

ONTARIO COUNTY Agricultural Enhancement Board

MEETING MINUTES: March 1, 2022
Fredrick Lightfoote, Chairman

MEMBERS PRESENT

Deanna Gentner, for Cornell Cooperative Extension of OC. (CCE)-Tim Davis
Maria Rudzinski – for OC Planning Dept. - Tom Harvey
Fred Lightfoote
Tucker Kautz – for OC Soil & Water Conservation District (OCSWCD) - Megan Webster
Robert McCarthy
Frank Fessner
Jared Martin
Lisa FitzGerald

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Donna LaPlante
Elizabeth Newbold
Kristin Hanggi

GUESTS

Joel Smith,
Paul Lambiase, Join Village and Town of Naples Planning Board Member
Hon. Brian Shenk, Mayor, Village of Naples

1. **Call to order:** Chairman Lightfoote called the meeting to order at 7:06p. The meeting was conducted virtually.
2. **Introductions**
The guests, Joel Smith, Paul Lambiase, and Mayor Brian Shenk, introduced themselves. The Board members then introduced themselves.
3. **Election of OC Agricultural Enhancement Board Chair**
M. Rudzinski stated that since this was the first meeting of 2022, the election of the chair should have been included on the agenda but was not due to error. She stated that there were no Board vacancies that required action. She asked Sup. Lightfoote if he was willing to serve as Chair.

He stated that for clarification, he is appointed to the Board by Supervisor Jack Marren, Chairman of the Ontario County Board of Supervisors as its representative. He stated his willingness to serve as chairman but wanted to open it up to the members should anyone else want to put their name in nomination.

No one offered to put their name in nomination.

Motion made by M. Rudzinski: Fred Lightfoote should serve as Chairman of the Board for 2022. Seconded: Frank Fessner. Motion carried.

4. **Consideration of Draft 2022 Annual Agricultural District Enrollment Report: Proposed Inclusion of Viable Land to Ontario County Consolidated Agricultural District One**

Maria Rudzinski reviewed the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets process for the annual inclusion period which allows landowners to request that their land be added to a state-certified agricultural district – known as Ontario County Consolidated Agricultural District 1. The annual enrollment period is November 1-30.

There were no persons at the meeting who came to comment on the Acquilano parcel. Mr. Joel Smith was present to answer questions about their land and operation. Mayor Brian Schenk, Village of Naples, and Paul Lambiase, Naples Planning Board member attended with interest in the Smith parcels,

The following parcels were proposed for inclusion.

Municipality	Owner	Tax Map No.	ACRES	Property Address
Town of Canandaigua	ACQUILANO, JAMES. P	139.00-1-8.220	8	5797 Smith Rd
T. Naples	SMITH, JULIE D.	204.00-1-1.000	1	East Hill Rd
V. Naples	SMITH, JULIE D.	201.18-1-52.000	21	(160) S Main St
V. Naples	SMITH, JULIE D.	201.18-1-64.000	1	160 S Main St
V. Naples	SMITH, JULIE D.	201.18-1-51.000	11	Between Naples Cr. & parcels on Reed St.
		Total Acres Added	42	
*If a parcel does not have a street number, then the number in parentheses is for an adjoining address for purposes of location.				

Summary of Board Discussion:

- Acquilano Parcel:** The land had previously been in agricultural production. The soils are either classified as prime or of statewide significance. This is a startup operation that is small scale. Mr. Acquilano has already planted grape vines and has a barn. A residence is on the parcel. It is in a rural area with similarly scaled agricultural operations and homes on large lots. He plans to eventually use the woodland as a maple sugarbush. Minimal vehicle trips will be associated with the operation. The operation will not require any significant soil disturbance that would increase stormwater runoff. No public venues for wine tasting, etc. are planned. The operation is production of juice and wine marketed off site.
- Smith Parcels:** The land is located in the village and had been in agricultural production historically. The land is virtually all prime agricultural soils and has large stands of black walnut trees which the Smiths are going to harvest and process. This is a startup operation. No onsite marketing of any associated products will take place. Products will be sold through retail outlets or at festivals. Silva culture pasturing is being considered to keep down under growth. Given the relatively small area, there would likely be only a small number of animals required. The Smith’s will be investigating the types and numbers of animals to determine if it is feasible in their situation and what type of fencing would be appropriate.

