

Schoharie County Planning & Development Agency



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Alicia A. Terry
Director

Seward and Carlisle Agricultural Committee Meeting
July 26, 2010 -- Schoharie County Planning office

Attendance:

Committee: Carl Barbic, Larry Bradt, Richard Bates, Linda Cross, Mac Holmes

Consultant: Laura Ten Eyck

County: Michele Strobeck

Meeting started at 7:10 p.m.

The committee reviewed the minutes from the May meeting. C. Barbic moved to approve the minutes of the March meeting with the discussed changes. M. Holmes seconded, motion passed, carried.

L. Ten Eyck distributed a second draft of the Town of Seward plan and went over the components with the committee. There was discussion on how the two plans will be made different for the individual towns.

A map of the Town of Seward and Carlisle's location in relation to surrounding towns and the Capital District will be added to the plan once it has been completed.

Action Item → Map to be created by/found by Schoharie County Planning & Development Agency.

R. Bates noted that he thought the reference to the amount of traffic that travels on Route 10 in particular was incorrect.

Action Item → L. Ten Eyck said she would look to the NYS DOT for more information.

Regarding the section on "Conversion Pressure" R. Bates and C. Barbic noted that in the Town of Seward most of the voluntary sales of land have been by those who are no longer farming the land. They have had positive experiences with the absentee landowners who have purchased land, including a majority of forestland on Clove Rd.

Regarding the section on the "Future of Farming" R. Bates noted that farmers have to be able to make a profit in order to survive, otherwise there will not be any farms left. L. Cross thought it should also be noted in the plan that what may be deemed as "marginal" land for dairy may be excellent soil/topography for "new" types of agricultural crops. L. Ten Eyck mentioned that AFT has an intern who has done extensive research in the pros and cons to gas drilling/hydrofracking and will put some information together for the plan.

On Page 14 there was discussion regarding the proposed recommendation that would suggest a level of tax relief for farmers. The committee came to a consensus to remove this recommendation from the plan.

Action Item → The Committee should once again review the goals and recommendations and offer any comments at the next meeting.

On page 22 there was discussion regarding the Natural Resources and Renewable Energy Recommendation that the town should make provisions that would allow personal use wind generating systems. It was noted that the Town of Seward Planning Board is currently working on possible wind laws/regulations in the town. C. Barbic also noted that the technology for solar power has tremendous potential and has come a long way.

Action Item → Each Committee was asked to review the "Review of Regulations" compiled by AFT and offer comments at the next meeting.

M. Strobeck presented information that was gathered from the Town Assessor. The Committee was asked to review and begin identifying the types of farm operations that were receiving agricultural exemptions.

Action Item → For the next meeting Committee members were asked to review a section of the assessment role and make notations regarding the type and size of farm operation.

The Committee discussed ways to bring awareness to landowners and farmers in order to take full advantage of government assistance programs through the USDA.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:45pm

Next meeting (August 23, 2010)

Minutes submitted by M. Strobeck