



Sullivan County Agriculture and Sustainability Policy Committee

January 15, 2015 AGENDA

1:30 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

Presentation:

1. Center for Agricultural Development and Entrepreneurship (CADE)

Discussion:

1. NYS Solar Initiatives/Ban on Hydrofracking
2. Next Steps for Implementation of the Farmland Protection Plan

Resolutions: None

Adjourn

OSE Activities Report for January 2015
Reporting on December 2014 activities

I. ENERGY MANAGEMENT FOR SC FACILITIES

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

- “Kick-off” meeting December 16th to outline scope for next phase of the work. NYPA agreed to incorporate analysis of window films and other envelope measures, and to include skylight replacement and potential solar technology in connection with the skylight. We also discussed the potential timeframe and duration for various possible HVAC replacements; how long office spaces would have to be vacated as the work is done; how this would be organized and sequenced for minimal disruption to County staff.

Solar PPA – NYSERDA awarded Solar City \$900,000 in incentives to develop the 2MW solar array at the Liberty Health Complex.

- SASD continues to work with the County Manager and Commissioner of Public Works to provide details of location and configuration of the solar installation.
- The SC County Attorney’s office is reviewing the paperwork. At the November meeting of the Ag and Sustainability Committee, the County Attorney outlined the need for a municipal law that would enable the County to enter into a 20 year agreement to purchase electricity from Solar City through the PPA contract.
- Paperwork needs to be completed and submitted to NYSERDA by mid-January.

Main Street Programs 2015 – with SCDPEM

- Working with Jill Weyer and Travis North to coordinate energy assessments and consultation for Monticello Main Street program participants. We will work with DPEM and NYSERDA to set up an informational meeting for property owners.

II. SC CLIMATE ACTION PLAN/CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES

- We continue to work in depth with Bethel and Lumberland to develop projects and action plans tailored to each of these municipalities.
- The Town of Delaware is pursuing energy assessments through Solomon Energy, a NYS-based company that also does solar installations.
- SASD met with Lee Smith of American Solar on December 17th at the Monticello offices of Aileen Gunther. Mav Moorhead, Ginny Boyle and Isaac Green Diebboll of the Town of Delaware energy committee also attended. Lee provided information about his company’s solar installation efforts, which are based on an Energy Performance Contract that results in ownership rather than a PPA leasing arrangement.

III. RESEARCH AND INFORMATIONAL OUTREACH

Energy Performance Contracting: We continue to research companies that provide EPC as a mechanism for municipalities to achieve high level energy retrofits at no up-front cost. Our goal is to give the County a range of options to help achieve the best cost savings and greatest reductions in GHG emissions as outlined in the Climate Action Plan.

Community Choice Aggregation: SASD continues to research and explore this new model for the creation of small utility-scale community owned electricity generation from renewable sources, facilitated by upcoming regulatory changes planned by the NYS Public Service Commission (PSC). Cost reduction and greater grid resiliency are the main goals.

- Governor Cuomo has vetoed the Paulin bill, which would have authorized a pilot program in Westchester. Word is that the Governor favors state-wide implementation, which would be facilitated by the Cahill bill now under consideration. We will continue to study these developments.
- The PSC staff report and proposal, *Reforming the Energy Vision (REV)*, is available from the OSE office or at <http://www3.dps.ny.gov/W/PSCWeb.nsf/All/26BE8A93967E604785257CC40066B91A?OpenDocument>

The NYSERDA New York Statewide Winter Energy Tour. On January 22nd at SUNY Purchase, NYSERDA will present Governor Cuomo's energy vision and information about NY Prize -- a new \$40 million competition to enlist communities to advance plans for local power infrastructure designed to promote clean energy, reliability, resiliency, and affordability. Sessions will bring together the New York energy leadership team, led by Richard Kauffman, Chairman of Energy and Finance for Governor Cuomo. The presentations should appeal to community leaders, municipal representatives, critical care facility managers, business leaders, innovators, investors, technology representatives, and others interested, to hear about new initiatives, including regional microgrid opportunities. NY Prize is part of New York State's comprehensive effort to build a cleaner, more resilient, and affordable energy system. This trailblazing approach is designed to rapidly integrate clean energy -- promoting more efficient use of energy, deeper penetration of renewable energy resources such as wind and solar, and wider deployment of "distributed" energy resources, such as microgrids, on-site power supplies, and energy storage.

