

# Schoharie County Planning & Development Agency



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Seward and Carlisle Agricultural Committee Meeting  
December 28, 2009 -- Schoharie County Planning office

## **Attendance:**

Committee: Larry Phillips, Michelle Linnane, Rick Bates, Linda Cross, Peter Bent  
AFT Field Representative: Laura Ten Eyck  
County: Michele Strobeck, Zachary Thompson  
Audience: Theresa Murphy

Meeting started at 7:09.

Linda pointed out that the minutes from the Nov. 23 meeting said the next meeting was on Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>. This was corrected to show that the meeting took place Dec. 28<sup>th</sup>. Movement to accept the minutes with correction made by Peter; seconded by Larry Phillips and approved unanimously.

Information regarding Senator Aubertine's roundtable will be sent around in the near future.

An announcement for a workshop titled *Managing the Margins* scheduled for Jan. 15 in Richfield Springs was passed around by Laura. This workshop is part of a series that was announced by NYS Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker meant to help dairy farmers "*optimize their income while minimizing risk during times of uncertain and volatile milk and input pricing.*" While everyone on the committee acknowledges that maximizing efficiency is always beneficial, there is concern that this workshop indicates that there are no plans to financially aid struggling farms.

[*From the December AFT Progress Report, prepared by Laura*]: The Committee discussed the need to entice business, such as light industry, to locate in the towns to help alleviate the tax burden on the farmers. The committee also discussed Goal IV: Protect Natural Resources and Open Space. To date only one recommendation has been generated for that goal: identify and monitor the quality of natural resources in the towns. The committee discussed why natural resources are important to agriculture and ways in which natural resources could be inventoried. The committee also discussed the environmental and economic impacts of wind turbines and drilling in Marcellus shale for natural gas.

A discussion took place regarding how to best analyze the list of Goals and Recommendations provided by Laura (combining the lists compiled by AFT and the committee) and it was decided that the committee would review the list goal-by-goal. In preparation for the next meeting, committee members are to comprehensively review all recommendations for *Goal I: Support Agriculture at the Town Level* and have thoughts ready for discussion.

There is data that needs to be generated for the continuation of the plan: the Carlisle committee continues to work on the maps identifying active agricultural land in the town and is still in the process of finalizing its inventory of types of agriculture and Michele Strobeck, agriculture marketing specialist for SCPDA, will discuss developing a report on the economic impact of agriculture in the towns with David Cox, agriculture program leader for Schoharie County Cornell Cooperative Extension. The committee also discussed how to define the level of development pressure on agricultural land. Committee members will start by contacting their respective town clerks and code enforcement officers to gather information on the number of building permits issued for new residential and commercial construction during each of the last five years [*from December's Progress Report prepared by Laura*].

Meeting adjourned at 8:35.

**For the next meeting (Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>):**

**AFT Document of Goals and Recommendations – Goal 1**

**Misc. Updates**

Minutes submitted by Zachary Thompson