

ONTARIO COUNTY
Agricultural Enhancement Board
MEETING MINUTES: OCTOBER 2, 2018
Acting Chairman Fred Lightfoote

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Supervisor Fred Lightfoot
Maria Rudzinski – for OCPD Tom Harvey
Robert McCarthy
Tim Davis, CCE
Robin Johnson, OCRPT
Elizabeth Newbold
Frank Fessner
Tucker Kautz – for OCSWCD Megan Webster

Members Excused:

Ben Lowe
Erin Bullock
Jason Weykman

Call to Order: Chairman Lightfoote called the Agricultural Enhancement Board (AEB) meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Chairman Lightfoote introduced new board member, Frank Fessner.

Minutes:

Minutes from the June 19, 2018 meeting were reviewed.
Motion to approve the minutes: Made by F. Lightfoote. Seconded by: R. McCarthy. Motion carried. Two abstentions.
T. Kautz said that he would provide agency updates to be included with the June minutes.

Board Terms Expiring 12/31/2018: Bob McCarthy and Ben Lowe

Motion to recommend reappointment of R. McCarthy and B. Lowe: Made by R. Johnson. Seconded by T. Davis. Motion Passed unanimously.

NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Grant Application – Dairy Transition: DeBoover Farm, Town of Geneva.

E. Newbold reported that the Finger Lakes Land Trust had agreed to submit an application for the DeBoover Farm. The grants are awarded by NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets for complete applications that meet all the criteria on a first come/first serve basis. The Farm meets all the criteria which include: 1) High quality agricultural soils; 2) Intergenerational transition plan in place; and 3) Priority for protection in both the Town Farmland Protection and County Agricultural Enhancement Plans. The Land Trust is currently working with the Family on the site plan which is required for the application.

The grant program requires that the AEB provide a letter of support for the application.

NOTE: At this point in the meeting, Elizabeth Newbold left the room at 7:58pm.

Board Action on Support for the DeBoover Farm Application The Board discussed the application and found that since it met the criteria of the program and was identified a Priority for Protection in the County Agricultural Enhancement Plan and the Town of Geneva's Farmland Protection Plan, the application should be supported by the Board.

Motion: The AEB supports the Finger Lakes Land Trust's Farmland Protection Implementation Grant Application for the DeBoover Farm and directs M. Rudzinski to draft a letter of support for signature by the Chairman of the AEB indicating the Board's reasons, as mentioned above. **Made by: Robin Johnson. Seconded by: Frank Fessner. Motion carried.** E. Newbold was not present for the discussion or the vote.

OC Agricultural Plan Implementation Funds (\$15,000) utilization.

The Board discussed potential projects that could be undertaken with the funds including social media, tire recycling, farm safety training, identifying farm/school bus pull off locations, etc. The Board requested M. Rudzinski to develop an application form which would be distributed to interested public entities/agencies. Given the tight timeline to have the projects under contract by the end of the year and the limited amount of funding available, only a limited solicitation was thought advisable.

The Board rescheduled their November 28 meeting to November 14 so that the applications could be reviewed and selected in time to meet the County's contractual deadlines for the end of the year.

Notice of Intent – Town of Canandaigua Water Main Improvements

M. Rudzinski said that the proposed improvements were at existing sites and had no impact on agricultural land or extension of service. The Board therefore said that no additional action needed to be taken.

Town of Farmington Request AEB Review of Proposed Delaware River Solar Farm

The Board reviewed a proposed 30 acre community solar project on farmland in the Town of Farmington. After discussion, the Board directed a letter be prepared for the Chairman's signature that included the following comments:

- The proposed project will result in the loss of approximately 30 acres of prime farmland on a parcel that is identified in the Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Plan – 2018 as a Priority Land for Protection. It is included in the county plan because it was also identified in the Town of Farmington's Farmland Protection Plan.
- The Board is concerned about the potential for the cumulative significant loss of prime agricultural land where commercial solar PV systems are allowed uses in zoning districts (such as A-80) where agriculture is the predominant land use and is a priority for protection
- The applicant should be required to determine if there are any surface or subsurface agricultural drainage systems that will be impacted by the proposed project. Damage or removal of such infrastructure can adversely impact the viability of the farmland remaining on the parcel and adjoining farmland which may be connected to the sites system.
- The Board recommends that conditions be placed on any approval that requires restoration of the site to productive farmland (including surface and subsurface drainage infrastructure) in a manner that is specified by the OC Soil and Water Conservation District or any successor agency.

OC Agricultural Enhancement Plan Implementation Team

A kickoff meeting for the Team had been proposed for August but was postponed due to time constraints. The Board said it would further discuss scheduling at its next meeting.

Other Business/Agency Reports

CCE is hosting a tour of farms for the Board of Supervisors on October 10th.

OC SWCD:

- CAFO Waste Storage and Transfer Program– 3 Storage project moving along- One Storage tank is almost complete. Working with engineering on a few design tweaks for two others that are expected to go in next year.
- Round 23 NYS Ag Nonpoint Source Grant -Working through geologic study review with engineers on one large manure storage. Another Farm is waiting on implementation due to poor dairy market conditions.
- Round 20 NYS Ag Nonpoint Source Grant - Working as as-builts, engineer sign off and payout for last 3 erosion and sediment control projects. Grant will be closed out by end of year.
- Genesee River GLRI Grant- First erosion and sediment basin had begun but has been delayed due to wet weather conditions at site.
- Genesee River EBM: Grant on final project – Final sediment control basin work is completed and will be closed out this fall.
- NYS Climate Resilient Farming Grant Rounds 2 & 3 – Currently working with all farms on documenting cover crop acreage planted. Had many acres interseeded directly into growing crops this year so will be interesting to see how those cover crops take off as the commodities are harvested. There is a tremendous amount of cover crops planted around Ontario County this fall.
- **Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted by,
Maria Rudzinski, Senior Planner