



## Sullivan County Agriculture and Sustainability Policy Committee

October 4, 2012 AGENDA

1:30 PM

### Committee Members:

Cindy Kurpil Gieger, Chair, Cora Edwards, Vice-Chair, Jonathan Rouis, Alan Sorensen, Kitty Vetter

### Reports:

1. Agricultural Planner Monthly Report- Jen Mall
2. SASD Monthly Report- Dick Riseling
3. Possible Renewable Projects- DPW

### Presentation:

1. Economic Possibilities in Biomass - Steven Stuart/ Alan Scott
2. SC Wind Resources/ Biomass Resources – Steven Stuart

### Discussion:

1. Climate Action Developments
2. Robert Travis Solar Project Ribbon Cutting
3. Mid Hudson Regional Update
4. New Farmers Market in Monticello
5. Statewide Strategic Dairy Industry Plan
6. Dairy Processing Facility RBEG: Proposal Evaluation Team

### Resolutions:

1. Requesting Governor Cuomo to Formulate a Strategic Dairy Industry Plan for the State of New York.

### Public Comment



### Ag Planner Projects:

**Ag and Sustainability:** Regular meetings with OSE and DPW. Helped to publicize September 21 biomass symposium.

**Dairy Processing RBEG:** Issued RFP on August 10. Public forum on September 17 to answer technical questions about the RFP, approximately 12 attendees. Proposals are due October 12.

**Microenterprise Assistance Program Grant:** Currently processing drawdown requests for grantees who have executed contracts and requested advancement or reimbursement of funds. Working to finalize all grant contracts with awardees. MAP Review Committee revised grant amounts for two agricultural business awardees, to utilize funds leftover from awardees who left the program.

**Ag Revolving Loans:** One agri-business loan was approved in September-- \$30,000 to Neversink Farm.

**Red Meat Processing Facility:** USDA has approved the transfer of the equipment RBEG from the Ag LDC to the IDA; working on the transfer of the technical assistance RBOG.

### Recent Events & Happenings:

**SC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan:** Promoted and attended September 24<sup>th</sup> community advisory input meeting in Liberty, encouraging farmers and agri-businesses to attend and share their economic development concerns and ideas. Organized a September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting for our consultant from Wadley-Donovan to hear from members of the Ag Advisory Board. Continuing to assist the consultants with information gathering

**CCE:** Assisted Liz Higgins in developing and hosting an informational session on USDA-Value Added Producer Grants and Northeast SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) Grants on September 17<sup>th</sup> at the Town of Callicoon Town Hall. Approximately 20 attendees.

**Ag Advisory Board:** Met on September 17<sup>th</sup>, elected Liz Higgins Chair and Sonja Hedlund Co-Chair of the AAB. Next meeting October 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Website:** With the help of Andrew McCabe in MIS, constantly adding new resources to the webpage.

**Farm Visits:** Several farm visits during September—to dairy farms, to discuss dairy processing RFP; and to farms participating in the Westchester Taste Our Local Harvest Event.

**Ag District 30 Day Window:** The inclusion of seven parcels, totaling approximately 201 acres, into Ag Districts 1 and 4 has been certified by the Commissioner of Ag and Markets.

### Upcoming Events:

**Westchester Taste Our Local Harvest Event:** Two farms and several local food businesses, along with SCVA, the SC Farm Network and I, plan to attend this tasting event on October 9<sup>th</sup> in Rye to promote and publicize Sullivan County farms and farm products. The event is open to the public, tickets are \$60.

**Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan:** Joint meeting of the six working groups on October 2<sup>nd</sup> in Harriman.

**Sullivan County Farmland Protection Plan Update:** Recently learned that we have been awarded \$50,000 to update our 1999 Farmland Protection Plan. Next steps are to discuss with DGA, the Ag and Farmland Protection Board, and the Ag Advisory Board how to proceed with accepting and administering the grant.



## SASD SEPTEMBER 2012 ACTIVITY REPORT TO THE SULLIVAN COUNTY LEGISLATURE

The county manager has indicated that a new paradigm for delivering county services is urgently needed to address the fiscal crisis caused by declining revenues, increased costs and demand for additional services. SASD's mission is to provide leadership for county-wide sustainability initiatives which go to the center of this very difficult challenge.

