

## MINUTES

### GENESEE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD

Monday, March 21, 2022

A meeting of the Genesee County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board was held on Monday, March 21, 2022 at 10:30 AM in the Large Conference Room of Genesee County Building 2 at 3837 W. Main Street Rd. in the Town of Batavia.

Members in attendance: Christian Yunker, Jan Beglinger, Kevin Andrews, Steven Boldt, Dennis Phelps, and Felipe Oltramari. Staff present was: Erin Pence. Applicants present: Chris Snyder and Marvin Snyder. Presenter in attendance: Matt Halliday.

**The meeting was called to order at 10:34 AM.**

- 1. Approval of Minutes** – A motion to approve the minutes from November 16, 2021 was made by Felipe Oltramari, seconded by Jan Beglinger and carried 6-0.
- 2. Membership** – Felipe mentioned that Marcia Hirsch was the only person whose term had expired and that she hadn't responded to communicating regarding whether or not she wished to be reappointed to the board. She represented Agri-Business on the board. There was a brief discussion on taking action to find a new person to fill that spot on the Board.
- 3. Presentation by Matt Halliday from the Genesee Valley Conservancy** – Matt started the formal discussion to engage in Farmland Protection in the Genesee River watershed portion of Genesee County. The Genesee Valley Conservancy has decided to expand their efforts of private land conservation via the purchase of development rights into the portion of Genesee County that falls within the Genesee River watershed. He has the list of high priority farmland parcels created during the 2017 update of the Agriculture and Farmland Protection plan. Christian Yunker asked about the criteria used to determine the priority parcels, and Felipe communicated that it was in the plan documents and that he would send it to the Board after the meeting. Christian asked about the number of projects that the Conservancy expects to work on in Genesee County. Matt said that one or two projects is what is projected. There was a discussion about how the County could allocate money in the next budget and a enter into a contract with the Conservancy to assist their efforts towards farmland protection. Jan Beglinger mentioned that 10 or 15 years ago there was less will but with solar development there is much more interest, and she said that it would make sense to move forward with an interested farmer. Felipe asked Matt for contract wording and a desired funding amount, and Felipe mentioned that then the Board can make a recommendation to the Legislature. Matt asked about getting information from Soil and Water to confirm soils data for parcels of interest, and the board confirmed that that was possible. Felipe said he would give Jared at Soil and Water a call regarding moving forward with the relationship with the Genesee Valley Conservancy.

**4. Genesee County Agricultural District Annual Enrollment application from Marvin and Christine Snyder for parcel 14.-1-51 in the Town of Darien.**

Erin Pence presented the request for inclusion into Agricultural District No. 1 received during the Annual Enrollment period is shown below.

Requests for Inclusion into Agricultural District No. 3  
Application Received: 2/24/16

Tax Map Parcel #: 14.-1-51  
Town: Darien  
Acres: 52.8  
Owner(s): Marvin Snyder and Christine Snyder  
Current Land Use: hay crop, beef cattle, horses  
Approx. Prime Farmland Soils Composition: 0%  
Contiguous to Main Farm Operation? Yes

While the property does not contain Prime Farmland Soils, the property does contain significant coverage of Farmland of statewide importance. Additionally, Felipe mentioned that the other significant criteria considered is that the property be part of the main farm operation, and this property falls is the main portion of the Snyder's farming operation.

**A motion was made by Christian Yunker to recommend to the County Legislature that they approve the request for inclusion into Agricultural District No. 1. The motion was seconded by Jan Beglinger and carried 6-0.**

Christine Snyder asked a question about how their property was removed from the Agricultural District as they were fairly certain that it had been in the district when they purchased the property. Felipe said that they could do some research to determine the Agricultural District history of this parcel.

**5. Discussion of the Planning Director Felipe Oltramari's involvement in two Working Groups currently discussing solar energy siting and farmland protection at the state level** – Felipe handed out a selection of slides; the first few summarizing recently passed New York State laws towards renewable energy goals and development and other regulations towards those goals. He then reviewed his time as part of the Agricultural Technical Working Group that serves as an advisory body providing guidance towards responsible renewable energy development in a way that considers NYS's agricultural operations, lands, and farmers. He also reviewed his efforts with the NYS Farmland Protection working group that is working to deliver recommendations for minimizing the impact of renewal energy siting on productive agricultural soils on working farms. The group is poised to deliver their recommendations before April 2022.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:59 AM.**