

AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 24, 2010

Committee members Present:

Mark Stolzenburg
Vicky McCaffrey
Reta Youngs
Karl Westfall
Ray Lurhman
Ed Thornton

Also Present

Laurie TenEyck, Field Consultant, American Farmland Trust
Michelle Strobeck, Schoharie County Planning and Development Agency
John Sanchirico, Town Board liaison
Jean Burton, Secretary

Minutes for last month's meeting were not available. They will be approved at the next meeting

Final review of draft: Laurie incorporated all changes from the last meeting. The committee completed an additional page-by-page review. Laurie and Michelle agreed to search out some additional data and to verify some information. To gather his opinion, the committee agreed to ask the assessor to review the plan, particularly the goals and recommendations that involve the assessor. Mark will do this. Map 3 may not be available in time for the public hearing but will be included in the final report. Estimated costs of recommendations were deleted since the committee does not have the resources to make realistic estimates. Laurie will use all input from the committee to complete format and proofread the draft to be presented at the public hearing.

Mark reported that some towns that have or are creating agriculture and farmland protection plans have made it an addendum to the comprehensive plan. This may have advantages or not. Committee needs to decide how we want to present this to town board. John will bring this issue up for discussion at next town board meeting. Mark questioned if this plan has a timeline for revisions as the comprehensive plan. If the committee chooses to submit the plan as a separate document/plan a timeline could be incorporated. Laurie will draft a paragraph denoting a review every five years. To include the plan as part of the comprehensive plan would entail SEQR forms to be completed and review by the county planning board.

Public hearing

Date - Monday, April 12th, just prior to the regular board meeting. John will verify at March Town Board meeting if this time works for the board. April 19th was selected as an alternative.

Plan distribution and Public hearing publicity:

- Laurie will have copies available to public at the town hall by March 13th.
- Mark will provide copies to the assessor and the County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board.
- Laurie will provide copies to John Brennan, NYS Dept of Ag and Markets.
- John will ask Kirsten, town clerk to post notice of the public hearing.
- Michelle will make posters and provide them to the committee to post at the dump, post office and corner store.
- Mark will write a press release.

Public Hearing/ Next Steps: It was agreed that the format should be informal. Mark will introduce the plan and Laurie may speak at that time. Other committee members are encouraged to speak to topics as they arise. The emphasis will be on listening to the public for additional input. If all the input is positive, it is possible for the Town Board to approve plan that night. Approval at a subsequent meeting may otherwise occur. If substantial revisions are needed, then one more committee review may be needed. This could require an additional public meeting. Once the final plan is approved by the Town Board, then final copies are submitted to the Commission of NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets for approval. The final copy will include photos/maps etc and will also be provided to the town in on CD in a pdf file.