

Town of Ballston  
Farmland Preservation and Protection Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
June 22, 2021  
7:30 p.m.

Attendance: Chairman, Scott Draina; members Stephen Merchant, Joan Pott; Town Board Liaison, Chuck Curtiss; and Guest ZBA Chairman Mike Lesniak

1. Solar Law Draft: as it is currently written, it is missing all of the FPP Committee's recommendations.
  - a. ZBA has submitted many corrections as requested by the Town Board. Mike noted the ZBA addressed Rural Residential, primarily, and left Rural/Agricultural to our Committee. FPP Committee concurs with ZBA that the setbacks, height limits and other stipulations already in the Zoning should be included in this reworked draft.
  - b. Final recommendations and stipulations from FPP Comm.
    - 1. For on-farm use only, 110% of electricity produced, all Ag & Markets guidelines and law must be followed.
    - 2. For Commercial Solar Installations, it is the unanimous recommendation of this committee that whereas the technology is not fully developed, the recyclability of components is in question, and the waste and potential ruin/loss of valuable soils are at risk, Commercial Solar Installations be restricted to Commercially and Industrially zoned districts and not allowed in the rural/Ag Dist.
    - 3. Cohoes has just sited CSI in their reservoir. Obviously, the wetlands at Curtiss Industrial Park are a suitable location. If developers object, it is assumed the installation, while not impossible, could be more involved than the free run of open fields. This committee recommends the developers bear that additional expense as the "cost of doing business".
    - 4. If the consensus does not agree with these recommendations, then FPP Comm. further suggests that it, along with other Boards, stipulate the least viable/tillable/pasturable land for CSI placement.
    - It is further recommended that any CSI Installations be instituted in a staggered progression of 5-year intervals until the total cap limit of 100 acres is reached. All acreage must be contiguous to be considered to reach the total number of acres required. In other words, if a landowner owns the necessary number of acres, but it is a combination of non-contiguous parcels, said land does not qualify to participate.

This verbiage plus the agritourism verbiage following is the complete recommendation of this committee.

2. Any and all Solar Installations and most particularly CSI shall be, according to existing law, inspected by Ag & Markets.
  - a. Agritourism is defined as any food or agriculture-related program, project or activity taking place at a farm or other food or agriculture-related location that will promote and enhance the public's understanding and awareness of New York food, farms, and agriculture and the

importance of this sector to their way of life by attracting visitors for social, cultural, educational, environmental, recreational, and entertainment activities and the opportunity to purchase New York produced food or agricultural products. Always following Agriculture and Markets guidelines that fifty-one (51%) of the product sold will have been produced on the farm.

Prohibited activities include:

1. fireworks or pyrotechnics of any kind
2. Paintball
3. Mass gathering Law must be followed
4. Traffic must be anticipated and plans in place ahead of events to minimize traffic congestion on roadways.
5. 4-wheelers, motorbikes, snowmobiling, and racing are prohibited
6. Any activity not herein described but reasonably could be discerned is also prohibited.

The committee adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joan M. Pott