



Natalia Alward <alwardn@grafton-ma.gov>

Town Meeting Article

1 message

Houlden Farm <houldenfarm@gmail.com>

Thu, Feb 16, 2023 at 12:26 PM

To: planningdept@grafton-ma.gov

Cc: Natalia Alward <alwardn@grafton-ma.gov>, JAMES MALLOY <JMalloy@charter.net>, Fiona Coughlan <coughlanf@grafton-ma.gov>

Good afternoon all,

After tuning in to the latest planning board meeting a few days ago, we do understand your concerns with our draft article for town meeting. We are in fact willing to work with you to reach an agreement where all parties are satisfied with the wording. As someone had mentioned in the meeting, agri-tourism seemed like a good route and I had begun working on a presentation for agri-tourism however, I did not believe that would include the language necessary to grant us what we are looking for.

We are willing to increase the acreage in our warrant article. When looking to determine a set number of acres for our article, I looked at the Grafton zoning map to find the size/acreage of some of these other parcels of land that you expressed concern in them utilizing our article. With that being said, I am looking for guidance as to what set acreage amount would be satisfactory in your eyes. 10 acres? 20 acres?

During the meeting, someone had mentioned the possibility of relocating our musicians/beer garden somewhere further back on our property. There are a few issues on our end of things with this suggestion. Firstly being that we would like to keep the beer garden centrally located as to continue to welcome and encourage guests to stop at our farm stand and purchase goods. The other problem is that we do not have the electrical capabilities further back on our property to allow us to do so. This is why we have also been working diligently to prepare lumber to construct a permanent, yet mobile structure for our musicians to play under. Our concern in moving forward with this construction is that it will require us to dedicate many resources into the construction, yet the possibility to face setbacks, complaints, etc. is still present. I am certain such a structure would greatly reduce the annoyance to our neighbors, but fear it will still not be enough.

I have a concern with the suggested decibel level of 10 decibels above ambient noise. My apprehension revolves around the term ambient level. That being, who determines the average ambient level? If I were to use my decibel reader right now, the ambient levels would differ greatly in comparison to the reading of let's say, 5:00 today. This gray area could potentially subject both the town and us to issues down the road which we are hoping to prevent for all parties involved. I know our readings at the property line last season rarely if at all, exceeded 65 decibels, which leads me to my next idea. What is your opinion on rephrasing the decibel level to say something similar to - *music that will not exceed 70 decibels at the property line*. From what I have researched, decibel readings under 70 db, are rarely found to cause annoyance or disruption. I'm hoping this could be a fair compromise and I look forward to hearing your thoughts and suggestions on this.

P.S - If you would prefer we come in to discuss the things mentioned in this message, please let me know so I can properly submit my request to be on the agenda and arrange to be at the meeting. We look forward to working together to find a resolution.

Thank you,

Rachel Houlden
Houlden Farm
HouldenFarm.com
C: 774-696-9980