

# Special Events Permit: A Mechanism to Sustain Rural Character

Torrington Planning & Zoning Commission





# Framing the Issue

- ❑ Farming is part of Torrington's heritage and farms help define the rural character of the City as well as Litchfield County
- ❑ Farmland owners are seeking other ways to utilize their lands without needing to subdivide or otherwise develop.



***Providing expanded opportunities for sustaining the rural character of larger tracts of land or prime farmland soils is an option for the PZC to explore. In essence—establish a mechanism for rural land preservation.***

# Where Do We Start?

- Benchmark using other communities
- Explore acceptable levels of uses to establish thresholds
- Identify potential issues and examine mechanisms to address
- Review existing regulations in light of what you want to achieve
- Consider a “test case”



# No Need to Reinvent the Wheel



- New Hartford
- Granby
- Morris
- N. Stonington
- Stafford
- Dutchess County (NY)



# Considerations

- Thresholds
- Extent of sensitive resources
- Frequency/size of events
- Indoor vs outdoor activities
- Hours of operation
- Distance to residences or sensitive receptors
- Site Restoration
- Noise
- Traffic and circulation
- Parking
- Sanitary
- Staffing



# Special Event Permit Process

- ❑ **Not necessarily tied to agricultural use or farmland**
- ❑ **Approvals require increasing level of details as size, frequency and other thresholds are exceeded**
  - Requires multi-department notification/sign-off
  - Site Plan Approval
  - Special Exception/Site Plan Approval

