

Town of Farmington

1000 County Road 8
Farmington, New York 14425

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, August 17, 2023, 2023 • 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES—FILED WITH TOWN CLERK

The following minutes are written as a summary of the main points that were made and are the official and permanent record of the actions taken by the Farmington Agricultural Advisory Committee. Remarks delivered during discussions are summarized and are not intended to be verbatim transcriptions.

Committee Members Present: Henry Adams, *Chairperson*
Charles Bowe
William Boyce Jr.
John Marvin
Peter Maslyn
Ronald Mitchell
Doug Payne
Michael Putman

Committee Member Excused: Denis Lepel

Town Representatives Present:
Ronald L. Brand, Farmington Director of Development and Planning
Dr. Michael Casale, Farmington Town Board Member
Donna LaPlant, Farmington Assessor

Guest:
Ashley Boyce

1. MEETING OPENING, PUBLIC NOTICE AND NEWS MEDIA NOTIFICATION

Mr. Adams called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The Town Clerk, the Committee members and Town staff were notified of the meeting on July 20, 2023, with a reminder on August 11, 2023. The meeting clerk notified the Canandaigua *Daily Messenger* newspaper on July 25, 2023.

The meeting date and time were posted upon the Town website and the Town Hall Bulletin Board on July 20, 2023, and have remained posted.

A public notice of the meeting was published in the Canandaigua *Daily Messenger* newspaper “Bulletin Board” website events section beginning on July 25, 2023, and has remained posted.

2. PRESENTATION ON AGRICULTURAL ASSESSMENTS

Mr. Adams introduced Farmington Town Assessor Donna LaPlant who presented information on agricultural assessments and agricultural assessment value.

Ms. LaPlant was appointed Farmington Town Assessor in 2006. In 2019, she became Ontario County Director of Real Property, a position which she held for four years, prior to her return to Farmington earlier this year to resume contact with residents and her interest in the direct assessment of property.

See the attached separate PDF file of materials which Ms. LaPlant presented and discussed at the meeting.

3. DISCUSSION

Mr. Adams: Asked if property sales data is used in the determination of assessment values and if assessed values are calculated at 100 percent. Ms. LaPlant said yes.

Mr. Adams: Asked about the New York State maximum 2023 agricultural exemption values per acre. Ms. LaPlant referred to the State form which was included in the packet of information which she presented this evening. She said to please refer to the bottom of the 2023 agricultural assessment values per acre as established in January 2023. The only purpose of these factors is to compute the agricultural exemption. They are not indicative of market values for those types of land.

Mr. Payne: Asked about the two-percent-per-year increase [in assessments] per year. Ms. LaPlant said that the State calculation is used and that she will provide data for the previous five years of property sales and the previous State calculations [for increases].

Mr. Marvin: Asked about 100 percent assessments during the recent reevaluation of property assessments in the Town. Ms. LaPlant said that the right thing to do is to calculate property assessments at 100 percent. She said that this is fair and equitable for all property owners. She also said that the recent reevaluation of assessments in the Town of Farmington resulted in a lower school tax rate in the Victor Central School District.

Ms. LaPlant: Said that she is reviewing the Farmington property assessment data now that she has returned to the Town assessor position. She said that this review is in anticipation

of the next town-wide reevaluation which will be conducted in 2025 with the approval of the Town Board.

Mr. Adams: Discussed the Town practice of soil classifications (good, normal and poor).

Mr. Putman: Asked about the value of residual land. Ms. LaPlant said that residual land is valued higher than tillable land.

Mr. Adams: Asked about the value of farm facilities. Ms. LaPlant said that she first considers the New York State cost table [for the value of farm facilities, such as barns, for example]. She said that the State table takes replacement cost and depreciation into consideration. She said that she uses the Town model [for the calculation of the value of farm facilities] which is employed for all Town properties to assure a fair and equitable assessment for all property owners in the Town.

Mr. Adams: Asked if cost factors are based on square footage. Ms. LaPlant said yes. She said that she also relies on the Ontario County OnCor digital property data system for reference, which she said offers a great deal of useful tools for property owners. Ms. LaPlant said that she cannot enter upon private property without permission of the landowner.

