

Adopted Minutes  
Cayuga County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board  
Tuesday, May 12, 2020, 10:00 A.M.  
Via Conference/Video Call

**Board Members Present:**

Kelly Anderson, Chair (Cayuga County Real Property Services, Director)  
Steve Lynch (Cayuga County Planning & Economic Development, Director)  
Jason Cuddaback, *designee* (Chairperson of the Board of Directors CCSWCD)  
Jeff Ten Eyck (Agricultural Land Preservation Organization Representative)  
Dennis Eckel (Agribusiness Representative)  
John O'Connell, III (Farmer Representative)  
Thane Benson (Farmer Representative)

**Others present:**

Dan Welch (CCE Agriculture Educator Representative- Pending appointment by County Legislature 5/26/2020)  
Kari Terwilliger (CCPED Staff to AFPB)

**Absent:**

Andrew Dennison (Cayuga County Legislator)  
Craig Culver (Farmer Representative)  
Christopher Gross (Farmer Representative)

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Kelly Anderson at approximately 10:08 A.M. with a quorum of members present.

**2. Approval of Minutes – April 9, 2020 meeting**

Kelly Anderson asked the Board if they had reviewed the minutes from the April 9, 2020 meeting and if they had any questions, comments, or corrections to make. There were none. She asked if there was a motion to approve said minutes. **Steve Lynch made a motion that the minutes from April 9, 2020 be accepted as written. Motion seconded by Dennis Eckel. Motion carried.**

**3. Chestnut Ridge Rd Solar Installation in the Town of Moravia NOI**

Kelly Anderson asked Kari Terwilliger to review this agenda item with the Board. Kari stated that she received a copy of the NOI that was provided to the Board in their meeting packets from NYSDAM with a request that the Board respond by May 21, 2020. Jason Cuddaback stated that he is very familiar with this site and the landowners that owned the parcel in years past. He stated that the site would be great for solar since the parcel has not been farmed in at least 15 years and has been mined for gravel by the 2 past landowners. He also stated that the parcel was reclaimed a few years ago for farmland, but most of what was put back was sub soil and rock separated out during top soil removal so it is not really well suited for farming anymore. Jason also stated that this project is a much cleaner and more thoughtful design with respect to farming than the previously reviewed project in the Town of Ledyard; noting the post driven proposal for the panels which will be back filled and the incorporation of top soil under the panels which together is overall better for future agricultural use. Steve Lynch stated that he felt that the developers did a good job of looking at the actual agricultural areas on the site and tried to avoid them as much as possible with most of the panels being placed over the old quarry. He also stated that this project does not seem to have the same level of potential impacts on agriculture as the project that the Board reviewed last month in the Town of Ledyard. He stated that he felt that this project in Moravia would not have an adverse impact on future agricultural use of the site noting that the developer was able to confirm that there are no drain tiles on the site and that the developer will be placing the transmission lines as overhead lines and not burying them to avoid impacts on future farm use. Dennis Eckel, Kelly Anderson and John O'Connell, III all agreed with the statements made by both Jason and Steve and said that this particular project will not have an adverse impact on either current or future agricultural use of the site. Kelly asked the Board if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, she asked for a motion for a response to NYSDAM and this solar NOI. **Steve Lynch made a motion to have Kari Terwilliger**

**draft a letter in response to NYSDAM regarding the Chestnut Ridge Rd solar project in the Town of Moravia summarizing the Board's comments made during the meeting and to circulate a draft of said letter to the Board via email for review and final approval and then authorizing her to send the letter to NYSDAM on the Board's behalf. Motion seconded by Dennis Eckel. Motion carried.**

#### **4. Other Business**

Kelly Anderson asked if anyone had anything else they would like to discuss. Steve Lynch stated that he wanted to inform the Board about the proposed large solar project in the Town of Conquest on 2,000 acres +/- and around 200 Megawatts. He stated that this project will be going through the state's Article 10 process for sitting review and approval, unlike the other projects that the AFPB has seen which required local approvals. He stated that he was unsure what role that NYSDAM or the AFPB will have in the review of the project, but that the public comment period should start in early June when a sitting board will be established. Steve asked Dennis Eckel if he was familiar with the area that was being proposed for the project. Dennis stated that he was very familiar with the farm where the project is proposed and stated that he felt the solar project would have a major negative impact on agriculture and the Town of Conquest, that it is a tremendous amount of good agricultural land that will be lost. Kelly Anderson welcomed Dan Welch back to the Board, and asked if he wanted to say anything. Dan introduced himself to the Board, noting that many members already know him; and stated that Cornell Cooperative Extension has approximately 1,200 remaining gallons of hand sanitizer that they will be distributing to farms and agricultural businesses in the county by the end of the week.

#### **5. Adjournment**

Kelly Anderson asked if there was any further discussion or business to come before the Board. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to adjourn. **John O'Connell, III made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Dennis Eckel. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 10:29 A.M.**

Minutes prepared by Kari Terwilliger, staff to the AFPB