

Town of Red Hook Ag & Open Space Committee
Minutes
March 30, 2009
7-9pm

Members present: Larry Thetford, Pete Hubbell, Rich Bieskynski, Kenny Migliorelli, & Mary Ann Johnson

Absent: Craig Vogel and Beth Mead

Others: Town Board member Robert McKeon

Discussion items:

Affordable farmland – continued from previous month. The basic concept is that even when development rights are sold, the remaining "ag value" is too high for "new" farmers to purchase the land. How can we make it affordable and available?

- ❖ A "non-farmer" can out-compete a new farmer in the "open" market.
- ❖ Ag value will differ depending on the product grown.
- ❖ Could separate out the homestead, but that creates other issues.
- ❖ A program would have to ensure the "new" farmer cannot make huge profits on future sales – similar to affordable housing programs which cap profits when units are sold for a second or third time.
- ❖ Need a farm plan from the potential buyer
- ❖ Where will the money come from? Land trusts, bonding?
- ❖ Long term rental preferable, but it is tenuous.
- ❖ Committee to review preemptive purchase agreement clause to be circulated by Pete Hubbell

New committee members: Rich indicated Bucky Coons is interested. Rich was encouraged to have Bucky submit a letter of interest to the Town Board. Mary Ann & Robert mentioned that Craig was very ill.

Ag Land Buffer Recommendation – the Committee was asked by the Intermunicipal Taskforce for a recommendation on a buffer size in situations where new residential development is adjacent to a farm.

- ❖ Committee is recommending a minimum of 200 feet

Mary Ann mentioned a "speed marketing" event on May 4th, 9:30am, at the Stissing House in Pine Plains hosted by the Dutchess County Bounty.

Farm brochure – committee recommended putting seasonal products on back. It was noted there was a short-term opportunity to print 1,000 for \$270.

Storing and preserving farm produce – request to see if we could get a speaker.