Town of Farmington

1000 County Road 8

Farmington, New York 14425

**Agricultural Advisory Committee**

**Thursday, February 20, 2025, • 6:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES—draft**

*The following minutes are written as a summary of the main points that were made and are the official and permanent record of the actions taken by the Farmington Agricultural Advisory Committee. Remarks de­liv­ered dur­ing discussions are summarized and are not intended to be verbatim trans­criptions.*

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**Committee Members Present:**  Henry Adams, *Chairperson*

John Marvin

Ronald Mitchell

William Boyce

**Committee Members Excused:**  Denis Lepel

Pete Maslyn

Michael Putman

Doug Payne

Charles Bowe

**Town Representatives Present:**

Ronald L. Brand, Farmington Director of Development and Planning

Michael Casale, Farmington Town Councilperson, Committee Liaison

**Guests: None**

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

Mr. Adams called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The Town Clerk, the Committee members and Town staff were notified of the meeting on February 11, 2025. The meeting clerk notified the Can­an­daigua *Daily Messenger* news­paper on February 11, 2025. The meeting date and time were posted upon the Town Hall Bulletin Board on or about February 11, 2025, and have remained posted.

A public notice of the meeting was published in the Canandaigua *Daily Messenger* news­paper “Bul­letin Board” website events section beginning on February 11, 2025, and has re­mained posted.

**2. APPROVE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:**

Mr. Marvin proposed a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Mitchell.

**3.** **DISCUSS GENESEE LAND TRUST APPLICATION**

The committee discussed two Land Trust applications brought to their attention by Amanda Grisa from the Genesee Land Trust. The first application concerns the Sadler family's 375 acres of land, which includes 3 parcels, one of which was acquired recently. The Gray family [Fresh Ayr Farm] consists of 2 parcels. The committee noted they need to endorse each application separately. Mr. Adams explained that different applications fall into specific categories based on their characteristics, such as livestock or pure crop operations, which have different requirements regarding soil quality. He shared insights from a previous conversation with a local farmer regarding the complexities of his application, including issues with multiple ownerships and land classifications. The discussion also touched on the impact of mortgages on property applications, with Mr. Brand recalling a case where a potential applicant withdrew due to mortgage complications. Mr. Adams confirmed that while having a mortgage isn't necessarily a dealbreaker, it can complicate the process. The committee acknowledged that the application process is lengthy and may not provide immediate benefits, highlighting the challenges in obtaining funding and the potential strings attached.

The discussion **revolved** around the competition for limited state funds from the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and the attendance issues within a committee overseeing grant applications. Mr. Adams expresses concern about the increasing competition for these funds and notes that while the committee is fully subscribed with nine members, not all are actively participating. Several members have not attended recent meetings, which could lead to potential reappointments per the attendance policy. Mr. Brand highlights the need for the committee's endorsement to strengthen grant applications, clarifying that formal endorsements must come from the town board. There’s a debate about the process, with Mr. Marvin sharing his past experience involving the town board and the Genesee Land Trust, emphasizing the importance of having knowledgeable entities manage the grants and easements. Ultimately, the group acknowledges the evolving nature of these processes and the need for clarification on roles and recommendations in submitting grant applications.

The members proposed to advise the town board in favor of a new program. The discussion then shifted to changes in land use regulations, particularly regarding the allocation of building lots. Mr. Adams clarified that state rules would take precedence over local ordinances, while Mr. Marvin expressed concerns about preserving land for future generations. As they discussed specific properties, Mr. Marvin highlighted issues with wetlands that deterred previous conservation efforts. Mr. Adams presented details from an email by Amanda regarding the proposed site plan for the Gray parcels, which included future building zones on conservation easements. He noted concerns raised by Mike Putman about accessing the eastern parcel, particularly due to its wet conditions. The meeting revealed a desire for more clarity and discussion on the implications of these development plans, particularly concerning access and environmental considerations.

**4.** **PRESENTATION ON THE PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION OVERLAY DISTRICT (ACOD) REGULATIONS AND OTHER SECTIONS OF A PROPOSED LOCAL LAW AMENDING PORTIONS OF CHAPTER 165 OF THE FARMINGTON TOWN CODE, ZONING LAW- HAL ADAMS, ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND TOWN STAFF.**

Mr. Adams initiated a discussion about the Agricultural Conservation Overlay District (ACOD), noting that some members were absent in January due to work commitments. He reflected on the previous meeting, highlighting its constructive nature and the positive engagement from attendees, particularly Kate Crowley, who expressed support for farmland protection and raised insightful questions. Mr. Brand mentioned that he had encouraged attendees to voice any concerns before tonight’smeeting but received no additional feedback. The consensus among the members, was to move forward with recommending the draft regulationsto the town board for endorsement and further steps, including review by county planning and possibly by the County’s AG Enhancement board. Mr. Brand clarified that the town board, if it became necessary, **c**ould need to formally request atechnical review by the State’s AG & Markets and noted that combining **code** changes was more cost-effective than separating theminto a number of local laws. Mr. Adams pointed out the need for proofreading the draft to correct typographical errors and asked whether it was standard for new town codes to be reviewed by the town attorney. Mr. Brand explained that this practice varies by municipality, but he was not aware of concerns from the town attorney regarding the current process. At the conclusion of the discussion, the committee recommended the draft ordinance to the Town Board for its consideration.

**5.** **PUBLIC COMMENTS – TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE COMMITTEE**

None

**6.** **NEXT STEPS IN THE FORMAL ADOPTION PROCESS – ADVISORY**   **COMMITTEE AND TOWN STAFF**

Mr. Adams and Mr. Brand evaluated the necessity of holding future meetings. Mr.

Adams suggested leaving their next meeting open-ended since neither had current agenda

items, citing a lack of developments from the Land Trust and the anticipated increase in

activity related to farmland, which has not yet occurred. He expressed his preference for

not holding meetings without a purpose, acknowledging previous pressure to meet

regularly. Mr. Brand agreed that while they could schedule more meetings, it would

depend on having topics to discuss. He also mentioned that the Zoning Board of Appeals

has reserved the fourth Monday of each month for meetings, but they only convene if

there is a need to address appeals.

**7.** **NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE TIME AND LOCATION – HAL ADAMS**

The next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on *A Date to be*

*Determined,*at Farmington Town Hall, 1000 County Road 8.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Paula Ruthven

**Farmington Agriculture Advisory Committee Members**

**Town Board Resolution #81-2024**

Hal Adams *(Chairperson January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024)*

John Marvin Term expires 12/31/2025

Ronald Mitchell Term expires 12/31/2025

Michael Putman Term expires 12/31/2025

Hal Adams Term expires 12/31/2026

Charles Bowe Term expires 12/31/2026

Peter Maslyn Term expires 12/31/2026

William Boyce Jr. Term expires 12/31/2027

Denis Lepel Term expires 12/31/2027

Doug Payne Term expires 12/31/2027

*Per Town Board Resolution #81-2024, February 13, 2024*

**E-mail Distribution:**

*Committee Members:*

Adams, Hal

Bowe, Charles

Boyce Jr., William

Lepel, Denis

Marvin, John

Maslyn, Peter

Mitchell, Ronald

Payne, Doug

Putman, Michael

*Town Board and Staff:*

Ingalsbe, Peter

Holtz, Steven

Casale, Michael

Herendeen, Ron

Bowerman, Nate

Finley, Michelle

Brand, Ron

Delpriore, Dan

Gordner, August

Marvel, Carol