

## Town of Farmington Agriculture Advisory Committee

Minutes – October 25, 2012

Attendance: Pete Maslyn, Royal Purdy, Don Jones, John Marvin, Jim Ochterski

Guests: Ron Brand, Bob Sheldon, Rick Padghem, Bob Bowe, Davis Degear

1. Agriculture Planning Grant: Ron Brand announced that the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets has awarded the Town funding for an Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan, as applied for in March 2010.

Mr. Brand proposed that he lead the research and development of the Town of Farmington Agriculture Plan, working with Robert King. They would be able to develop a plan that is pragmatic and sensible with data from the Assessor's office, the Agriculture District, and other dependable sources. The plan is intended to document specifically what kind of farming is taking place in the town, what the issues are, what the future of agriculture could be if the town was proactive in its support of farming as a business base of the economy. With the cooperation of the Town Clerk's office to take notes, the proposal is also to hire Lu Engineers for mapping, and use their time effectively within the proposed budget. The timeline for the planning project would be 12 to 16 months from the date the contract with NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets is approved.

The proposed work would include a close look at zoning laws and policies and their applicability for agriculture. Townwide drainage issues would be taken into consideration, as would agriculture business trends in adjacent towns. Public participation and records of meetings would be a priority. The effort can take advantage of the Agriculture District #1 renewal is underway.

Once the proposed plan is developed, it would be up to the Town Board to adopt the plan and use it for future project proposals, grant applications, economic development planning, and land use decision-making.

The process would substantially involve an ad hoc Agriculture Planning Committee, comprised of the current Agriculture Advisory Committee, and several other participants from the Planning Board, the Town Board, and farm owners in the Town.

Motion made by Jim Ochterski, second by John Marvin, and amended with a second from Don Jones: The Agriculture Advisory Committee approves of the proposed process led by Ron Brand and supported contractually by Robert King and Lu Engineers. The Farmington Agriculture Advisory Committee shall review all fee schedules and subcontracts associated with the process. Vote: unanimous in favor.

Motion made by Jim Ochterski, second by Don Jones: Approve identification and designation of an Agriculture Planning Committee subject to the approval of the Farmington Agriculture Advisory Committee. The members of the Agriculture Planning Committee would serve until the plan is completed and adopted by the Town, and would be comprised of 6 individuals from the Agriculture Advisory Committee, 1 Town Board member, 1 Planning Board member, 1 liaison from the Conservation Committee, and an at large farm operator from the Town. Vote: unanimous in favor.

The Agriculture Advisory Committee supports the idea of using the upcoming Town of Farmington Agriculture Roundtable, hosted by the county Agriculture Enhancement Board to introduce the Agriculture Planning process for Farmington.

2. Open Space Index

NYS law requires a Conservation Board to have an annual Open Space Index, to maintain Board status, otherwise, it becomes a council with less influence on municipal policies and laws. The Agriculture Advisory Committee intends to keep the Conservation Board updated on the Agriculture Planning process, and Pete Maslyn will maintain contact with the Conservation Board accordingly.

3. Agriculture Advisory Committee member turnover

Discussion of possible advisory committee members to replace Jim Gray (term ending) and Bob Gerlock (term ending).

Next meeting: Scheduled for November 15, 2012.

Respectfully submitted by Jim Ochterski, Vice Chair, Town of Farmington Agriculture Advisory Committee.