



**Progress Report
Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan Development
Towns of Seward and Carlisle
July 30, 2009**

Next Meeting: Monday, August 24, 2009, 7 PM, Schoharie County Planning Department

Maps & Inventories

The committee continues to work on the maps identifying active agricultural land in the town. Carlisle is still in the process of finalizing its inventory. The Carlisle committee has been unable to meet to work on finalizing mapping and inventories but will do so as soon as possible. Seward has completed a draft of their map identifying active agricultural land and is in the process of verifying information.

Seward Comprehensive Plan Survey

The Town of Seward is preparing to develop a comprehensive land use plan. They are going to conduct a survey of town residents that will be useful for development of the agriculture and farmland protection plan as well as the comprehensive land use plan. The Schoharie County Planning Department Agency (SCPDA) will facilitate the survey. Money from the state grant for the development of the agriculture and farmland protection plans will be used to pay for the survey.

Carlisle Comprehensive Plan Survey

A draft analysis of the original survey conducted for the Town of Carlisle's comprehensive plan has been completed by Laura Ten Eyck, field consultant for American Farmland Trust (AFT). A more recent survey exists but Laura does not yet have it. Once it is made available Laura will update the draft with the new information.

Farmer and Landowner Interviews

The interview summaries for both towns are complete. Two more interviews remain to be done in Seward. Laura is trying to make contact with alternates on the candidate list as two of the original candidates have been unavailable.

Goals

The committee has continued its discussion of goals and recommendations to be made in the plan. At the July meeting Laura presented the committee with a revised draft of the goals based on their input on prior versions. The committee reviewed the draft and will work towards finalizing it at their next meeting. The individual committees will also review the draft. Once goals are finalized the committee would like to review them with some key members of the agricultural community to get their input.

Michele Strobeck, agriculture marketing specialist at SCDPA offered to present the goals to the county agriculture and farmland protection board as well.

Timeline

Laura presented the committee with a revised proposed timeline for completion of the plan by the February deadline required by the terms of the grant. The revised time line ends in the submission of the plan to the town board for approval instead of the town's submission of the plan the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM). This change allows additional time for work on the plan. In general the committee felt that this still would not be enough time to complete the plan. John Brennan, of NYSDAM's Farmland Protection Program has suggested that any town that thinks it may need an extension apply for one now as they are taking a long time to be approved. The committee decided to go ahead and apply for an extension of one year and the application is in process.