

From: [Stevenson, James](#)
To: [Jennifer Hager](#)
Subject: RE: Farm Use by-laws
Date: Tuesday, January 3, 2023 1:52:42 PM

Happy New Year Jen, thanks for your input in the example I sent you

As you suggested, this is my first go at a simple proposal:

Proposal for Event usage on Agricultural properties (farms with x+ acreage): Sutton is fortunate to still have a good number of working farms that helps give the town that New England feel. To help the owners of these farms to be more profitable and diversify we would like to submit a proposal that owners of farms with x + acers, can be allowed to rent their grounds to the public.

In addition to all use otherwise allowed in the farms district, properties found to be compliant with (requirements TBD) can also be used for the following uses:

Event and Function Space – Baby or bridal shower, fundraisers, weddings, business meetings, or seminars.

- Allows farms to be more profitable and stay in tack
 - Spill over business benefits town
 - Capitalizes on Sutton's rural beauty
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SECTION XIV. SPECIAL EVENT FACILITY ORDINANCE

To encourage the preservation of agricultural lands and buildings special event facilities, as an alternative use of farmland at currently active farms or at inactive farms which retain agricultural buildings and open fields, shall be permitted subject to the following restrictions:

1. Special event facilities shall host events which are regular and/or seasonal in nature, i.e. reasonable expectation of hosting events more than two (2) times per year.
2. Events under this ordinance shall only be allowed in the general residence district and rural/agricultural district.
3. Event site shall be on a property or contiguous properties under the same ownership with a minimum total of twenty (20) acres.
4. Events shall be restricted to commercial use of property for private events/functions, not open to the general public. Permitted types of events would include workshops, retreats, private weddings, family gatherings and similar kinds of activities.
 - a.) A special event shall not exceed one hundred twenty-five (125) attendees in size, including guests and staff supporting the event.
 - b.) Special events numbering from 75 – 125 attendees in size shall be limited to a maximum of 10 events in a calendar year. Special events numbering 25 – 74 attendees in size shall be limited to a maximum of 20 events in a calendar year. Special events with less than 25 attendees shall have no limit.
 - c.) No event shall exceed 12 hours of operation, excluding set-up and break-down.

No event shall commence earlier than 10 a.m. nor extend later than 10 p.m.
5. Any subsequent development of the site for this use shall be consistent with the existing rural agricultural characteristics of the property.
6. All events require off-street parking for all vehicles.
7. Approved facilities and activities must comply with all other applicable statutes, ordinances and regulations.
8. All businesses of this type must be approved by the Planning Board after meeting requirements of Site Plan Review, except that Site Plan approval shall be valid for three (5) years from the date of the Planning Board vote and expire if the applicant does not apply for a new approval prior to the expiration

date.

Agricultural Venue Bylaw

3.4 Special Uses Relating to Agriculture, Horticulture and Floriculture (Added 1978, Amended 2011, 2018)

3.4.1 Purpose.

The purpose of this subsection is to encourage farming and agricultural operations within the town by permitting, in addition to the principal agricultural activities conducted upon the site, farm events using the farm grounds and accessory structures while also minimizing impacts on abutting properties.

3.4.2 Buildings and Structures.

Uses that qualify for the exemption for parcels of 5 acres or more or 2 acres or more as described in Chapter 40A, sec. 3 relating to agriculture, horticulture, silviculture, viticulture, aquaculture or floriculture shall be uses allowed as of right provided that appropriate and reasonable screening of buildings and structures, such as hedges or fences, as determined by the Planning Board in light of the nature of the proposed use and the character of the surrounding area be provided. Such determination shall be made within 30 days based on a screening plan submitted as part of an application for a building permit, and referred to the Planning Board by the Building Inspector, in connection with any buildings or structure to be erected within 200 feet of a public way or lot line.

3.4.3 Farm Events

Farm structures and grounds may also be used for events including but not limited to, educational conferences, fundraisers for nonprofit entities, weddings and other personal recognition special events, as an accessory use clearly secondary and incidental to the principal use of the premises for agricultural purposes. Such events and uses are subject to Site Plan Review in accordance with the requirements of Section 5.3.1 of the Zoning Bylaw, and Section 3 of the Site Plan Rules and Regulations regardless of the zoning district. Parking must be provided in accordance with the requirements of Section 5.1 of the Zoning Bylaw. Such events and uses shall comply with all applicable state and local regulations and licensing requirements and the following:

a) Sound emitted from the event must cease promptly at 10:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and 9 p.m. Sunday. Sundays prior to a Monday holiday shall follow the Saturday rules. Exceptions may be granted by the Planning Board for weekdays during May-October as part of the Site Plan Review.

b) The measurement of sound or noise shall be made with a sound-level meter meeting the standards prescribed by ANSI S1.4 - 1971 Type 1 or Type 2. The instrument shall be maintained in calibration and good working order. A calibration check shall be made of the Town of Sherborn Zoning By-Laws

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system at the time of any noise measurement. Measurements recorded shall be taken so as to provide a proper representation of the noise source. During measurement, the microphone shall be positioned so as not to create any unnatural enhancement or diminution of the measured noise. A windscreen for the microphone shall be used when required. Traffic, aircraft and other transportation noise sources and other background noises shall not be considered in taking measurements except where such background noise interferes with the primary noise being measured.

The maximum acceptable sound level shall be 75 dBA as measured at the complainant location or that portion of the public way closest to the complainant.