

*Town of Farmington*

1000 County Road 8  
Farmington, New York 14425

**AGRICULTURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Monday, November 20, 2017 • 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 the actions taken at the Town of Farmington Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting.*

**Committee Members Present:** Henry Adams, *Chairperson*  
Robert Gerlock  
Denis Lepel  
John Marvin

**Committee Members Excused:** Don Jones  
Peter Maslyn  
Doug Payne  
Royal Purdy

**In Attendance:**  
Marie Anselm, Agriculture Economic Development Specialist, Cornell Cooperative Extension,  
Ontario County, 427 N. Main Street, Canandaigua, N.Y. 14424  
Ronald L. Brand, Town of Farmington Director of Planning and Development  
Cy Opett, 1361 County Road 8, Shortsville, N.Y. 14548  
Seth Pritchard, 3532 Depew Road, Canandaigua, N.Y. 14424

**1. MEETING OPENING, PUBLIC NOTICE AND NEWS MEDIA NOTIFICATION**

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

The clerk notified the Canandaigua *Daily Messenger* newspaper of this meeting on November 3, 2017, and on November 16, 2017. Notice of the meeting was posted on the Town website, filed with the Town Clerk, posted on the Town Clerk’s bulletin board at the Town Hall and communicated via e-mail to committee members, Town staff and interested residents on November 3, 2017, and on November 16, 2017.

## **2. WELCOME AND MEETING AGENDA**

Mr. Adams welcomed everyone, asked that they sign-in and that they take a packet of the information provided on the ranking system used in the Town of Canandaigua. Mr. Adams said that following last month's meeting with Zachary Odell of the Finger Lakes Land Trust, he has reviewed the time line used in the Town of Canandaigua for ranking parcels of land under consideration for the State's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program and feels that there is not enough time between now and May 2018 to prepare a successful grant application. Mr. Adams wanted to use tonight's meeting to document the lengthy process used in the Town of Canandaigua for the benefit of all members of the Town of Farmington Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Mr. Brand reported that John Robortella was recording the meeting of another committee tonight and that he (Mr. Brand) would be taking the notes for this meeting.

## **3. DISCUSSION**

Mr. Brand began a Power Point presentation on the Town of Canandaigua process which began in May 2017 with a mailing sent to agricultural landowners of 50 acres or more in size. This was followed by a four-month application window (June through September) where solicitations were followed-up by a press release, website notification, and social media. In November 2017, the Ranking Team (members of the Canandaigua Agricultural Advisory Committee and the Environmental Conservation Board) ranked all applications and recommended top applications for approval by the Town Board.

During January 2018, the Town of Canandaigua and the Finger Lakes Land Trust will divide the top applications for submission by each entity. Between December 2017 and March 2018, the Town and applicant(s) will finalize the Town application(s). These will be reviewed by the Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Board for their review and comments.

In May, 2018, it is anticipated that the application window will be open for the State Agriculture and Markets applications. Then in the fall/winter of 2018, it is anticipated that PDR awards will be made by Agriculture and Markets.

Ms. Anselm of Cornell Cooperative Extension stressed the importance of developing strong support for future PDR grant applications, by the town residents, the members of the Agriculture Advisory Committee and the Town Board. She presented examples of grant applications forms from other towns (copies of these application forms are attached to these draft meeting minutes for the Committee's consideration).

Ms. Anselm stressed the importance of having a land trust work with the municipality in preparing PDR grant applications. The State looks favorably upon such applications and the commitment by the land trusts to administer the grant awards upon the farmland. She noted that land trusts are somewhat franchised within the various areas of the state that

they serve. For example, in northern Ontario County, it seems the Genesee Land Trust has most of the PDR applications and grants; and in southern Ontario County, it is the Finger Lakes Land Trust. Mr. Adams acknowledged that the Finger Lakes Land Trust seemed to be more interested in acquiring open lands—such as around Ithaca and the southern ends of the Finger Lakes—but have become more involved with farmland protection.

Mr. Pritchard discussed their most recent PDR application which has been awarded. The award took about five years from beginning to notification. He said they still are awaiting payment. He also said that he highly recommends the Finger Lakes Land Trust becoming involved with any PDR application. He noted the importance of having recent appraisals of the property. He noted the importance of having land located within the established Strategic Farmland Protection Area identified in the Town's Farmland Protection Plan. Mr. Brand noted that the Town does have such a strategic area and that it is part of the adopted plan.

Ms. Anselm noted that the land trusts are limited in the number of PDR applications they can submit during any one round and that they usually concentrate on those applications holding the most promise for funding. Therefore, it is crucial that when the Town solicits the involvement of the land trust that a well thought out program be established and some initial reviews and ranking have taken place.

Mr. Marvin recalled the process used in Wayne County, about ten years ago, where the County hired an appraisal firm to do all of the involved properties making an application for PDR funding. He asked if the Town would be willing to hire a firm to conduct all of the appraisals. Mr. Pritchard noted that Canandaigua did contribute approximately \$29,000 toward his family's PDR grant application. It is not clear when the Town Board authorized this commitment of funds towards the application. It is also not clear that the Town authorized any commitment of funds towards the appraisals of properties. Mr. Brand noted that it may be difficult to justify hiring a firm to do all of the potential appraisals when there is no know number that might be involved. He noted that he could not speak for the Town Board on this.

Mr. Gerlock voiced concern that the Town would not be submitting any PDR applications this round and that it would be another two years before such applications could occur. Mr. Adams noted that the Town in preparing the Farmland Protection Plan has established the strategic farmland protection area, an important first step in such a program, and now it is up to the agricultural community to come together and start working on the rating and ranking components.

Mr. Brand noted that organizing a ranking and priority process would be time consuming and would need a commitment on the part of property owners to stay the course. One of the first tasks will involve creating a Ranking Committee and that such a Committee would need to involve members from the Town Board, the Planning Board, the Conservation Board, the Agriculture Advisory Committee and a few residents. He noted that the momentum in the Town of Canandaigua is the result of their active Citizens Im-

plementation Committee, an active Agricultural Advisory Committee and an active Environmental Conservation Board.

Ms. Anselm agreed that the more comprehensive the process is the better the chances for success with the State Department of Agriculture and Markets funding PDR applications.

#### **4. NEXT STEPS AND ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Adams noted that the next task would be to prepare a solicitation letter, to send it out to property owners and to begin creating a ranking process. He noted that he intends to hold another workshop on this topic in January 2018 and that he will invite Mr. Odell from the Finger Lakes Land Trust. In the meantime, he urged all to review the Town of Canandaigua process and to plan on attending the next meeting.

Mr. Adams asked if there were any further matters to be discussed. Hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Robortella secured the main entrance to the building and Mr. Brand secured the west entrance to the building.

Respectfully submitted,

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Ronald L. Brand L.S.  
Clerk *Pro Tempore* of the Agriculture Advisory Committee

#### **Attachments from Marie Anselm:**

1. Canandaigua PDR Application 2017
2. Cayuga County Pre-Application for NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Program 2017
3. NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Round 14 Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Program Request for Proposals 2016
4. Thurston County Farmland Inventory, March 30, 2009

**Agriculture Advisory Committee Board Members:**

Hal Adams, *Chairperson* (January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017)

Term expires December 31, 2021

Robert Gerlock

Term expires December 31, 2019

Don Jones

Term expires December 31, 2021

Denis Lepel

Term expires December 31, 2021

Peter Maslyn

Term expires December 31, 2021

John Marvin

Term expires December 31, 2020

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