

TOWN OF EAST LYME

ZONING COMMISSION SUB-COMMITTEE: BEE-KEEPING

JUNE 2, 2016

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present:

Matthew Walker, Chairman
Terence Donovan
John Manning

Also Present:

Tom Kalal
Mark Christensen
Thomas Hall

FILED IN EAST LYME
CONNECTICUT
June 16 2016 AT 8:55 AM/PM
Terence Donovan
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Donovan stated Mr. Kalal had approached him about bees; he is here to explain the need for bee-keeping to be in our Zoning Regulations.

Mr. Kalal stated the Agricultural Commission had a seminar in January and about 60 people attended. Without pollinators we will starve as a population. About 60% of our food is a result of pollinators.

Mr. Donovan stated only a 6x6 area is needed.

Mr. Kalal stated bees live in hive bodies, which are sometimes elevated off the ground. The flight of the honeybee is out of the hive and up, they fly above the trees. Each bee has a very specific job; they never sleep, they only live 30 days typically, but do live longer in the winter.

Mr. Christensen said when it is 10 degrees below outside; it can be 95 degrees in the center of the hive.

Mr. Kalal stated 80% of honeybees are maintained by backyard beekeepers. He feels East Lyme should be a leader; most towns that have it in their regulations have it written very poorly. This is an opportunity for East Lyme to shine. He invited the members to come to his apiary.

Mr. Donovan stated they are learning a lot. He asked what exactly it was they were looking for.

Mr. Hall stated they are hoping to persuade the Zoning Commission to make beekeeping permitted by right in most of the zoning districts.

Chairman Walker asked how many beekeepers are in town.

Mr. Kalal stated he could identify about 20.

Mr. Donovan asked if the regulation was passed would they have to have a requirement of it being near a body of water.

Mr. Hall stated they do need water, but he didn't think a body of water is a necessity. He uses a bird bath for his bees. They are hoping for them to allow 4 hives for a lot that is less than 10000 square feet, there being no restrictions on the number of hives for a lot that is over 10000 square feet, but also a requirement to adhere to beekeeping best practices. They also feel there should be a requirement for a bee barrier, either a dense hedge or fence that is in front of the entrance to the hive. If they are closer than 25 feet from a lot line they would have to have a bee barrier, a short one close to the hive would serve as well as a long one. He also said there should be a setback of 5 feet, and there should be no bee hives in front yards.

Mr. Donovan asked what would happen if two owners right next to each other have bees.

Mr. Kalal stated if bees flew into the wrong hive they probably wouldn't make it out.

Mr. Manning asked if they should make a requirement that they register with the State.

Mr. Kalal thought that would be a good idea.

Mr. Manning asked if the Agri-Committee can self-police this, then they can foster learning of this.

Chairman Walker asked if there is a list of best practices.

Mr. Kalal stated the Pollinator Bill mandated best practices be prepared by the CT Agriculture Station. That was Senate Bill 231.

Mr. Christensen stated at the beekeeping seminar they realized how many people want bees. They think they should know the right way to keep the bees.

The Commission members are going to Mr. Kalal's apiary on June 6th at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Hall stated the State Bee Inspector is a mentor more than an inspector.

Mr. Manning stated there may be an issue with just saying they aren't allowed in front yards, on some lots the front yard could be anything.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen Miller Galbo
Recording Secretary