Mayor Schenk confirmed that the legacy land use was agriculture, and he was pleased that this use was returning to the village. Mr. Lambiase asked about use of pesticides/fertilizer, runoff, new buildings and zoning. Mr. Smith said that there is an existing building that is not in good condition that may have to be replaced. The processing would take place inside the building. Planting of tree seedlings require very little soil disturbance. Maintaining existing land cover is very desirable for the operation. The land has perfect soil and growing conditions for black walnuts and no need for use of fertilizers. Application of pesticides on a mature black walnut is generally not warranted or recommended. If a condition arose that required a pesticide application, only an organic product would be used.

BOARD ACTION:

Acquilano Parcel Motion: After considering the requirements for inclusion of viable agricultural land in an agricultural district NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM) CIRCULAR 1150 ARTICLE 25AA - AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS §303 b. and the potential for significant environmental impacts that have been discussed at this meeting, this Board finds that

- a. The parcel consists of predominantly of viable agricultural land; and
- b. The inclusion of such land would serve the public interest by assisting in maintaining a viable agricultural industry within the district; and
- c. No significant adverse environmental impacts will occur as a result of inclusion of this parcel.

This Board therefore recommends that the Ontario County Board of Supervisors recommends that the NYSDAM include the Acquilano parcel in Ontario County Consolidated Agricultural District One.

Made by: Tucker Kautz. **Seconded:** Frank Fessner. Motion carried unanimously.

Smith Parcels

Motion: After considering the requirements for inclusion of viable agricultural land in an agricultural district NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM) CIRCULAR 1150 ARTICLE 25AA - AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS §303 b. and the potential for significant environmental impacts that have been discussed at this meeting, this Board finds that

- a. The parcel consists of predominantly of viable agricultural land;
- b. The inclusion of such land would serve the public interest by assisting in maintaining a viable agricultural industry within the district; and
- c. No significant adverse environmental impacts will occur as a result of inclusion of this parcel.

This Board therefore recommends that the Ontario County Board of Supervisors recommends that the NYSDAM include the Smith parcels in Ontario County Consolidated Agricultural District One.

Made by: Frank Fessner. **Seconded by:** Bob McCarthy. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes from November 16, 2021 Meeting

M. Rudzinski found an error in the calculation of the SWCD project total cost in the information provided to the Board at the November 16th meeting. The correct total is \$24,000 rather than \$22,000. The table included in the minutes has the corrected total.

Motion to approve the November 16, 2021 meeting minutes. Made by: R. McCarthy. **Seconded** T. Kautz. **Motion carried.** Frank Fessner abstained since he did not attend the meeting.

6. Draft Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Board Bylaws discussion

M. Rudzinski stated that in 2012, the Board was interested in developing bylaws. A draft was developed but no final bylaws were ever prepared. Since the State is requiring more procedural formality in how meetings are conducted, consideration should be given to developing bylaws. She stated that she made some minor changes to the previous. She did a brief overview of the draft bylaws.

7. Agency Reports

SWCD: T. Kautz said they are in the middle of grant writing season. The Water Quality Symposium will be held in March but will be held remotely. Construction projects are set to begin spring but with the problems with cost increases and material availability is a big problem.

CCE: D. Gentner reviewed the designs proposed for the agricultural implementation grant share the road project. Signs are targeted to be in place by May 1st.

OCPD: M. Rudzinski mentioned that the Town of Manchester met with RGE/NYSEG to identify suitable areas for solar development where the grid can handle the capacity. They want to be proactive in protecting farmland by allowing development in grid suitable places in their local zoning regulations that they have authority over.

8. 2022 Board Meeting Dates

Meeting dates: May 17, August 23 and November 15. M. Rudzinski will circulate the dates to see if they work for those not present.

Motion to adjourn was made by J. Martin and seconded by T. Kautz. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by

Maria Rudzinski, Senior Planner