

# Schoharie County Planning & Development Agency



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Seward and Carlisle Agricultural Committee Meeting  
May 18, 2009 Schoharie County Planning office

## **Attendance:**

**Committee:** Linda Cross, Larry Phillips, Mac Holmes, Richard Bates

Consultant: Laura Ten Eyck

County: Michele Strobeck, Lillian Bruno, Zach Thompson

Presenter: Steven Hoerz, Director of the Schoharie County Soil and Water District

Audience:

Meeting started at 7:14.

Michele Strobeck was introduced to the Committee as she is the new Ag. Marketing Specialist and will be participating in the remainder of the process.

Mac motioned to approve the minutes; seconded by Larry and approved unanimously.

Steve presented information about soil types and how they pertain to the plan. He provided soil maps of each town that show prime farmland and soils of statewide significance and defined those layers as shown on the map. He explained that these prime soils are also highly sought after for development so there should be writing in place to try to prevent these soils being lost, either through zoning or through this kind of plan. Steve then talked about programs in place to aid agriculturists, such as ag. districts and assessments, the NRCS farm bill, and AEM (Ag. Environmental Management) and also provided a comprehensive list of soils. Worldwide, 8% of soils are prime. In NYS it is 15%. The maps provided by Steve seem to show that both Seward and Carlisle have easily more than 15% of their town atop prime soils. Finally, Steve provided a copy of the Soil Survey and demonstrated the NRCS websoil survey website, which can be found by searching "NRCS websoil survey" on the internet.

Laura inquired about the status of broadband in Schoharie County, noting that a lack of access to high speed internet is a major obstacle for local farmers. Larry gave the quick version about BPL (broadband over power lines) and Mittel's efforts to provide coverage in the areas untouched by current broadband service and how this issue remains unresolved.

The completion date for the plan is set for 2/26/10, meaning that the plan has to be written before the end of 2009 to allow time for public hearings and for the plan to either be adopted or not by each town.

A Land Use Plan Survey for Seward was discussed once again. Richard said that the town board, planning board, and ZBA will get together to look at the Town of Sharon survey that was put together

and analyzed by the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Board (STE for short). Laura would also like to look at this survey, so a copy will be brought to Planning to be mailed to her. Also, Zach will talk to Alicia to find out what the timetable is for such a survey being done by STE.

Laura wrote up an explanation of the Protection Plan to go on each town's website that was approved by the committee.

To complete the inventory of active agriculture, each town would like a new map showing aerial photos with parcel lines drawn and parcel numbers labeled. Those will be printed ASAP so that the committees in each town can resume work on that.

There was a quick discussion of recommendations, strategies, and goals but, because there were only 4 of the 7 committee members there, it was decided that the topic would become homework. It is expected, and crucial, that 3-6 goals for the plan be identified prior to next meeting.

Next meeting is 6/22 at 7:00 pm at Planning.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07.

**For the Next Meeting:**

**Active Ag. Inventory**

**Goals/Strategies**

**Land Use Plan Survey - Seward**