

**Town of Dryden
Agriculture Advisory Commission
October 9, 2013**

Members Present: Evan Carpenter (Chair), Doug Barton, Joe Osmeloski, Kim LaMotte, Steve Stuttle (absent)

Town Hall Representative: Jane Nicholson (Interim Planning Director)

Planning Board Liaison: Craig Anderson

Conservation Board Liaison: Craig Schutt

Town Board Liaisons: Steve Stelick and Jason Leifer,

Guests: Nancy Munkenbeck, Lisa Stelick, Amrit Singh of *That Indian Drink*, and Ron Szymanski

The meeting was opened at 7:35 PM.

1. Amrit Singh, That Indian Drink

Mr. Singh came to the Ag Commission to share his product, a drinkable yogurt, and distributed samples. He talked with the Commission about *That Indian Drink* goals and plans for the future. His wife is a trained chef and creates their own recipes. They currently work out of Romulus and he is already selling to Whole Foods. Right now, he is retailing the product for \$2.50-\$3.00. He buys 1% standardized milk out of Syracuse and their other ingredients are fresh and as local as possible.

C. Schutt recommended that Mr. Singh contact Richard Clark to ask if he will carry the yogurt, Mr. Clark tends to be supportive of local businesses.

Mr. Singh is looking forward to living here and working with the community.

Eventually, he and his wife are considering expanding to produce other all natural products and hopes to work with the local farmers. He anticipates that they will be able to hire about 10 people within the next couple years.

Talk turned to some of the local farmer's markets which led to S. Stelick commenting on the potential of a farmer's market in Dryden. Mayor Zimmer from the Village of Dryden is on board with the idea and Mr. Stelick feels that with all the traffic through Dryden, the market should do well.

Mr. Stelick asked if Mr. Singh is considering moving toward an organic product. Mr. Singh said that they are not considering organic at this time, partly because he doesn't feel that he knows enough about GMOs and organic farming. Right now they are producing an all natural product.

2. Review and approval of minutes from September 11th.

D. Barton moved to approve the minutes as presented and K. LaMotte seconded the motion. All approved.

3. Ag Land Protection Grant Application update

J. Leifer said it is in the budget for 2014. J. Nicholson, C. Schutt and J. Osmeloski are going to work on filling out the proposal which is an application to apply for the State grant.

4. Update on the Agriculture survey

E. Carpenter talked to Ms. Teeter a week ago. There isn't any new information. C. Anderson pointed out that work done before the grant is awarded will not be paid for

by the grant. At this point, the Committee discussed the actual survey again and the issue of whether or not the survey is anonymous.

J. Osmeloski pointed out that the question “Do you think the town is farmer friendly?” is a poor question. It isn’t specific enough. Suggestions for replacing that question included “What aspects of the Town support agriculture?” and “which aspects don’t support agriculture?”

5. Update on the Open Space Plan

J. Nicholson said the survey is going to roll into the Open Space Plan. Another town had a similar situation and they held a public workshop where they had maps that people could write on. The people came and filled in the maps with information regarding what they were doing with their land – ie. they might have a small roadside stand or lease their property to a farmer.

J. Osmeloski asked whether the grant will have time constraints. J. Nicholson and C. Anderson responded that these kinds of grants generally have a limit.

E. Carpenter asked how much we want to do before we get the grant. J. Nicholson replied that she doesn’t suggest too much work getting done ahead because she believes that the survey and the Farmland Protection information are going to be the Ag portion of the Open Space Plan. For now, the Planning Department is going to focus on the Recreation and Conservation aspects of the Plan.

As far as any changes due to the unexpected departure of Mr. Kwasnowski, J. Nicholson pointed out that the Open Space Plan has been her project almost from the beginning and she expects there won’t be any interruptions or delays.

6. Choosing a Vice Chair

J. Osmeloski pointed out that the length of terms to which the members were appointed will have an impact on who would be a suitable Vice Chair. J. Osmeloski’s and S. Stuttle’s terms end in December of 2013.

K. LaMotte agreed to take the position.

7. Other Business

C. Schutt asked whether the CEAs are being pulled back because when he was at the Conservation Board, Supervisor Sumner indicated that the original three CEAs are being rescinded but the Town Board is still thinking of moving forward with the other designations.

Mr. Stelick responded that the three formal CEAs are being removed and there aren’t any plans to move forward with the others. He also stated that if the CEAs do come up for discussion again, it will be at the Town Board level, not in the Committees or Boards.

C. Anderson took the opportunity to thank the Committee and congratulate them for their success in pulling together and getting as much work done as they have this past year.

C. Schutt agreed with C. Anderson and Mr. Stelick added his congratulations and praise for the way the members have organized the Committee.

D. Barton thanked Mr. Stelick for his support and continued presence at the Committee meetings.

Mr. Szymanski added his thanks as well, adding that until this Committee was formed, many in the agricultural community didn't feel recognized or as though they had a voice.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin A. Bieber
Deputy Town Clerk