

**TOWN OF FARMINGTON AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 20, 2014**

*The following minutes are written as a summary of the main points that were made and the actions taken at the Town of Farmington Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting.*

**Committee Members Present:**

Peter Maslyn, *Chairperson*  
Henry Adams  
John Marvin  
James Ochterski  
Royal Purdy

**Staff Present:**

Ronald L. Brand, Town of Farmington Director of Planning and Development

**Also Present:**

Michael Casale, Farmington Town Board, Deputy Town Supervisor

**1. MEETING OPENING**

Mr. Maslyn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. UPDATE OF FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN**

Mr. Brand discussed the Inventory of Current Agricultural Operations that the members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee have been asked to complete. He said that the purpose of the inventory is to identify the locations of the various types of agricultural uses in the Town. He said that several other maps for the Farmland Protection Plan have already been completed, including the map showing owned vs. rented farmland and the soil classifications map.

He also reported that the Farmland Protection Plan Committee has completed a review of those sections of the Town of Farmington Code that deal with agriculture and has compiled a Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities listing. Another chapter of the Plan has been prepared that identifies the techniques available for protecting and preserving farmland.

Mr. Brand said that each of these activities would serve as the foundation that will lead to the identification of action items to be addressed by the Farmland Protection Plan Committee and become part of the Plan.

He again noted that the Agricultural Advisory Committee would need to take the lead in helping educate and create awareness among landowners about the need for creating and

maintaining a Town-wide Drainage District. Like the Farmland Protection Plan, a Town-wide Drainage District is an implementation action contained in the current Comprehensive Plan. He said that this topic would have to be proposed from the grassroots level to avoid the impression that the Town is forcing such a district upon the citizens. He said the Town would look to the Agricultural Advisory Committee for leadership and guidance on current drainage issues and needs.

Mr. Maslyn asked if a date has been scheduled for the next meeting of the Farmland Protection Plan Committee. Mr. Brand said that the meeting would be held near the end of March 2014 at the earliest so as to give time for completion of the inventory map and for Lu Engineers to formalize the map and the soils map.

Mr. Ochterski suggested that the Town provide an aerial photograph map with an overlay of the tax parcels. He said that this would make it easier for the committee to identify the agricultural parcels and their uses. He said that agricultural uses are not as apparent on the standard tax-parcel map that has been provided this evening. Mr. Brand responded saying that such maps are available and had such a request for one been made they would have been available for tonight's meeting. Mr. Ochterski said that he could use his cell phone tonight to view the aerial photos for purposes of this mapping exercise.

### **3. INVENTORY OF CURRENT AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS**

Mr. Brand said that this inventory seeks to accomplish the identification of the various types of agricultural operations in the Town, i.e., the types of uses and where they are currently located. Mr. Adams noted that some uses might change from year to year. Mr. Brand said that this current inventory would serve as a benchmark that would be used in future years to indicate and evaluate changes in agricultural uses within the Town. Mr. Brand noted that the Farmland Plan is to be periodically updated to reflect changes in agricultural operations and land use. The periodic updates of the Plan would be an action item within the Plan.

Committee members asked how multiple uses within a parcel of land should be categorized. It was the consensus of those present that the primary use of a parcel would serve as the categorizing selection. For example, if a dairy farmer grew hay and other feed for his or her dairy cattle, the parcel would be categorized as a dairy use since the crops were being grown in support of his or her dairy operation. Mr. Brand requested that there be a notation on the map identifying this criteria.

Mr. Brand also suggested that any parcel identified as "Other" be listed in the map legend.

Committee members identified the following categories for the map:

#### **1. Dairy/Livestock**

**2. Field Crops and Vegetables (including hay for sale)**

**3. Fruit**

**4. Nursery**

**5. Horses**

**6. Other**

“Horses” was originally part of category No. 1, but members decided to include this as a separate category because this use has been expanding during the past few years.

For the remainder of the meeting, committee members reviewed the individual maps that they and others had completed and combined the data onto the master map.

Mr. Ochterski referred to website aerial photographs to assist the committee in identifying specific parcels and uses.

Mr. Purdy took the master map for further review and will return it to Mr. Brand in the next few days.

Committee members noted that woodlands should also be shown on the finished map to avoid the exaggeration of the actual farmland in the Town.

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee will be on Thursday, March 20, 2014, at 7:00 p.m., at the Farmington Town Hall. An agenda and meeting notice will be provided by the chairperson to the Director of Planning and Development for publishing and posting on the Town’s website.

Following the meeting, Mr. Robortella secured the building.

Respectfully submitted,

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John M. Robortella L.S.