



Sullivan County Agriculture and Sustainability Policy Committee

October 2, 2014 AGENDA

2:00 PM

Committee Members:

Cindy Kurpil Gieger, Chair, Cora Edwards, Vice-Chair, Gene Benson, Alan Sorensen, Kitty Vetter

Call to Order

Attendance

Comments: Committee Chair

Public Comment

Reports:

1. Office of Sustainable Energy (OSE) Monthly Report- Carol Roig & Stephen Stuart
2. Agricultural Report- Melinda Meddaugh
3. IDA Update – Red Meat Processing Facility

Presentation: None

Discussion:

1. Farm to School Summit/Wellness Committee
2. C-Pace Program

Resolutions: None

Adjourn

OSE Activities Report for October 2014

Reporting on September 2014 activities

I. ENERGY MANAGEMENT FOR SC FACILITIES

NYPA Potential for HVAC replacement at SC Government Center – In progress.

- Stephen conferred with Commissioner McAndrew to respond to the NYPA proposal and participated in a conference call on September 16 to discuss with PRES Engineering.

Solar PPA – In progress. Awaiting NYSERDA decision on awarding of incentives.

II. Energy Improvement Corporation/C-PACE Program

After the presentation by Elyssa Rothe and Mark Thielking of the Energy Improvement Corporation (EIC) and Energize NY on August 21st, OSE reached out to the County Attorney's office to offer any assistance needed to make sure any remaining questions or concerns had been addressed.

Next steps:

- County to draft local law, membership agreement, letter to EIC requesting membership.

III. SC CLIMATE ACTION PLAN/CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES

Work continues on organizing working groups to address the topics to be included in Part 2, from the point of view of various constituent categories including towns and villages, business owners, community institutions, schools, residential property owners and the general public.

- DEC has published a 300pp guidance document for municipalities that have joined the CSC Program and want to work towards certification. We are reviewing this document as well as new planning documents from other communities that may help inform our SC plan and plans devised by our CSC towns and villages.
- Carol Roig met with members of the Public Health Advisory Board on Wednesday, September 15th to explain the goals of the plan and to discuss the many synergies between public health and planning for climate change.
- We are researching methodology, software tools and availability of databases for conducting life cycle analysis of various energy, building and purchasing options to help the County make the best decisions.

IV. INFORMATIONAL OUTREACH

Concentrated Solar Power: In response to questions at the September committee meeting, we have prepared a background paper on Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) and the bird deaths at a facility in the Mojave Desert. Key points:

- Facility in question is not a conventional photovoltaic (PV) array, but rather a solar thermal installation using concentrated solar power (CSP) to produce steam for industrial use.
- This is not the optimal technology for electricity production.

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA): In collaboration with Catskill Mountainkeeper, SASD has helped organize a presentation on September 30 at Bethel Senior Center by Citizens for Local Power, a grassroots group based in Rosendale, NY. The presentation featured panelists from several communities that have established energy procurement programs that allow local governments to

pool the electric load of residents, businesses and community institutions to reduce electricity rates, buy energy from renewable resources, and encourage the development of local generation.

Sullivan County Get \$et Energy Symposium October 22nd at SUNY Sullivan: This informational event is organized by RUPCO, hosted by SUNY Sullivan, and involves SC Planning, Catskill Mountainkeeper, Cornell Cooperative and other SC organizations. Panels will focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy options for residential, commercial and municipal applications. Vendors are invited to table at the event. We are working to make sure SC-based contractors are well represented at the event.

Solarize Sullivan: We are working in collaboration with Catskill Mountainkeeper and other organizations on the rollout of a bulk purchase program that will reduce the price of solar panels and installations for residential and commercial buildings.

Carol Roig and Stephen Stuart
9-23-14

CCE/Planning AG REPORT:

Farmland Protection Plan Update: The committee has developed a timeline for completion and adoption of the plan. We are currently reviewing the draft plan. We are currently in the process of arranging a partner meeting and a public meeting to present the plan tentatively for the 1st week of November. We plan to present to the legislature in November and the Ag & Sustainability Committee in December. We hope to have the plan completed and reviewed by the Legislature for adoption at the December meeting.

CDBG Grant: Planning worked to submit a \$100,000 grant for a Dairy processing Project in Bethel. The project would entail producing local yogurt with milk sourced by local dairy farmers.

Educational Programming: CCE recently hosted a corn plot field day with over 60 attendees. CCE participated in the Bethel Woods Harvest Festival Farm Fest on September 14th, hosting activities for kids, animals and information on SC Agriculture. CCE is coordinating a Orchard Management Workshop for October and developing a farmer healthcare seminar for November. See the list below for additional 2014 programming. CCE is also working with the FSA to assist Dairy Farmers to learn about the new Milk Protection Program through the Farm Bill. We currently hosted a webinar for dairy farmers and will host an additional workshop in October to assist dairy farmers who are interested in enrolling in the program.

Ag Districts: We received the formal confirmation that the SC parcels recommended to be included in Ag District #4 were approved. Letters went out to landowners and municipalities this week.

In House Assistance- Assistance included information on:

- Soil Testing assistance
- Loan and grant information
- Information on Agriculture Districts & Agriculture Assessments
- Assistance with USDA crop registration
- Assistance with FSA/NRCS programs
- Assistance with Dairy Processing Requirements & equipment
- Assistance with general Beginner Farmer information
- Provided assistance with business planning information
- Assistance with identifying diseases/pests
- Assistance with Pesticide Credit information
- USDA Milk Margin Protection Program
- Animal Health

Upcoming Classes for Remainder of 2014

October 3-4th Orchard Management Workshop

October 16th Processing & Marketing of Livestock

October 25th Beef Quality Assurance

November TBD Insurance Coverage for your Farm

November TBD Farmer Health Insurance Seminar

November 13th Winter Greens/Tomatoes for High Tunnels

November 22nd Maple Syrup School

December 4th Dairy Lunch and Learn

December 8th Farm Funding Opportunities