help her. Her husband has had very severe health problems and is not able to work at all.

A large portion of the rear of the property used to be planted years ago, before the Mattabasset Sewer trunk line was installed which acts as a berm, trapping runoff and making the area unusable for farming. They were compensated at the time in the amount of several thousand dollars.

Mrs. Smigel said that their tax burden, which was always high, recently got worse when the Tax Assessor revoked their farming assessment because they put the property on the market.

b. 604 Main Street ("Millane Nurseries")

The Committee then went to Millane Nurseries. Michael Millane met them at the office and told them that Millane Nurseries has been in business since 1923 and that their market area includes eastern New York state, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, southern Maine and southern New Hampshire. They have about 50 acres on Main Street and 110 acres on Field Road, plus other land elsewhere in Connecticut as well as land that they lease from others. They employ 120 people during the peak of the season, going down to 10 or fewer in the winter. Mr. Millane showed the committee members several parcel maps of Cromwell showing the decline in farming over the years. Millane Nurseries hosted an "Arbor Day Tree Nursery Tour" for Cromwell school kids last year which was well-received and televised.

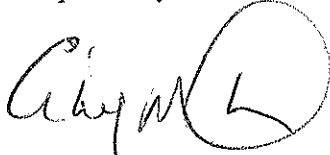
He then took the committee by van on a tour of the Millane property on Main Street, and the property on Field Road where he showed some of the 600 kinds of trees and shrubs that Millane grows. They do lease some land to grow trees, with a minimum lease of five years.

He told the committee that while the land Millane owns may be very valuable, the amount of debt is in the millions of dollars. Unless they can find a way to deal with this debt, they will be out of business. One way would be to sell some of the Field Road sand and remove it by rail (the railroad tracks run through the property) so as not to impact local traffic or neighbors. However when he presented the idea to "Save the Neighborhood", the group said they were opposed to it.

**4. Adjourn:**

John Whitney made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Joe Corlis. All were in favor. *The Meeting adjourned at 11:05 am.*

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Minor', enclosed within a hand-drawn circle.

Craig Minor, AICP  
Town Pl