

8 November 2022

Littleton Planning Board
Town of Littleton MA
37 Shattuck St
Littleton MA 01460

RE: Special Use Permit - Accessory Farm Use Section 173-57, Springdell Farm

To The Planning Board,

I am writing to express my support and reasoning with regard to the application by Springdell Farm to relocate and expand composting operations. I have reviewed the application materials and, as best I am able, familiarized myself with the opinions in favor of and against this operation.

Disclosure: I am not a resident of Littleton. I am a longtime resident of Groton, and worked in Littleton for many years. I am a customer of Springdell Farms.

First, let me attest to the stewardship and high competence which Ms. Cruz and Mr. Durkin have exhibited in the years she has operated the farm. The quality, variety and consistency of the farm products is excellent, and the yield is consistently high, especially considering the small workforce. My family has steadily increased our purchasing at the farm, largely because of the quality. We have tried retail shopping at many local farm stands, and joined many CSA programs: none have succeeded, whereas we are reliably very happy with the food produced at Springdell.

Secondly, I want to emphasize the importance of this successful local farming. All of us fortunate residents of these beautiful ex-ag communities outside Boston yearn for the holy grail of successful small-scale local farming operations. I don't need to tell you about the steady loss of open space and particularly agricultural land into residential property. Ironically, this diminishes the reason why people choose to move to our towns. I recently participated in forums conducted by Destination Groton, in which overwhelmingly the attribute people most wished to preserve in the town was "rural character" and the farming. Not only do people value open space, they specifically value the aesthetics and buffer of active farms. Active farms generate revenue and employment, and they don't require maintenance by the town.

Thirdly, farming is always difficult and rarely successful. Even skilled farmers can't make the numbers add up, and few will stick it out for the love of it. When we find ourselves with the rare farmer capable of creatively adapting to modern agricultural practices and retail operations, we should swarm to support her. Jamie Cruz is an energetic, resourceful and adaptive modern agriculturalist: a model that needs to be emulated and duplicated if at all possible.

Fourthly, we should all be conscious of the real value of local food production. As energy instability, climate change and food supply insecurity continue to create problems, local diverse agricultural is an important solution. Springdell Farm is a valuable, local solution to a global problem.

What are the objections? As I understand it, some objections have been made about possible (but unsubstantiated?) concerns about groundwater contamination, or perhaps noise. I understand that the composting operation a) has already been in operation and b) will process only local biomass. The composting operation will take place on Ms. Cruz's and Mr. Durkin's own homeland, and on the same watershed as their business and food supply. Most of all, the composting stands to create more topsoil and put more arable land into production.

I've listed a number of profound reasons for appreciation and encouragement of the rare success that is Springdell Farm. To be honest, I haven't heard a coherent objection to the expanded composting operation, and perhaps there isn't one. I'm taking the trouble to give you my voice because I do want to see Springdell Farm continue to thrive and - yes, please - grow!

Respectfully Submitted



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