The following activities can be reported as contributing to cost saving and revenue enhancement for government and non-government operations.

- A Bio-mass symposium was conducted with the assistance of CCE, DPW and Planning. A power point presentation on the potential development of this local resource will be presented at the October 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Agriculture and Sustainability Committee;
- The Community Owned Wind Feasibility Study will be completed in 3 weeks. A power point presentation will be also be presented at the October 4<sup>th</sup> Committee meeting;
- An initial design for an ENERGY DISTRICT at the DSS complex in Liberty will be presented for discussion at the October 4<sup>th</sup> meeting;
- An initial discussion of an appropriation of \$15-25,000 for a deep retrofit study of the Robert Travis building was held in the DPW Committee meeting. Action on this matter leads to final design work on the ENERGY DISTRICT design and proposal for the MidHudson Sustainability Planning Consortium which will be discussed at the November meeting of this Committee and then forwarded for funding in 2013-15.
- Consultations with SCCCollege on a proposed 1.8 megawatt solar electric installation; a county legislator on a tire recycling concept; a local entrepreneur who has signed a lease and is in the process of constructing an auto-clave waste system at Stewart Air Port; a local solar electric installer who has just completed the largest pv installation in the county (200kw) and is in the process of installing another 200kw for a local agricultural enterprise; CCE on a system wide audit and retrofit; Several other significant solar electric and solar thermal installations are in progress.

The Sullivan County Climate Action Plan Advisory Board held its second meeting and staff is now preparing a working plan of goals and time limes for actions to achieve them.

Lumberland has signed the Climate Smart Community Pledge. Tusten is engaged with SASD in deciding about HVAC and other issues to reduce cost and qualify for funding. Tusten is also ready to roll out its community survey which includes residential, commercial and civic buildings. The next step is funding development for specific projects. Meetings were held with Delaware, Highland, Cochection and Liberty town boards to introduce the Climate Smart Communities Pledge.

Looking to the immediate future, SASD reports:

- A Ribbon-cutting ceremony for the official commissioning of the Robert Travis 49.8 kw solar electric system has been scheduled for Tuesday, October 16 at 1 pm.
- Projected delivery of a map of municipal properties for community owned solar power stations which would complete the triad inventory of wind, sun and bio-mass resources of Sullivan County. These studies establish a data driven platform for major development of an energy efficiency and renewable energy industry of substantial size.
- Budget submittal for 2013 which includes an increase from \$65,000 to \$130,000 with specific costs related to specific outcomes.

**RESOLUTION NO. -12 INTRODUCED BY THE AGRICULTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE REQUESTING GOVERNOR CUOMO TO FORMULATE A STRATEGIC DAIRY INDUSTRY PLAN FOR THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

**WHEREAS**, for generations, the dairy industry has been an economic anchor for Sullivan County and upstate New York; and

**WHEREAS**, the recent explosive growth of Chobani Yogurt in Chenango County has demonstrated the enormous continued potential of dairy manufacturing in New York State; and

**WHEREAS**, most dairy farmers have not benefited from the growth of yogurt manufacturing in New York; and

**WHEREAS**, dairy farmers continue to suffer from lack of profitability; and

**WHEREAS**, dairy manufacturers continue to suffer from a lack of milk availability; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a lack of consensus and understanding on how to grow New York's dairy industry in a way that benefits both farmers and manufacturers; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Wisconsin has demonstrated the value of a statewide strategic plan to grow milk supply in a way that benefits both farmers and manufacturers.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Sullivan County Legislature requests that Governor Andrew M. Cuomo form a committee of representatives of dairy farmers, dairy cooperatives and dairy manufacturers to develop a straightforward strategic plan to grow the dairy industry in New York State in a way that benefits both farmers and manufacturers; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Clerk of this Legislature shall forward certified copies of this Resolution to Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, Assemblywoman Aileen M. Gunther, and Senator John J. Bonacic.

