

East Kingston forms Agricultural Commission Steering Committee

Interest in forming an agricultural commission was very high among the attendees of an exploratory meeting facilitated by the East Kingston Planning Board in August. Based upon this interest, a group of volunteers have formed a steering committee to draft a warrant article for the 2011 town meeting ballot and to raise awareness of the benefits of an agricultural commission among town residents. The typical purpose of an agricultural commission is to protect agricultural lands, preserve a town's rural character, provide a voice for farmers, and promote agriculture-based economic opportunities in the town. Agricultural commissions in New Hampshire do not have any enforcement powers or regulatory authority. Their role is to advise other town boards and serve as an advocate for farming. Establishing an agricultural commission is seen as a way for East Kingston to balance growth and quality of life issues while preserving the town's local character. Anyone interested in participating on the steering committee is encouraged to attend the next meeting, scheduled for January 13 at 7 PM at the Pound School on Depot Road. For additional information, please contact Chris Castonguay at 347-1534 or visit <http://eknh.org/planningboard.html>.