



Sullivan County Agriculture and Sustainability Policy Committee

March 7, 2013 AGENDA
2:00 PM

Committee Members:

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

Call to Order

Attendance

Reports:

1. Office of Sustainable Energy (OSE) Monthly Report- Carol Roig & Stephen Stuart
2. Agricultural Planner Report/Ag Advisory Board Monthly Report- Jen Mall
3. Update – DPW

Presentation:

1. Renewable Energy Credits

Discussion:

1. Small Business Roadmap – Include Ag Business
2. SUNY New Paltz "Growing Agriculture" Conference- Cindy Gieger, Chair

Resolutions:

1. To Adopt a Sullivan County Small Business Road Map and Place the same on the County's Web-site.

Public Comment

Adjourn

OSE Activities Report for March, 2013

Reporting on February 2013 activities

I. Energy Management for SC Facilities

Begin exploration of options for standby electricity utilizing the existing PV arrays at Travis and Mobility Management Center.

- The right system could help reduce peak demand at county facilities by utilizing the stored excess energy to reduce the peak demand loads of County operations.

Begin exploring concept of a space symposium to help plan response to growing space needs of County operations.

- In looking forward at possible deep energy retrofits at the Liberty Health Care Campus to lower energy demand, and in reviewing the Capital Budget Plan, there are many references to re-configuring space.
- A space symposium would be a guided discussion among the entities involved and a unified plan developed to meet the current and future space needs. This will help Sullivan County develop and implement an orderly and fiscally manageable and energy efficient infrastructure plan.

Gathering ideas for repair/replace atrium skylight at Government Center.

- Possible plans would include developing the skylight into a PV array to help offset electricity costs at the GC.

II. SC Climate Action Plan

The CAP Advisory Board is moving into the stage of drafting specific recommended measures in the general topic areas: Energy, Transportation, Materials Management and Land/Water Use.

- CAP Advisory Board met February 28, 2013. Meeting notes will be distributed at the Sustainable Policy Committee Meeting.

III. MHRP

- Executive Summary and draft version of the Mid-Hudson Sustainability Plan are now available.
- SC's formal endorsement of the general goals and concept of the plan complete.

IV. Research

Carol Roig and Stephen Stuart attended a symposium at NYU Law School on Friday, February 15, 2013, entitled *Green for Green: The Business and Law of Renewable Energy Finance*. The day-long symposium explored legal and practical issues of private financing for renewable energy projects for municipalities. Background research papers by the symposium presenters are available at the OSE Office.

Major concerns explored included: how to control the cost of PV development – cost per megawatt is 5x greater for solar than for wind; whether the Production Tax Credit be permanent; and ways in which government can remove barriers to private investment.

Some upcoming possible federal actions affecting renewables:

- EPA emission standards placed on power plants via Clean Air Act;
- Department of the Interior – more rapid permitting of RE projects;
- Treasury – Real Estate Investment Trusts possibly allowed to develop PV farms;
- Department of Energy continues to look for new technologies for renewables.

At the seminar, we met the legal counsel for Fulcrum Solar, a start-up company wanting to locate in the Town of Cochection. Mission of the company is to develop pre-engineered balance of system for PV, both on and off grid. They are looking at strategic way to lower the cost of installation of PV. SASD will engage company to help them explore this further in the county.

V. Energy Efficiency “Concept of the Month”

Solar parking covers.

Ag Planner Projects:

Dairy Processing RBEG: Last week the Legislature adopted a solution authorizing a contract with Sullivan County Dairy Products, LLC for the lease of dairy processing equipment. Since that time I have been working with the firm, the evaluation team, and the County's Purchasing and Legal Departments to develop contract language. I have also been working with the USDA to ensure that we continue to meet all requirements of the grant.

Microenterprise Assistance Program: Continued administration of ag projects. In February the MAP Review Committee approved increasing grant awards to two agricultural businesses, utilizing grant funds that had been declined by another grantee earlier in the process. Currently drafting the required grant modification agreements for execution by the County Manager.

Sullivan County Farmland Protection Planning Grant: Received approval from NYSDAM of revised project scope and budget. Prepared revised documents for incorporation into contract, currently awaiting contract from NYSDAM. Began developing RFQ to solicit professional services to assist with the plan update.

Red Meat Processing Facility: Continuing to work on the transfer of RBOG from the Ag LDC to the IDA. Regular communication with contacts at USDA-RD to ensure that the grant transfers comply with USDA regulations, and to ensure grant extensions where necessary. Continued work on Ag LDC dissolution. Facilitating communication between IDA and Ag Advisory Board regarding the red meat facility.

REAP Board: REAP Board met on February 13. No updates on continued existence of REAP Zones, pending passage of Farm Bill. Next meeting May 1.

Recent Events & Happenings:

Ag Advisory Board: planned red meat processing roundtable, to coordinate technical assistance and program staff efforts toward advancing livestock processing and help guide the County in areas where additional support is needed. Roundtable was to be held on February 27, but has been postponed until March due to weather.

Upper Delaware River Roundtable: As part of the UDRR's dairy working group, I will meet with other members on March 4 to exchange information and prepare for the next UDRR Ag Roundtable on March 7.

Bethel and Liberty Farmland Protection Plan Implementation Committees: attended Liberty committee meeting on February 13 and Bethel committee meeting on February 20th. Continued support of these municipal efforts to implement their farmland protection plans.

Sullivan County Wellness Committee: Discussion of farm to school efforts and WIC-accessible farmers markets is ongoing. Wellness Committee meeting scheduled for February 27 was postponed due to weather.

Upcoming Events:

Next UDRR Ag Roundtable: March 7th 2013.

Ag Advisory Board: Red meat processing roundtable in March (date TBD)

Pure Catskills Farm to Market Connection: March 24th 2013, CVI Building. A day of networking and education about the most current topics in direct marketing. Farmers who attend will meet and make connections with buyers of all scales.

RESOLUTION # ____ 13 INTRODUCED BY THE AGRICULTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE TO ADOPT A SULLIVAN COUNTY SMALL BUSINESS ROAD MAP AND PLACE THE SAME ON THE COUNTY’S WEB-SITE

WHEREAS, the creation, development and successful operation of small businesses is a vital part of the economy of Sullivan County, and

WHEREAS, there are many individuals in Sullivan County who have small business dreams which could lead to successful small businesses if those individuals were able to navigate the paths and understand the requirements involved in starting a small business, and

WHEREAS, the process of starting and developing a small business can be imposing and difficult for those with no prior experience, and

WHEREAS, in the process of creating and developing a small business there are a number of practical steps which an individual should know and pursue, and

WHEREAS, at present there is no central location where one can find the check lists and resources which anyone attempting to start a small business should have at the outset, and

WHEREAS, Legislator Geiger, with the assistance of experts in the field, has put together a Small Business Road Map which sets forth the check lists and relevant resources both required and desirable in starting a small business, and

WHEREAS, the aforesaid Small Business Roadmap Should be made readily available to anyone in the County who may wish to start a small business.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Sullivan County Legislature hereby adopts the aforesaid Road Map, as it may be updated from time to time, as the Sullivan County Small Business Road Map.
2. The Legislature directs that the Sullivan County Small Business Road Map be prominently placed on the County’s Web-Site.
3. In an effort to assist persons in the County to start small businesses, the County shall, by way of press releases and references by officials at appropriate venues, call the attention of persons in the County to the existence of the Sullivan County Small Business Roadmap on the County’s Web-Site.

Moved by _____,
Seconded by _____,
and adopted on motion _____, 2013