

Town of Farmington Agriculture Advisory Committee

January 15, 2009

Meeting Notes

Attending: Pete Maslyn- Chair, John Marvin, Jim Ochterski, Dick McClurg, Royal Purdy, Greg Atwood (guest)

1) Reporting to Town Planning Board:

Pete M. is planning to attend the January Farmington Planning Board meeting with the application information for the municipal agriculture protection planning grants available from NYS - to get their endorsement before we move forward with an application.

2) Changes in Agriculture Assessment in Farmington

Greg Atwood reported that the assessor was considering a 30 percent increase in the agriculture value assessment, and he asked if the Agriculture Advisory Committee could meet with the assessor to discuss. It appears as though the assessor is under pressure to increase the assessment. The numbers may be faulty because agriculture land is not being bought for farming - more for future development, so the transactions suggest incorrectly that the real value of agriculture land for farming purposes is increasing. There is little farmland sales value to go on from the past 5 years.

Discussion of where the assessor might be getting the information from, the effect of land in an Agriculture District, penalties and some case examples from the region. Valuation of ground is for either tillable acreage, or development - no effective provisions for grazing land. Some towns do have grazing valuation and that should be considered for Farmington.

Recommendation that the Agriculture Advisory Committee should meet with the assessor immediately and request:

- Try to keep the increase in base agriculture assessment minimized because there is relatively little farmer-owned ag land in the Town. Need to support farming because it is still a tax profit to the town.

3) Plans for Farmington agriculture appreciation event

The Farmington Chamber apparently has plans and ideas for an agriculture celebration event in 2009, but no details are available yet.

4) Farm development in Farmington:

Discussion of horse farms, need for composting facilities.

Discussion of GL Kraut announcement of possible closure, and efforts being made to retain this facility.

Greg Atwood suggested that the Town should adopt guidelines regarding wind farm development and make sure zoning is at least receptive to windmills. Exploration may be

starting due to geography and proximity to transmission services around the Rochester metro region.

5) Next meeting: Scheduled for February 19, 2009; 7:30 PM Town of Farmington Hall