



- **In order to qualify for the NYSDAM PDR Grant program, a county or local municipal plan must be in place. Lacking those, a town can qualify if it has a properly prepared comprehensive plan that addresses agriculture. Comprehensive plans adopted after January 2006 are held to a more strict standard and must comply with Section 324-a of Article 25-AAA of the Agriculture & Markets Law, which covers farmland protection. It states that plans shall include all of the following:**
  - The location of land or areas proposed for protection. This does not have to be parcel specific but may be a concept map or “bubble” map showing the areas of town identified for protection, preferably with blocks of farmland identified strategically (soils, etc.)
  - For these lands, an analysis of:
    - Their value to the town’s agricultural economy. At least a few paragraphs with an “order of magnitude” discussion that ties production to value. This can also include a tax analysis such as Cost of Community Services study, or references to one.
    - Open space value. Scenic value as well as conservation value, e.g. providing a vegetated buffer for streams, etc.
    - Consequences of possible conversion. At least a couple of paragraphs to capture what would be the impact of full build out; and also what might be the impact of development adjacent to farmland, e.g. growth inducing, nuisance conflicts, fragmentation of farmland blocks, etc.
    - The level of conversion pressure. A discussion of development trends in the town, and particularly on these lands.
  - Description of activities, programs, strategies appropriate to the town to promote continued agriculture, including but not limited to subdivision regulation changes. This should be a targeted list based on the town’s conditions and strategies, not a laundry list of farmland protection strategies used elsewhere. It should also show thinking beyond PDR programs.

In addition:

- It’s important that the plan express active support for preserving agriculture and not adopt a passive, market-driven approach.
- The plan should define agriculture in the town and consider extending that definition to encompass auxiliary businesses — added value, horse boarding, etc. — that can help ensure economic survival.
- Include a profile of agriculture in the town.
- It’s essential that farmers are members of the comprehensive plan committee.

John Brennan/NYSDAM recommends the American Farmland Trust publication Guide to Local Planning for Agriculture in New York,” which includes case studies, resources, and a CD with examples of documents, local laws, ordinances,

etc. It has a checklist section that a town can use to assess how well along they are in protecting agriculture, and then use that as guidance for what should be the town's goals, strategies and implementation recommendations.

**With no further business,** The workshop was adjourned at 6:25 pm. Carried unanimously by all members present. The next Regular meeting will be **Monday January 5, 2009** at the Taghkanic Town Hall.

Audience:

Cheryl Rogers  
Clerk/Collector