

**Conservation/UW-EX Education Committee**  
**January 6, 2015**  
**Minutes**

**Committee members present:** Chairman Tom Rudolph, Bob Mott, Jim Intrepidi, Robb Jensen, and Scott Holewinski.

**Others present:** Jean Hansen, Fred Heider, Karl Jennrich, Sharda Gray, and Merry Lehner. No individuals from the public were in attendance.

**Call to order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Rudolph at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 6, 2015 at the Oneida County Courthouse – Committee Room #2, Second Floor. The meeting was properly posted and the facility is handicap accessible.

**Approve Agenda:** Motion by Jensen/Mott to approve today's amended agenda. All ayes; motion carried.

The Chairman officially announced and opened the Public Hearing portion of the Meeting.

**Oneida County Farmland Preservation Plan:** The Oneida County Farmland Preservation Plan (FPP) was read per item #3 on the agenda. It was noted that neither Fred Heider nor Jean Hansen received any calls or e-mails from interested parties regarding the Farmland Preservation Plan. There is a link on the website available if any interested party wishes to inquire further. Scott Holewinski met with Paul Sowinski, of Sowinski Farms, who voiced a concern to be addressed at this meeting. He referenced page 9 of the Oneida County Farmland Preservation Plan under Issues and Concerns, was regarding wells. He wanted the word "permits" inserted under the first bullet point regarding wells for agriculture. It should read: Concern that DNR is no longer issuing permits for lateral shallow wells or conventional wells for agriculture. Access to water for agricultural production is necessary, so without receiving approval for wells, then agricultural production will decline. The DNR is not issuing any permits for wells for agriculture at this time according to Sowinski.

Holewinski asked for clarification of how the tax credits worked, referencing page 32 under Implementation Tools, Farmland Preservation Income Tax Credits. For landowners to claim the credit their land must be zoned a particular way. If there is a Farmland Preservation Zoning and it is located in an Enterprise Area (EA), the tax credit is \$10/acre. Since there is no EA in Oneida County, nobody would receive this tax credit. If Oneida had zoned areas exclusive for agriculture, which it does not, a farmer could claim \$7.50/acre. One can only do this if you sign a contract with DATCP that for the next 15 years you will be farming in an area zoned exclusive for agricultural use. One has to prove income of \$6,000 in the previous year from agricultural sales to receive the \$7.50/acre back from the total farm. Currently the county has only Residential Farming. It allows many other uses in the zoning districts, so it cannot be zoned exclusive agriculture. The \$5.00/acre tax credit is only one that applies to Oneida County. There are people in the county that are participating in the current tax credit program and those agreements will be expiring. This new plan will allow them to sign new contracts if they choose to do so. New participants will now also have the opportunity enter into the FPP.

Further clarification of the term "Planned Out" as described on page 31, which are areas excluded because they meet the criteria as a Non-Farmland Preservation area. Land parcels that do not allow

the owner to apply for income tax credits are also termed planned out. This would include public lands, such as local, county, state and federal forestlands, which are excluded. The City of Rhinelander and sewer areas of Minocqua, Three Lakes, and Lake Tomahawk are excluded. Tax exempt land, subdivisions, and parcels less than 5 acres are also excluded. Maps were referenced where the Red shaded area designates land that is not eligible for the plan.

Criteria depicted as "Planned In" are Farmland Preservation Areas outlined on page 31. They are lands shown on soil maps as farmlands and on land use maps as agriculture, cranberry bogs, open lands and woodlands. Future use maps show lands for agriculture or forestry allowed to occur. Forest use is defined as agricultural use.

Cranberries and trees are considered crops and are included in agricultural areas. Rudolph commented that this should be publicized so that people in the county are aware that is the case and they might consider their eligibility into the FPP.

Heider made two additional comments prior to a motion being made. DATCP will still have to provide comment and their pending approval on the Farmland Preservation Plan. One final comment on Non-Farmland Preservation Areas is that platted subdivisions will be taken out of the criteria for Non-Farmland Preservation Areas which is designated as "planned out". One reason being the popularity of small scale farming and growing your own food. Oneida County mapping includes a GIS layer that has legal designations as platted subdivisions. That layer of platted subdivisions is not depicted on the maps included on the FPP. Heider advised that his recommendation was to strike any platted subdivisions.

A motion was made by Jensen to approve the Farmland Preservation Plan for Oneida County 2014 with the corrections as discussed and presented with the understanding that there will be additional comments by DATCP and approval. Intrepidi seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

The County Board will have to approve the plan and then it will be amended to the Comprehensive Plan by ordinance to make it official. Heider should hear back about DATCP approval in the next two weeks.

The Public Hearing portion of the meeting was officially closed.

**County Cost Share Program:** Jean Hansen presented the Soil and Water Resource Management (SWRM) Program. There are two items that will need motions to be approved: One is to approve the monetary cap per project that will spread out available funds to more landowners and the other item is in regard to up front deposits on projects.

**Monetary Cap:** The program is available on a first come, first serve basis. Is there a maximum that a person can apply over a period of time? In the past, landowners have completed projects in phases, over several years. The program is not advertised in that media because of the limited funding available. The program is normally advertised through lake associations. It was suggested that the program should be worded per project per landowner rather than parcel. Can money left over at the end of the year be applied to existing projects? Yes, with approval from the committee. Holewinski made the motion to approve the future cost share funding as presented with a cap of \$7500. Intrepidi seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

**Project Deposit:** A deposit is requested for cost share projects due to lack of follow through that has occurred in the past. There have been cases where people wanted to be part of the Cost Share Program and then had issues over how the plan was laid out with plantings. Many hours are spent on plans, received a DNR permit, contractors packet were presented and the party backed out. It was

agreed by the committee members that a deposit was warranted and suggested that it should be a larger deposit amount than what was presented. Cost share projects are divided into two services: Engineered Practices and Non-engineered Practices. It was suggested that the deposit amount for engineered practices should be raised from a \$600 to a \$1000 deposit. For non-engineered projects it was recommended that the deposit be raised from \$300 to \$500. The landowner pays for the project upfront and will be refunded when the project is completed and the job approval is signed. A motion was made to approve the Soil and Water Resource Management Program with a deposit of \$1000 for engineered projects and \$500 deposit for non-engineered projects. Mott seconded the motion. All ayes; motion carried.

**Public comment:** None.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Jensen/Intrepidi to adjourn at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Merry J. Lehner, Recording Secretary

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Thomas Rudolph, Committee Chair

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