

April 17, 2019

Town of Colrain  
Planning Board  
55 Main Rd.  
Colrain, MA 01340

Dear Planning Board:

The Colrain Agricultural Commission (AgCom) reviewed the Planning Board's draft Zoning Bylaw (Public Hearing Draft, 2-28-19). This is of interest to us because our mission includes promoting farms and agriculture in the Town of Colrain and ensuring that farmers can grow crops, in appropriately zoned areas, with high economic potential such as marijuana and hemp. The Ag Com passed the following motion unanimously on April 17 recommending revisions, which we understand are consistent with Planning Board intentions.

**Marijuana and hemp are important agricultural products that have the potential to improve the diversity and economic viability of farms in western Massachusetts. To help small growers and Craft Marijuana Cooperatives compete against large agri-businesses in an already highly regulated market, it is important that zoning regulations do not restrict the ability to capitalize on such an important business opportunity.**

**The Colrain Ag Com endorses the Planning Board's proposed changes to Colrain's Zoning Bylaw such that, a) marijuana cultivation may operate in all 3 districts with appropriate Planning Board permitting b) marijuana cultivation activities do not require any special setback restrictions c) Craft Marijuana Cooperatives are recognized as a way for small growers to join together to compete with larger enterprises and they are not specially restricted.**

Further, we understand that state laws prevent the sale of marijuana through home businesses. However, it is not unreasonable to expect growers to produce other byproducts that could be sold to retailers. These should be allowed.

The Agricultural Commission voted unanimously, to make the following recommendation to the Planning Board :

**To amend the proposed zoning bylaw to remove the following exclusions a) allow Greenhouse growing of marijuana by right b) allow marijuana enterprises to operate as home-based businesses abiding by the same regulations as any other business.**

We look forward to a public hearing when the draft bylaw is ready and we would very much like to endorse the Planning Board's final revision, hopefully including the Ag Com's recommendations.

Sincerely,  
  
Haynes Turkle (Chair)  
Colrain Agricultural Commission