

The Board of Selectmen, Finance and Administration Subcommittee held an informational meeting at the Town Hall on November 9, 2010 on a proposed ordinance that would provide a tax exemption for buildings used in farming. Present were: First Selectman Robert Morra; Selectmen Ray Walker and Robert Lessard; Assessor Mike D'Amicol; Administrative Officer Joyce Stille; Open Space Chair Gwen Marrison; Joan Nichols from the CT Farm Bureau; and approximately 20 members of the public.

The informational meeting began at 7:00 P.M. Mr. D'Amicol explained the ordinance: CT General Statute 12-91(c) grants authority; any building used actually and exclusively in farming would be exempt from property tax to the extent of an assessment value of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000); does not apply to any residence; farmer must own building; file schedule F; farmer annually derive at least fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) in gross sales or expenses related to farming; and requires a yearly application.

Ms. Nichols stated that at least 17 towns have such an ordinance. Around Bolton, towns having an ordinance include East Hampton, Hebron and Glastonbury.

Ms. Marrison discussed the involvement of the Open Space Committee to bring the ordinance forward and asked that the Selectmen not delay an enact for next fiscal year.

Other clarifications included: exemption is on assessed value of buildings not market value; must be a building used exclusively for farming; and our draft ordinance does not include seasonal housing. However, if in a six (6) bay garage four (4) bays are used for farm equipment and two (2) bays have cars in them, the assessment will be prorated.

Mr. Morra explained that due to economic conditions and concerns about state aid, the Selectmen will move forward with the ordinance but it will not take effect until the July 1, 2012 tax bills. A public hearing will be held prior to any adoption. Draft language for the proposed ordinance was distributed.

The informational meeting ended at 7:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce M. Stille
Administrative Officer