

Sullivan County Agriculture and Sustainability Policy Committee

November 9, 2017 AGENDA 12:30 PM

Committee Members:

Catherine Owens, Chair, Nadia Rasjz, Vice-Chair, Mark McCarthy, Terri Ward, Scott Samuelson

Call to Order

Attendance

Comments: Committee Chair

Reports:

1. Office of Sustainable Energy – Heather Brown

2. Parks and Recreation-Brian Scardefield

3. Agricultural Report- Melinda Meddaugh

Presentation: None

Discussion: None

Resolutions: None

Public Comment

Adjourn



Sullivan County Office of Sustainable Energy SULLIVAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

100 NORTH STREET PO BOX 5012 MONTICELLO, NY 12701-5192

Sullivan County Office of Sustainable Energy Monthly Report for October 2017

Electric Vehicles

- Coordinated execution of contract with the Town of Bethel for the EV Infrastructure Reimbursement program.
- Met with staff from Public Works as well as Grants Administration to coordinate efforts to submit for funding to the NYS DEC for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment at the Government Center

Solarize Sullivan

 Solarize Sullivan launched its community solar program, which is expected to save participants 10% on their electric bills.

Outreach

- The Village of Monticello is now a Climate Smart Community, having adopted the pledge in October. OSE will be working with the Village to identify action items that have already been completed as well as potential future projects and/or initiatives.
- Continued to participate in discussions with representatives from the Ethelbert B. Crawford Library with regard to their solar charging kiosk.
- We continue to refine the resource guide and anticipate that it will go to print in early December.

Meetings/Events

- Attended "Paving the Way to Broadway" event at the Ethelbert B. Crawford Library.
- Participated in training for new software timekeeping and agenda submissions
- Met with the Sustainability Director for SCCC and the Fire Training Coordinator to discuss potential partnerships to bring training to our emergency services/first responders

- Met with representatives at Sullivan Renaissance to discuss upcoming initiatives of both organizations and potential collaborations.
- Attended board meeting of the Village of Monticello to discuss the Climate Smart Communities Program
- Met with representatives from the Monticello Housing Authority to discuss incentives for potential energy efficiency project and building improvements.
- All OSE offices are now located on the 2nd floor of the Government Center. Thank you to the Division of Public Works for all of their work!



COUNTY OF SULLIVAN Parks and Recreation

SULLIVAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

100 NORTH STREET PO BOX 5012 MONTICELLO, NY 12701

Monthly Report

Agriculture & Sustainability Committee Meeting – November 9, 2017

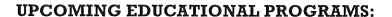
• Fort Delaware: The Fort Delaware staff and DPW have been putting everything away in the cabins for the winter months. We pruned a lot of the brush that was starting to get overgrown around the cabins.

The Fort manager attended a Colonial Trade Faire at Historic Schoenbrunn Village in Ohio that is a similar museum to Fort Delaware. She came back with a lot of connections and ideas for our Fort that we want to implement.

All schools have been sent the flyers for our 2018 Fort Delaware Student Days. We have some schools that have already contacted us and scheduled their trip.

- DPW have been working on closing up the parks and facilities for the winter and completing maintenance projects.
- Shared Services: I have been meeting on a weekly basis with the Town of Liberty Park and Recreation staff and Town Supervisor.
- John Conway contacted me and would like to meet to discuss the possibility of working together on a project that would entail Interpretive Signage and Publication through funding The Delaware Company received. We are going to come up with a project that would enhance the Minisink Battleground Park.
- Hurleyville Cultural Center: The DPW staff have been changing ceiling lights that were out at
 the Hurleyville Cultural Center and we are working on getting more lighting for the outdoor
 pathway and parking lots. We are also replacing flooring in the basement that had lifted from the
 flooding due to the broken pipe in the basement. I put an ad out for an attendant to cover the
 Sunday shift and fill in where needed.
- I attended the D&H Transportation Heritage Council meeting which is a group that helps promote and preserve the D&H canal. The county is a member of the group. The group is currently coming up with informational DVD's which will include the Counties section of the trail in the near future.

