**MEMORANDUM**

 TO: Cape Elizabeth Planning Board

 FROM: Maureen O’Meara, Town Planner

 DATE: June 15, 2021

 SUBJECT: Agricultural Amendment

Introduction

At the May 10, 2021 meeting, the Town Council passed the following motion by a 5-0 vote:

ORDERED, the Cape Elizabeth Town Council refers to the planning board for review and report back to the town council a request to increase the size of high tunnel/greenhouse agricultural buildings, Sec. 19-9-2.

Procedure

•The Board should begin by summarizing the proposed amendment and then opening the public hearing scheduled for this evening.

•At the close of the public hearing, the Planning Board may discuss any revisions to the proposed amendment.

•At the close of discussion, the Planning Board has the option to recommend or not recommend the amendment to the Town Council or to table it to a workshop for more review.

Summary

The William H. Jordan farm has requested that the maximum size of agricultural buildings that do not require site plan review be increased from 2,000 sq. ft. to 3,000 sq. ft. Under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) NRCS EQUIP program, a high tunnel of at least 2,100 sq. ft. in size is eligible for reimbursement. The current ordinance would require Site Plan review for a high tunnel of more than 2,000 sq. ft.

The proposed revision increases the site plan exemption cap to 3,000 sq. ft. for barns, greenhouses and storage sheds used for agriculture. The Planning Board discussed expanding the cap for greenhouses alone, but noted that non-agricultural buildings like a single family home garage would not require site plan review. The Comprehensive Plan supports “farm friendly” policies.

At the June 1, 2021 workshop, the Planning Board voted to schedule a public hearing on the agricultural amendment for June 15th. Minutes of this portion of the June 1st workshop have been prepared.

Motion for the Board to Consider

BE IT ORDERED that, based on the draft amendment and the facts presented, the Planning Board (recommends/does not recommend) the agricultural Amendment to the Town Council for consideration.