

**Agricultural Advisory Committee  
February 13, 2019**

**Members Present:** Evan Carpenter (Chair), Kim LaMotte, Steve Foote, Marie McRae, Brian Magee

**Liaisons:** Craig Schutt, Conservation Board, Craig Anderson (filling in for Tom Hatfield). Planning Board

**Guests:** Erin Bieber, Debbie Teeter, CCE Tompkins

The meeting was called to order at 7:42 pm

**Swearing in of re-appointed committee members**

C. Terwilliger (Deputy Town Clerk) swore in re-appointed members E. Carpenter and S. Foote

**Review and approval of minutes dated December 12, 2018**

E. Carpenter made a motion to approve the minutes as written, minutes were unanimously approved.

**New Business**

E. Carpenter proposed the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION #1 FOR 2019** from the Dryden Agricultural Advisory Committee to the Dryden Town Board regarding membership:

**Whereas**, Jeremy Sherman was appointed as a member to the Agricultural Advisory Committee with a term ending 2019;

**Whereas**, Jeremy Sherman has resigned from the Agricultural Advisory Committee, leaving his seat vacant;

**Whereas**, the Agricultural Advisory Committee has accepted a volunteer application from Erin Bieber to be a new member;

**Therefore, be it resolved**, the Agricultural Advisory Committee recommends the new appointment of Erin Bieber to fill the vacant seat, with a term ending December 2019.

Motion was made by K. LaMotte, seconded by S. Foote and unanimously approved.

**Old Business**

Discussion took place regarding putting a list of farms and their products on the Town's website. M. McRae advised all we have to do is decide what information we are going to ask each farm for and how

we would like it laid out on the website. R. McHugh (Supervisor's office), will be the person that will set up the website for this. M. McRae came up with the following suggested list of information we might ask of the farms:

- Name of farm
- Address/location
- Contact information
- Products and/or services available
- Season of sales
- Hours of operation
- Other important information

E. Carpenter suggested that maybe we could get history of each farm and feature a different farm each month or however often.

The Town used to have a "virtual farmer's market" link on the website. Apparently, the person that set this up did not leave us the password to be able to manage the information so the link was taken down.

E. Carpenter will check with R. McHugh and see exactly what will happen with it so we can tell people exactly what is going to be happening with the information on the website before gathering the information.

S. Foote suggested this be tabled for a month, and in the meantime, the members of this committee will do some research of websites of area towns and see what information they are providing. D. Teeter stated she thinks the only other one that has farm information is the Town of Ithaca.

#### **Planning Board Update – C. Anderson**

Tom Hatfield will be the new liaison from the Planning Board to this committee.

#### **Conservation Board Update – C. Schutt**

In December he had emailed members of this committee a draft guidance document from the Conservation Board (see attached). The purpose of this document is to be a guidance document for the Planning Board. Discussion ensued regarding the Natural Resource Plan (NRP) and Zoning Law.

C. Anderson -For example, in the Zoning Law there is language for "open space" but there is no definition. If you had a guidance document that would help a developer or anybody that is trying to develop open space you could refer to the guidance document.

C. Schutt – the Conservation Board had four members that went through the NRP and brought things forward that they each thought were important, C. Schutt pulled all the information brought forward into this draft guidance document. We should be continuing with this at this month's meeting. Possibly the Ag Committee may want to change some of the language in there or add additional information.

#### **Old Business continued...**

K. LaMotte – Had the Farmland and Agriculture section of the NRP printed so we could review it. (attached)

M. McRae -Got a copy of the Residential Development Design Guidelines for Dryden because someone had told her there were definitions in there. C. Anderson said this is a good example of what the Ag Committee is trying to create, but related to open space.

The Committee discussed the General Measures for Farmland Conservation section of the NRP:

- Protect active farmland, prime farmland soils, and farmland soils of statewide importance from development as much as possible. *Doesn't the farmer have the right to sell his land to whoever he wants to do whatever he wants? D. Teeter feels things have changed as we now see many examples of farmland being sold to farmers, unlike in the 70's or 80's when land was being sold to developers. The cost of the farmland has increased and the demand for the land by larger farms has slowed land being sold to developers. There might something to offer developers to make it more attractive to develop in the Village, near the Village, or away from farm land*
- Design new subdivisions and development sites in ways that preserve the areas of best farmland soils intact and unfragmented as much as possible.
- Maintain intact habitats in and near hayfields, cropland, orchards, and pastures to help support pollinators and wildlife. *This could be problematic, there is an awful lot of habitat on farms. The forest land, the hedgerows. Not looking to maintain habitat in hayfields or crop land. Maybe in orchards and pastures. This section should probably be deleted.*
- Promote farming practices that conserve water, prevent soil erosion and soil loss, build living soils, and minimize applications of toxic substances.
- Minimize applications of fertilizers and pesticides, and especially in the more sensitive areas such as floodplain fields, and maintain cover crops and thatch to minimize soil loss during heavy precipitation or flood events.
- Where possible, shift tilled land in floodplains to other uses (such as pastures, hayfields) more resilient to flooding.
- Encourage farms to participate in the NYS Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) administered through the Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).
- Encourage farms to work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and SWCD to develop conservation plans that will allow farms access to programs and funding to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) on their farms.

C. Anderson – Guidance document would probably say something like “it would be desirable for the Town of Dryden to use some of the marginal land (or not road frontage) to protect the viewsheds or something along that line.” To encourage a developer to not run a road right up the middle and segregate two fields. Keep the prime soils and sell off your hilly sides.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- Housing sub-divisions being built right next to a farm
- Buffering within the subdivision
- Agricultural Zone should only have low density residential
- No duplexes or apartment houses
- Zoning law – shared driveways, road cuts, how many acres per single family home
- Minor subdivisions coming in – 4 lots/5 lots, they are conservation subdivisions

(M. McRae left at approximately 8:35pm)

C. Schutt's guideline is a good framework for this committee to look at. For next month the members of this committee are going to review C. Schutt's document and see what should be scratched or added to the guideline, go through the Agricultural Protection Plan and come up with ideas to protect the ag land going forward.

D. Teeter – Something the Town might want to look at is a lease of development program. It's less expensive and not frightening to landowners because it's not in perpetuity. To farms that have been owned for several generations, 50 years would be nothing to lockup an easement on your land.

Everyone agreed low density, and buffering provided by the developer, as being good ideas.

There being no further business, S. Foote made a motion to adjourn, seconded by K. LaMotte and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chrystle Terwilliger  
Deputy Town Clerk