OCTOBER 2017 AGRICULTURE REPORT







- Business Planning Workshop, November 29th
- Capturing Money Using Quickbooks, December 4th & 11th
- Finding the Right Funding for your Farm, December 7th

CATSKILLS KITCHEN FOOD INCUBATOR PROGRAM

The kitchen continues to gain interest and new users. Potential users have toured the kitchen and we receive calls from interested users on a regular basis. We are hosting the 2nd annual Catskills Farm and Food Conference on November 3rd, along with a business planning workshop on November 29th. We currently have 2 new users for the kitchen producing granola and sauces.

FARM TO SCHOOL PROJECT

October is Farm to School month. Staff participated in a Taste Test Thursday at Liberty Central School. Students had the opportunity to sample a new menu item using local farm products. The district intends to offer a Taste Test Thursday 1x per month. CCESC also submitted a NYS Farm to School grant on behalf of the Monticello, Fallsburg, Liberty and BOCES school district. The grant proposed to hire a Farm to School Coordinator to assist with coordinating farm to school initiatives such as taste test, menu development, procurement, the development of educational resources and connecting buyers to farmers.

VALUE - ADDED DAIRY PROCESSING PROJECT

The new facility is currently producing yogurt and working on fine tuning the product. However, the facility is able to produce their own bottled milk. Once the recipe has been finalized we will schedule a ribbon cutting ceremony. We are currently working through completing the reporting paperwork for the USDA and CDBG grant programs.

Agri-Business Retention & Expansion Program:

The Agriculture Coordinator, with assistance through existing staff, accomplished the following:

- Farm Assistance: Assisted 25 farms through phone and email and conducted 10 field visits. Assistance includes business planning, beef production, specialty crop production, hay and soil testing, Assisted over 100 consumers with agriculture related phone calls and emails.
- **Programming: Upcoming ag business** programs include Quickbooks, funding and business planning. We recently developed a business plan template specific to farmers.

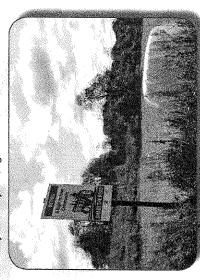
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Staff assisted producers with the following:

- Soil Testing: 19 soil tests were conducted in October and soil amendment recommendations discussed.
- Forage Testing: 6 forage tests were conducted in October.
- Business Planning Support: Staff are working with new farmers and farmers looking to expand on business planning in the areas of high tunnel production, beef, and specialty crops. Staff are working to develop a model Business Plan template.
- Beginner Farmer: Staff have conducted field visits and meetings with landowners looking to start farming. Staff has educated beginning farmers in the areas of ag assessment, ag districts and production needs
- Crop production: Staff have been assisting farmers with options for potential for specialty crop production.

RIGHT TO FARM LAW: IN A NUTSHELL

Written by Nat Tompkins, Ag Business Coordinator



and closes it becomes easter to read. The top reads "Bethal" followed by "A Right to Farm Community" below that There's a green and white silicotette of a farmer ending to their fields on a tractor, with the words "Share the Road" at the bottom. starting to put up Right to Farm signs all over Sullivan County, and we're here to mes. Every little house, business, or street sign blend together stits yet, but you know it's green and white. As you draw closer something new that wasn't there before. As you get closer, you is details. It's rectangular, longer than it is wide. You can't quite it a few times. Then all of a sudden, you're snapped out of your had this moment? You're driving on some road you've gone from? Maybe you haven't seen these signs yet, but you might soon! Towns are that's new." you think to yourself. But what is it? And where did it come help you understand what that means. after you drive trance! There's start to notice make out the v

opportunities to run a successful farm bust-ness. To do this, Right to Farm laws A Right to Farm (RTF) law is a law where the title pretty much speaks for itself If helps to protect and promote the farmer's right to farm, and maintains their can be created by a town or county in order to promote farming activities.

