

Agricultural Advisory Committee
May 14, 2014

Members Present: Evan Carpenter (Chair), Kim LaMotte, and Joe Osmeloski
Town Hall Representative: Jane Nicholson (Planning Director)
Town Board Liaison: none present
Planning Board Liaison: John Kiefer and Craig Anderson (at 8PM)
Conservation Board Liaison: Craig Schutt
Guests: Nancy Munkenbeck

The meeting was called to order at 7:39 PM

Farmland Protection Plan Grant: Jane Nicholson

See attached.

J. Nicholson said that the Scope of Work/Work Plan had to be redone for the grant. She presented her plan for the Committee to review.

She said the goals and objectives listed are directly from the NYSDAM (New York State Department of Ag and Markets) circular with the exception of #1 which is the survey the Dryden Ag Committee is focusing on.

Task 1: Request for Proposals – J. Nicholson said we might not have to do this task since we are already anticipating working with Cornell Coop-Extension.

Task 2: Subcommittee – staff, a town board member, cooperative extension and a couple members from the Ag committee who can meet on a weekly or monthly basis as necessary.

Task 3: The above group will be the project team which will organize the public participation.

Task 4: Task Contents: J. Nicholson believes our plan will follow the same basic pattern as other farmland protection plans.

Task 5: Survey Distribution and Analysis:

E. Carpenter recommended that we add the fact that the surveys are going to anonymous.

Task 6: no comments

Task 7: no comments

Task 8: no comments

Task 9: Recommendations: J. Osmeloski asked who is going to make the recommendations. J. Nicholson said that the Ag Committee, the town board and the process will generate the recommendations.

J. Osmeloski asked if the State asks for the results or the reason for the money. Do they want to know what the town is going to do with the information? J. Nicholson said that they don't necessarily need a report but they do want to see what information is being generated and that certain areas are being addressed.

J. Nicholson said the Grants Gateway will open this month and then from there they compile the proposal until they have a certain number. Then they organize the applications and award funds. The expectation is that we will get funded in the fall which is perfect timing for the Ag. Committee.

J. Kiefer asked if most farmers think this is a good thing. J. Osmeloski and E. Carpenter both said that the reaction they have heard so far, is positive. So far no one has asked “why are you poking in my business”.

K. LaMotte pointed out that in terms of the public participation discussion the timing is important with the farmers and weather. The committee is assuming that the public gathering will be in the fall.

J. Nicholson reminded the Committee that the Town Board adopted resolution in January to submit for the application.

J. Nicholson returned to the Goals and Objectives in the Scope of Work and asked if they wanted to add to goal #1. K. LaMotte recommended changing “etc.” to “and farm operations”.

Conservation Board: C. Schutt informed the group that the Conservation Board was agreeable with the Ag Committee regarding changing the definition of Open Space. The only thing they (the Conservation Board) wanted to adjust, after agreeing to drop the final sentence, related to the recharge areas and wanted to push that up to the earlier list in the definition.

In reference to the Open Space Plan, J. Nicholson said the Conservation Board has put together criteria for land acquisition by the Town. It can be a stand-alone policy but it is definitely a good idea. J. Nicholson said that the guidelines are appropriate and she is hoping that gets passed as a resolution soon. Concerns were expressed by various members of the committee regarding why folks want to donate land (to avoid the taxes, to donate in a family name, etc) and recent expenses to the Town in regard to a recent land acquisition.

Suggested Zoning changes:

The group discussed the changes that they are recommending. C. Anderson said that Jason Liefer (Town Board) suggested the Ag Commission attempt to make changes to zoning while working within the existing zoning. This all goes back to the original zoning that was sent to Ag and Markets, the letter from Bob Somers suggesting changes based on Ag and Markets requirements, the reply Dan Kwasnowski (former Planning Director) sent and the lack of changes that have occurred since.

N. Munkenbeck asked about farm worker housing. Can you offer housing in exchange for work? Does it have to be full time or can it be part time? E. Carpenter explained that the farmer can use the housing as part of the payment for work.

The minutes from April 16, 2014 were moved by J. Osmeloski, seconded by K. LaMotte and approved by all.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin A. Bieber
Deputy Town Clerk