

**Dryden Agriculture Advisory Committee
November 12, 2014**

Members Present: Evan Carpenter, Chair, Joe Osmeloski, Doug Barton and Kim LaMotte

Conservation Board Liaison: Craig Schutt

Planning Board Liaison: John Kiefer

Town Board Liaison: Jason Leifer

Town Hall Staff: Jane Nicholson, Planning Director

Guests: Craig Anderson, Planning Board

The meeting was called to order at 7:40PM.

1. Introduction of Guests:

Craig Anderson

2. Review and approve minutes from July 9, 2014.

J. Osmeloski moved to approve the minutes, D. Barton seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Update on Farmland Protection Grant: Jane Nicholson

In an email from the State, J. Nicholson was informed that the grant has been reviewed and approved. At this point the award has not been announced but should be over the next month.

4. Timeline for the Farmland Protection Plan: Jane Nicholson

See attached. The timeline is not by specific dates but rather by months (month 1, month 2, etc.) The budget still has a revenue line from last year for the plan. She is waiting to start anything until she has talked with Debbie Teeter or Monika Roth to verify what can be done prior to the grant contract.

5. Zoning changes update: Jane Nicholson

The Planning Board has sent a resolution to the Town Board asking them to send the proposed changes to Atty. Perkins for review and advice. Since the Farmland Protection Plan will require a review of zoning, J. Nicholson recommended that the review by Atty. Perkins be delayed until the Ag Committee gets to that point.

C. Anderson pointed out that the zoning review is the last step in the Farmland Protection Plan. He suggested that the Town Board and the Planning Department indicate that zoning will be changing. He said there seems to be a lot of farmers out there that will be happy to hear those changes are taking place and will be more supportive of the Ag protection plan.

C. Anderson told the Committee that at the Planning Board meeting, farm worker housing was addressed. Currently there isn't a zoning category for that kind of housing.

C. Schutt shared an article from the Cortland Standard, Saturday November 8th which said Cortlandville is trying to zone out manure pits. The Town is upset that the Town of Homer has permitted a large manure pit close to the Cortlandville border. They are researching the possibility of keeping them out of their town. He is concerned that some people in Dryden will jump on this idea and may try to pursue it. J. Leifer said he thought it would be highly unlikely to happen. C. Schutt's point was that if the zoning is all in place properly then there won't even be a question.

J. Nicholson said that Atty. Perkins is currently working on signs for mobile home parks. There isn't a category for those signs so instead of sending it to the ZBA for interpretation, they are adding those dimensions to the current zoning. C. Anderson asked whether Atty. Perkins could look at signs for ag (it was one of Ag and Markets' concerns) while he is looking at signage for mobile home parks.

J. Nicholson said it was up to the Town Board but it is a good recommendation; J. Leifer encouraged J. Nicholson to suggest it to the Town Board.

6. 2020 Agri-Culinary Tourism Implementation Plan: Craig Anderson

Tompkins County is pushing this idea, the Chamber of Commerce, tourism. The meeting was an attempt to get peoples' views on agri-culinary tourism. Other than C. Anderson, the Piggery was the only other farmer in attendance. Large restaurant owners and B&Bs were well represented.

Some folks asked about farm tours. C. Anderson stated that was unlikely simply due to liability. There is also a huge disconnect between the people that were in attendance and the reality. A farmer is unlikely to spend several hours giving people a tour in anticipation of them purchasing home made goods that won't be enough to compensate for the lost time.

Another question was why farmers don't sell to local restaurants or stores. C. Anderson said he explained that the farmer won't make any profit. By the time the farmer pays for the butchering and packaging by a professional butcher, and split the profits with the store, there isn't enough left to justify the work and effort when taking the animal to market will generate higher returns. Restaurants only want certain cuts of meat which leaves behind the rest, the ground or tougher cuts.

The goal is to implement the plan by 2020. They have already included in the plan that fracking is not compatible with tourism. J. Nicholson was shocked that they are giving themselves 6 years to put together a plan. She asked what the goal was? C. Anderson suggested that they wanted to be a culinary hub. He shared statistics from the meeting like the fact that people tend to spend more on food than lodgings when visiting Ithaca.

7. Members' terms ending in December 2014:

Doug Barton and Kim LaMotte agreed that they both want to remain on the Committee and they will fill out and return applications.

J. Osmeloski suggested that the Committee consider requesting that the Town Board make them an official board and asked how the committee feels about increasing the members to seven.

The members in attendance were all agreeable to increasing their numbers although no decision was made.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin A. Bieber
Deputy Town Clerk