Mr. Adams: Asked if there are agricultural property owners in the Town who are not receiving agricultural tax exemptions. Ms. LaPlant said that some property owners may not wish to apply for agricultural exemptions. Mr. Boyce discussed a method in which to determine this [the number of agricultural property owners who have not applied for agricultural exemptions]. Ms. LaPlant said that she would look into this.

Mr. Putman: Asked if damaged farm facilities would be a detriment to the property assessment. Ms. LaPlant said yes, and that damaged or dilapidated facilities could bring down an assessment.

Mr. Payne: Asked if obsolescence comes into play. Ms. LaPlant said yes, but that the condition of a barn would be considered. Mr. Adams said that farm lending for a new barn is valued at 50 percent of the cost.

Mr. Maslyn: Asked about the classifications of poor, fair, average, good and excellent farm facilities. Ms. LaPlant said that there are few classifications of “excellent” facilities in the Town and that the classification is often based on a review of the facilities from the road or from the OnCor digital system.

Mr. Putman: Asked if the amount of road frontage affects agricultural calculations. Ms. LaPlant said that the calculations are based on current use, not on the highest and best use. She said that road frontage would be assessed differently because of the property potential to be used as building lots. She also said that farm lots are considered differently because the landowner’s intention may be to operate a farm and may not be to subdivide the land.

Mr. Boyce: Asked about the step-up in value for new construction. Ms. LaPlant said that this depends upon on how near the taxable status date of March 1st of each year the con-

struction has proceeded. She said that an agricultural building exemption can be received if the property owner applies within one year of the issuing of a Certificate of Occupancy. She also said that a partial increase in the assessment may be given depending upon the extent of construction on the taxable status date of March 1st.

4. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. at the Farmington Town Hall, 1000 County Road 8.

Mr. Adams: Said that the next meeting of the Committee on September 21st will include a discussion of the possible establishment of a Town Agricultural Conservation District.

Mr. Adams: Said that he would like Committee members to discuss what they like from the sample regulations from other municipalities which have been distributed to the Committee.

Mr. Adams: Said that he would like a more conceptual discussion on this [a Town Agricultural Conservation District] at the next meeting.

Mr. Maslyn: Requested that the sample regulations from other municipalities be re-sent to Committee members for review.

Mr. Adams: Said that he would pare down the materials [from the other municipalities] to provide the Committee with only those which address the idea of an agricultural conservation district. He suggested that the relevant materials are those from Chili, Ballston, Bloomfield, Seneca and Ulysses. Mr. Adams said that he will confirm these with the clerk for distribution again to the Committee.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Following the meeting, the clerk locked the front doors to the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Robortella L.S.

Attachments:

1. PDF file of “Agricultural Assessments and Exemptions in Farmington” presented by Town Assessor Donna LaPlant at the meeting.
2. Ontario County Vacant Farmland Sales 2011–2021.

**Farmington Agriculture Advisory Committee Members
As of January 10, 2023**

Hal Adams (*Chairperson January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023*)

Reappointed January 4, 2022

Term expires December 31, 2026

Charles Bowe

Appointed March 28, 2023

Term expires December 31, 2026

Filling the vacant position of Don Jones who moved out of state.

William Boyce Jr.

Appointed March 28, 2023

Term expires December 31, 2027

Denis Lepel

Reappointed January 4, 2022

Term expires December 31, 2026

John Marvin

Reappointed January 5, 2021

Term expires December 31, 2025

Peter Maslyn

Reappointed January 4, 2022

Term expires December 31, 2026

Ronald Mitchell

Appointed March 28, 2023

Term expires December 31, 2024

Doug Payne

Reappointed January 4, 2022

Term expires December 31, 2026

Michael Putman

Appointed March 26, 2019

Term expires December 31, 2023

E-mail Distribution:

Adams, Hal
Bowe, Charles
Boyce Jr., William
Lepel, Denis
Marvin, John
Maslyn, Peter
Mitchell, Ronald
Payne, Doug
Putman, Michael

Town Board and Staff:

Bowerman, Nate
Brand, Ron
Casale, Michael
Caudle, Casey
Delpriore, Dan
Finley, Michelle
Gordner, August
Herendeen, Ron
Ingalsbe, Peter
Holtz, Steven
Marvel, Carol
Mitchell, Sarah