Energy Improvement Corporation/C-PACE Program: SASD reached out to Ulster County legislators and staff to explore their progress with C-PACE financing of energy improvements and renewable energy installations for county businesses.

The Weather Project in 2015: SASD and NACL Theatre in Highland Lake are pursuing funding to continue this collaboration in 2015 and 2016. Plans include a regional tour of the play, including Brooklyn NY; after show seminars and community conversations led by SASD; and a series of educational presentations developed by SASD.

Carol Roig and Stephen Stuart
1-5-2015

Farmland Protection Plan Update: The FLPP was adopted in December. Staff are working to develop a brochure as a form of outreach for the plan and for agriculture in general. Staff are also working to develop the resource section of the appendix into a user friendly guide that can then be distributed to existing and beginning farmers. Staff are already in the progress of implementing strategies from the plan. These include developing rackcards for the public listing different farm products, such as Christmas Tree Farms, CSA's, farm stands and maple producers and developing a Sullivan County Beginner Farmer Manual

Dairy Processing Project. CCE and planning staff are in the process of coordinating the details for the Catskill Mountain Dairies yogurt project for the project. Planning also received a \$100,000 2013 CFA grant for the project.

Catskill Comfort: Planning received a \$50,000 grant to assist the expansion of a Maple Farm (Catskill Comfort) in Neversink. Staff are currently in the process of working out the details of the contract.

Educational Programming: CCE and Planning hosted a Farm Funding workshop on December 8th. There were over 30 participants in attendance. Representatives from Planning, IDA, Catskill Mountainkeeper, FSA, NRCS and NYSEG discussed their different programs. Attendees also received a folder with additional farm funding information. CCE Staff are in the process of developing programming for 2015 based off the Farmland Protection Plan, CCE's Work Plan and input from the farming community. Programs for 2015 include a Beginner Farmer series, agri-business and farm management classes, High Tunnel Classes, Dairy/Livestock classes, Farm Bill classes, Processing classes, Cover Crops/No-Till Classes, along with other specialty crops.

Farm to School: CCE is working with Public Health, Sullivan Renaissance, BOCES and the Rural Health Network to jumpstart the Farm to School subcommittee. There will be more to report on next month. Cornell Cooperative Extension also has a new GAP's (Good Agricultural Practices) educator, based out of CCE Orange and serving the Hudson Valley region, who will work with farmers to receive their GAP's certification and training, which is a requirement to sell farm products to schools.

Greenhouse/High Tunnel: CCE is in the process of working with Sullivan Renaissance and BOCES to develop an Operational Plan for the High Tunnel/Greenhouse project. The plan will include a production timeline, potential classes and coordination of the use of the facilities. CCE anticipates growing tomatoes, greens and cucumbers in the High Tunnel.

Agri-Business Revolving Loan Fund: CCE and Planning staff are in the process of reviewing potential applications for this loan program. Staff have been doing extensive outreach on this program in order to attract new farmers. Staff are also in the process of completing annual site visits.

In House Assistance: Assistance included information on:

- Assistance with Livestock production
- Loan and grant information, specifically info on the County Agri-Business Revolving Loan Fund
- Information on Agriculture Districts & Agriculture Assessments
- Assistance with Dairy Processing Requirements & equipment
- Assistance with general Beginner Farmer information
- Provided assistance with business planning information
- Assistance with identifying diseases/pests
- Animal Health
- Organic Certification
- Assistance with info on processing facilities
- Information on land use resources

Upcoming CCE Classes for 2015:

Agri-Business Tax Workshop, February 4th

Farmers Market Nutrition Webinar, February 5th

Succession and Estate Planning, March 3rd