Right to Farm laws can vary slightly between each town. For example, the Town essential enterprise and an important industry which enhances the economic of Bethel's Right to Farm law states "The Town Board recognizes farming is an base, natural environment and quality of tife in the Town of Bethel". The town board further declares that it "shall be the policy of this Town to encourage agriculture and foster understanding by all residents of the necessary day-to-day operations involved in farming and accessary day-

necessary for the business of farming to proceed and be undertaken free of deemed to be a nuisance and to allow agricultural practices inherent to and unreasonable and unwarranted interference or restriction".

neighbors, many Right to Farm laws require realtors to inform prospective buyers A town's Right to Farm law contains provisions for farmers to conduct reasonable dust, noise, and odor. Many Right to Farm laws also include language regarding Remember, as we mentioned earlier, each municipality's Right to Farm law may and necessary agricultural practices and does not constitute a threat to public controversy arise that cannot be settled between the neighbor and the farmer, differ slightly, so please check with your municipality regarding exactly what controversies between farm and non-farm neighbors. For example, should a health and safety. In order to promote better relations between farmers and about such laws, and that farming activities may occur, possibly resulting in either party may submit the controversy to a dispute resolution committee. your town's Right to Farm law says.

available supply of food. Agriculture can be a messy, noisy, and smelly endeavor. The primary reason these protections are in place is that farmers grow our food, lawsuits for doing activities they need to do in order to raise livestock or grow and we need to protect their ability to do their work in order to have a readily If these protections weren't in place, farmers could incur all sorts of nuisance crops. Residents may want towns to impose restrictions on them,

"As a farmer, I know how dangerous it is to "share the road" for ALL of us to travel! Thank you to Extension and Sullivan awareness of these drivers and help make our roads safer County's Planning Department for making that possible.' with other motorists. These signs, I hope, will raise the

Thomas R. Bose, Town of Callicoon Supervisor

a farmer's ability to do their work, there would likely be very few farms left. Once running, if local towns were to pass regulations that could unreasonably obstruct mition of the value of agriculture and farmland, and to making it difficult to make a living. Farmers already meet many challenges on a offarmland in Sullivan County, Cornell Cooperative Extension Sullivan County, daily basis. Between never knowing what price the goods you produce will go for, unpredictable weather, and any number of other obstacles that can occur that ever gets planted in the ground is blacktop. To facilitate the preservation in general, it's a very tough and fragile thing to keep a farm business up and farm land gets bought up by non-agricultural buyers, typically the last thing municipalities have been working hard to put up Right to Farm signs and to Sullivan County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, and various lovely road siggs that you may have reemonf, Rockland, Mamakaing, Neversink, Liberty, Cochecton, Delaware emberland, and Forestburgh) have RTF laws enacted. Unfortunately, these One of the goals of the Sullivan County Agricultural and Farmland Protec increase constituent understanding of best farm management practices. seen while out and about. Eleven out of the 16 minney

for both parties involved. In order to narrow this gap, the County's agricultural importance of agriculture in Sullivan County, Additional educational materials they encounter a conflict with a farming neighbor. This can lead to frustration a huge gap in public awareness about the existence of these laws. Most of the line, folks don't realize that they're living in a Right to Farm Community until towns. Our hope is that these signs will serve as visual reminders about the agencies partnered with municipalities to install RTF signs within those 11 and opportunities are on the horizon in 2018.

public knows about these laws too. After all, they are also a part of the community emember this, that ten minute delay would only get you two blocks further down Sullivan County, and it's important to protect farmers from harmful regulations or audience. If realtors are aware that the property they are showing is in a Right to lawsuits that may be brought against them for doing their jobs. It's important the they live in, and should know how to coexist and work with farmers who produce information on RTF laws, the municipalities with the laws in place, and will soon Farm town, they can make the potential homeowners aware of that, and answer in NYC. So slow down, crank up some tunes on your radio, enjoy the scenery town officials. This workshop helps disperse information on the laws to a wide knowledgeable way, they'll be able to explain it to town residents that may be ongoing workshop opportunity, and will be offering another in winter of 2018. questions about the laws, and where they may be implemented, they can visit wondering about what farmers can and cannot do. We plan on making this an Right to Farm laws exist for a reason. Farming is a vital part of the economy in the food supply. The next time you're stuck behind a tractor for two miles, just Cornell Cooperative Extension Sullivan County has updated its website with sullivancce org or contact their local municipal offices to get the information questions the buyers may have. If town officials can speak about the law in a include additional information on agricultural districts. When people have they need. CCE has also held a workshop on RTF laws for both realtor and around you, and share the road with farmers.

Sullivan County Right to Farm signs were designed by Dorene Warner from WDesign in Barryville NY and are produced by Keller Signs in Monticello.



Extension Connection November 2017

Page 15