

Commercial Farm Dorr Application

Lucy St. John

From: Steve Allenby <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, December 14, 2015 3:14 PM
To: Lucy St. John; [REDACTED]
Subject: Dorr application to the Planning Board

Bill and Lucy, I would like to have these comments submitted at the Planning Board hearing tomorrow night if that is OK. I may be able to make it to the meeting, but just in case....

Thanks! Steve

Chairman Helm,

I am writing to support the application of the Dorr's to create a commercial farm on their property, consisting of the former Bucklin and Messer farms.

As as a board member of the Pleasant Lake Protective Association and of Ausbon Sargent and as the Chair of the Ausbon Lands Committee, I am well aware of how land use decisions can have a major positive or negative impact on our community. (To be clear, my comments do not reflect a position of either the PLPA or Ausbon Sargent)

Allowing commercial farming on the Dorr farm has many advantages for New London, including the following:

- 1: If the Dorr's are prevented from farming, they will be forced to turn to other ways to recoup the cost of purchasing their properties. The most obvious alternative is to develop the property for commercial or residential uses. Not an attractive alternative.**
- 2. The farm will have a minimal effect on town services and benefit the people of New London and surrounding area through the products it provides.**
- 3. The Dorr and Messer properties have been commercial farms in the past. Continuing that tradition and keeping the dollars produced on the property in town strengthens our local economy and helps preserve the rural character of New London.**
- 4: The farm will help with the local production of food at a time when the future productivity of some of the major agricultural areas of the country, such as California's Central Valley, is coming into question. Its contribution to our community's food security now and perhaps even more so in the future could be important.**
- 5: The farm preserves open land in New London, which has become almost 90% forested. This is critical from a bird and animal habitat standpoint. Furthermore, the Dorr's large tract of land abuts other preserved land and undeveloped land, thereby creating a large, undivided habitat for many animal species.**

6. The Dorrs plan to be as progressive as possible in how they farm the property, with sound manure management plans, organic farming practices and limited antibiotics for their cattle.

7. The bee hives, flowers and organic crops should create a habitat that can potentially help reverse the recent collapse of bee populations on the local level.

8. A benefit the Dorrs provide with their farm, of which few are aware, is that they allow the Kearsarge Wood Ministry to cut, split and store the wood that it provides to disadvantaged families in the Kearsarge area during the winter. Last year the Wood Ministry provided 18 cords of emergency wood in ½ cord portions to people in our area.

For all the reasons above, I strongly encourage the Planning Board to approve the Dorr's application to create a commercial farm.

Sincerely,

Steve Allenby

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