

Caroline Agriculture Committee Meeting Minutes of June 2, 2022

The Caroline Agriculture Committee meeting was held in person at the Brookton's Market, called to order at 7:11 PM

Attendance:

Liaison to Agriculture Committee, Councilmember Katherine Goldberg
Agriculture Committee Chair Andrew Dygert
Agriculture Committee member Don Barber
Agriculture Committee member Tony Tavelli
Agriculture Committee member Caleb Scott
Agriculture Committee member Pete Hoyt
Agriculture Committee member Emily Adams
Agriculture Committee member Hannah Wyllie
Agriculture Committee member Wil Lawrence
Community member Erica Frenay
Community member Anne Dygert

Recording Secretary:

Councilmember Katherine Goldberg

Agenda & Discussion

Right To Farm signage - committee discussed locations for signage and developed a list of desired locations. Acknowledged multiple levels of jurisdiction - town, county, state roads. Discussed possibility of erecting signage on private land; several committee members offered their parcels and suggested others.

Correspondence related to RTF signage and request for particular locations was sent via email to Highway Superintendent Bobby Spencer on June 6, 2022

Correspondence also sent to County Highway Department related to the same.

Welcome Wil Lawrence to the Ag Committee; discussed whether members would be added to committee via resolution; agreed that all are welcome, welcomed and re-welcomed all to the committee. Reiterated that anyone can join the Ag Committee via email to Town Clerk expressing interest.

Right to Farm Law: whether/how to revise
Agreed that RTF should be as broad as possible, inclusive

Discussed services that support farming: fencing, ag, supply, "ag adjacent businesses", "farm-related industries"

Should there be a restriction on size? (related to zoning permissions)

Discussed benefits/burdens of these businesses regulated as industry versus farming support

Recommend expand section 3 of RTF law to include support services; specifically indicate that industry can be independent from a farm parcel

Suggest look at use table for zoning commission to identify any missing industries/businesses. If not on use table, it is not allowed.

Response from Nan & Zoning Commission

Written statement will be added to the minutes of this meeting for public review.

Summary: current zoning efforts are an attempt to preserve rural land and rural character; however, this is not agricultural zoning.

Ag Committee members expressed their response to this - i.e., "surprised", "taken aback", "felt like a slap in the face", "insulting"

Ag Committee members also expressed appreciation that this has been asserted in a clear & concise way, since preservation of agricultural land has been presented as justification for zoning. Given current written communication from Nan/Zoning Commission, this feels like miscommunication that should be corrected/clarified.

Does Caroline want Agricultural zoning? What would that look like? How is that different from the current proposed zoning?

Mission/Vision of Ag in Caroline - multilayered

- 1) community food resiliency perspective
- 2) protection - people growing food, nuisances, regulation
- 3) support - build culture of Agriculture, increase enthusiasm for Ag
- 4) education

Action steps/ideas to support the categories listed above:

- Education at farmers market - "Did You Know?" posters/displays
- CCE Tompkins County Farm Days
- Caroline Farm Day/Caroline Ag Day (name TBD)
- Educate consumer: food system plan will be released within next week, sign pledge that we (Ag Committee/Town of Caroline) agree with the food system plan
- Farmland Preservation Plan - Erica to research and contact Monika Roth
- suggest ways to improve/ease/optimize success of site plan review for Ag activity

Adjourn 8:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Katherine J. Goldberg

Reminder of list from previous meeting of action items/ideas:

- 1) Ag & land use education
- 2) "stay out of the way" of farming
- 3) website attractiveness
- 4) roadside attractiveness
- 5) farm directory
- 6) succession planning education

Reminder of Next steps for Ag Committee:

- Communicate on Google Group re. ideas for increasing Ag presence in town, small & actionable
- Communicate on Google Group re. RTF law revision
- Consider mission/vision effort, "workshopping"
- Continue to consider role of Ag Committee related to zoning
- Continue to consider Ag-related issues aside from zoning

Reminder of additional materials/information:

1) Of note, the Town of Danby's law related to "Right to Farm" is called "Right to Engage in Agricultural Activity" to more completely capture Ag activity which is not "farming"

http://danbyny.org/Documents/TownBoard_Law_200902.pdf

2) An additional step to consider in terms of maximizing the integration of agriculture into town planning efforts would be to have an Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan (Dryden's is linked here as an example); to be further explored by this committee

<https://dryden.ny.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/DRYDEN-DRAFT-DOCUMENT-6.30.pdf>

3) Related to the above, a reminder that Monika Roth presented to the town board on February 2; you may view the recording on the town website and/or request a copy of Monika's powerpoint from Katherine