

Town of Farmington Agriculture Advisory Committee

September 19, 2009

Meeting Notes

Attending: Pete Maslyn- Chair, John Marvin, Royal Purdy, Bob Gerlock, Jim Ochterski,
Guests: Jim Gray (pending committee member)

1) Town conflict of interest policy:

P. Maslyn handed out copies of the conflict of interest policies for municipal officials.

2) Pursuit of a farmland planning grant

P. Maslyn and J. Ochterski reviewed the status of the farmland planning grant application as of May and June 2009. Of particular emphasis is the issue of involving the Town of Canandaigua as a collaborator in the application. R. Purdy noted that the City of Canandaigua is again considering an eastern bypass route and regional planning remains important.

Discussion about the merits and drawbacks to involving the Town of Canandaigua. There are benefits, but ultimately, Canandaigua seems like a “divided” town with agriculture of noteworthy concern only in half the Town (north, northwest, and Route 21 corridor). J. Ochterski has sought input from several leaders in Canandaigua Town government, and the previous discussion from June 2008 is still valid – now would not be the right time to engage Canandaigua directly on agriculture planning.

Consensus of the Agriculture Advisory Committee that based on careful & deliberate reconsideration, informal input from the Town of Canandaigua, and another 12 months of observation and inquiry, that it would be best to apply for the funding as a single Town. The merits of partnering with Canandaigua makes sense on some levels and are noted – it would be a bigger, more meaningful project; the choices made in Canandaigua affect Farmington’s agriculture; intermunicipal resource sharing is preferable. As of September 2009, Canandaigua does not appear to be the fully-engaged and willing team partner we would need for long-term agriculture planning.

The Committee reviewed the 2003 update of Farmington’s Comprehensive Plan, particularly sections of the Plan that relate to agriculture viability in the Town. General consensus that it would be good for the committee to remain actively involved in the Comprehensive Plan revision. The Committee specifically addressed which recommendations in the Plan have been implemented and which have not.

Drainage of land should definitely be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan revision.

General discussion of the impact of the Finger Lakes Race Track on promoting agriculture development in the Town, which is usually overlooked. Hay sales, straw sales, and horse boarding facilities are all benefiting from the Track’s continued operations and expansion. The

Track horse facilities are now being changed to comply with CAFO permit regulations and it is causing consternation among horse owners. It will be important to monitor the CAFO process.

Farmington Planner Ron Brand and Planning Board Chair Dave Degear joined the meeting to discuss the agriculture planning grant application. It seems like it would be better to increase the amount of money being requested to attract a more qualified consultant to perform the work sought in the grant. Mapping of agriculture and residential land use trends will be important. The drainage issue might become a good intermunicipal project with the Town of Manchester. The Committee should also consider jointly planning for agriculture with the Town of Manchester.

Next meeting: Scheduled for October 15, 2009; 7:30 PM Town of Farmington Hall