

**Dryden Agricultural Advisory Committee
October 10, 2018**

Members present: Evan Carpenter (Chair), Kim LaMotte, Brian Magee (at 7:42), Marie McRae, Jeremy Sherman, and Steve Foote (at 7:44)

Liaisons: Craig Schutt (Conservation Board) and Joe Wilson (Planning Board)

Guest: Debbie Teeter (CCE of Tompkins County)

E. Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM.

E. Carpenter asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes from the September 12, 2018 meeting. K. LaMotte made a motion to accept the minutes, J. Sherman seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Definitions

E. Carpenter advised the planning board had only reviewed a portion of the definitions and they will hopefully have this on the agenda to finish at their next meeting.

J. Wilson confirmed that they had run out of time at their last meeting to finish reviewing the definitions.

Right to Farm Signs

E. Carpenter-advised that DPW has installed six of the signs.

C. Schutt -R. Young advised he ordered ten signs and will look to order another ten signs next year, so it does not impact the DPW budget all at once.

Committee had a discussion regarding the signs and there seems to be some public confusion regarding the signs. M. McRae will compose an informational post, will send out to the committee members for their review/approval, and then forward to the deputy clerk to post on the Town's website.

"Carbon farming" update

E. Carpenter, B. Magee, and M. McRae discussed the "carbon farming" meeting that was held on September 26, 2018 at the Tompkins County Public Library. M. McRae asked for feedback. E. Carpenter and B. Magee both stated they were disappointed that more questions from the audience were not answered. Discussion ensued and M. McRae inquired as to what topics may be of interest in the future and was advised bio-char.

Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan

The Priority Actions/Recommendations section of the Plan were discussed (attached) to determine what sections will be worked on next.

- Discussion took place regarding the possibility of producing a map that would be available for viewing (on display at the Town Hall) by existing community members as well as new property purchasers that would indicate the farm land adjacent to their property and to make sure they are aware of the things they can expect to hear/smell when living next to a farm operation. D. Teeter advised a request could be made to the assessment office for a list of ag parcels, which

could then be sent to the County Planning to have a map made that could be handed out to the public.

- It was decided it was too late in the year to consider arranging farm tours for town officials and the public. The committee will keep it in mind for 2019.
- Committee members will work on producing a directory for the town website regarding farms in our town that provide farm products for direct to consumer sales. It will be discussed at the next meeting.

J. Sherman made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by K. LaMotte and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Chrystle Terwilliger
Deputy Town Clerk.

- To reference comments provided by the NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets (provided by Robert Somers, 2012) when considering amendments to the town's zoning ordinance.

PRIORITY ACTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Increase general awareness and support for the Town's agriculture industry

- 1) Clearly identify Dryden as a Right to Farm town through road signage.
- 2) As per the town Right to Farm Law, provide anyone filing for a permit with the Town Zoning officer a disclosure statement if the property borders a farm. The intent is to make permit applicants aware of farming neighbors and to inform them that farmers have the right to undertake and follow sound agricultural practices.
- 3) To the extent possible, work with realtors to provide new landowners in the town's agriculture district with a map of district boundaries and information pertaining to agriculture district law provisions and benefits for non-farmers.
- 4) Include information on the town's website and a directory of farm products for direct to consumer sales.
- 5) Arrange tours of farms for town officials and the general public as a way to create awareness of farm operations and generate broader community support.

B. Create a supportive environment for farming in the Town

- 1) Continue to improve town-farmer communication.
- 2) Appoint an agricultural representative to the Town Planning Board, in accordance with GML §271 [See page 62 in Appendix].

C. Protect the best farmland and encourage environmental stewardship

- 1) Identify farmers interested in the NYS Farmland Protection Program (PDR) and support them in the application process.
- 2) Direct development away from actively farmed land and high-quality soils most suitable for farming.
- 3) Make farmers aware of programs and funding available through USDA NRCS, NYS Agriculture & Markets, and the Tompkins County Soil and Water District for farm improvements that protect the environment.

D. Ensure farm-friendly zoning and other legislation

- 1) Educate town staff and officials about the Agricultural District Law.
- 2) Ensure town laws are not in conflict with Agricultural District Law.
- 3) Encourage the state to increase the amount of forest acreage eligible for agricultural assessment (current limit is 50 acres of forest land)
- 4) Enforce trespass laws and storm water regulations, to reduce and avoid negative impacts on farm operations.
- 5) Adopt the zoning changes as recommended in section V. of this document:
 - Remove certain non-agricultural uses from the list of permitted uses in the Rural Residential, Rural Agricultural and Conservation Zoning districts (as per section V of this document).
 - Remove the requirement for special use permits for agriculture-related land use activities.
 - Add new agriculture-related land uses including agri-tourism, farm markets, and agriculture-related light industrial uses.
 - Add new or modify existing definitions in Article 3 of the Zoning Law.
 - Amend the zoning law to acknowledge that on farm buildings may include housing for seasonal or year-round workers and depending on the complexity of the housing, permits and streamlined site plan review may be reasonable.

E. Strengthen the farm economy and future viability of farming

- 1) Promote direct marketing, including farmers markets, farm stands, CSA farms, and U-pick.
- 2) Identify and promote the growth of emerging and expanding ag enterprises in the town, including equine operations, farm brewing, agri-tourism, and added value enterprises. Consider development of a food incubator corridor that supports farm-based entrepreneurship.