Memo to:	Durham Planning Board
From:	Durham Agricultural Commission - Theresa Walker, Chair
Date:	April 18, 2016
Re:	"Goat Ordinance"

The Durham Agricultural Commission (Ag Comm) appreciates the opportunity to discuss with the Planning Board the proposed amendment to the Town's Zoning Ordinance to allow the keeping of goats in all Residential Zones, as well as the OR, MUDOR, and ORLI districts.

The Ag Comm has been researching this proposal for three years and believes the amendment follows in the footsteps of the successful chicken ordinance adopted in 2013. As with the chicken ordinance, the Ag Comm has worked with the Town Planner and Code Enforcement Officer to develop the goat ordinance. The Ag Comm believes adoption of the goat ordinance furthers the goals set in the 2015 Durham Master Plan to encourage agricultural activities and development, and is in keeping with the Town Council's goals to pursue long-term economic and environmental sustainability and resiliency. The goat ordinance also reflects the expressed desire of residents interested in raising goats.

Key components of the proposed amendments include:
- Enabling the keeping of goats as a permitted accessory use to single family and duplex residences only.
- The size and number of goats permitted on a property are controlled by the lot size. For example, the proposed ordinance would allow two miniature, pygmy or dwarf goats (less than 100 pounds) on lots with a minimum of 20,000 square feet.
- Best Management Practices for the keeping of goats, as set by the NH Deptartment of Agriculture, Markets, and Food, are to be followed.

For small or backyard farmers, goats can be a useful and appropriate choice.   The goat is both a pleasure and an all-around multi-tasker. The pygmy and dwarf varieties are particularly well suited to small properties as they are browsers that love to eat weeds and brambles, as well as food scraps.   Goat manure, which comes in the form of small pellets, is a good fertilizer that is dry and odorless. Goats can produce milk, meat and fiber.