

PUBLIC HEARING  
July 13, 2022 4:30 p.m.

Roll call was taken. PRESENT – Joseph Grasso, Philip C. Barrett, Jonathon Schopf, Diana Edwards, Kevin Tollisen, Mark Hammond, Scott Ostrander, Theodore Kusnierz, Willard Peck, Thomas N. Wood, III, Matthew E. Veitch, John Lant - 12. ABSENT – Eric Connolly, Eric Butler, Jean Raymond, Michael Smith, Kevin Veitch, Arthur M. Wright, Tara Gaston, Thomas Richardson, Sandra Winney, Edward D. Kinowski, John Lawler – 11.

Chairman Kusnierz called the public hearing to conduct required 8 year review of Saratoga County Consolidated Agricultural District #2 to order at 4:35 pm.

Chairman Kusnierz asked the Clerk to read the notice of public hearing.

Chairman Kusnierz asked if there were any requests to speak.

**Frank Blaisdell, Town of Milton:** My name is Frank Blaisdell, I'm with the Town. And I just want to briefly say that, you know, we have a great place here. And really like to keep our rural areas rural. We've worked very hard to make it and I think our long term range is to bring in some more folks to make sure that everybody knows what we're doing, why we're doing it. Just to keep things in the county and the town working well. And I think we're here today to encourage more long term folks coming into the show, and to, sorry that, you know, they can bring in more people keep things very nicely worked out. Require we have people, other people in the group come in with us and make sure that they understand what we're doing, that we understand what we're doing, and keeping the county and the town a nice open space. Protected. I guess I guess that'll count. I think it's I think it's a very important thing. It's been here very, very many years. And we need to keep it going well, very important for the Town of Milton that we keep it that way. Thank you.

**William Crawford, Town of Ballston:** I've lived in the general area where I am now at 12 Charlton Road Ballston Spa my entire life. We have a project that's going on in my backyard right now that's looking for approval. And this meeting will change whether they get approval or not. One of the things that I'm concerned about is nobody in our neighborhood was notified at the meeting through letters like some of the people here have been, and I've talked to various people in in the surrounding area of this project that have not been notified of this meeting. Also, I would like to notify this board how this has affected people in our area. The water table is completely changed from what's already been done. When I built my house in 84, I never had water in a basement until this project went underway. And I now have to have a sump pump that runs almost continually. I think it's very important, as Mr. Blaisdell said that we keep our agricultural community the way it is, I think you know, to go to a large developments and in the Town of Ballston is not the right way to go. Thank you.

**Mark Katz, Town of Ballston:** I'm Mark Katz, I reside at 311 Charlton Road. I'm the owner of that property on Route 50. 90 acres, 1257 Route 50 Ballston Lake. We're already approved up front for 95 units, it's not going to change much that's ready to go right now. My lawyer has sent you all the paperwork, the studies, it hasn't been farmed in 50 years. It's all trees, it's heavy soils, about 20 acres of wetlands. So if it hasn't been farmed in over 50 years, not going to be now it's there's no fields in it. There's no way for it to really be farmed. So you have all the paperwork for my attorney. She couldn't make it today. But I'm sure she's got everything you need. Thanks a lot.

**Eric Smassanow:** Hi my name is Eric Smassanow, 538 Middleline Road. First, I want to thank the Board of Supervisors for last year, we put our farm in, we sold our development rights to the I don't know if it was the county the state, I'm not even sure where the money came from, but through Saratoga PLAN. So I appreciate that. Keeping Milton rural is very important to pretty much anybody that lives in rural Milton. That's why they live here. The Ag district, it's kind of funny, because I took a look at the map and realize that I'm not in it, which I thought was pretty interesting. So I looked into it. And it's it's a way that people can almost vote to say that we want to keep a rural keep their land rural, and the farm protection plan in Milton, that group and also the Milton Grange are going to undertake, trying to get more people in the R2 signed up into this district. So hopefully, you'll see our our efforts will bear fruit and you're gonna have an increase. I think there's definitely a need for the Ag district. It supports people It gives the puts gives the State a chance to protect people's rights, and right to farm things like that. I don't have to tell you what it's about you already know. But there's, there's a pretty good group, a sizable group of people that I think are going to want to join and increase their activity in this. So hopefully, you'll look favorably upon it and continue it. Thank you.

**Gary Capasso, Town of Malta:** My name is Gary Capasso. We're from the Town of Malta. We hope you'll find agriculture who's still part of all these communities. We certainly understand about growth. I've never seen a housing development knocked down to put in corn, but people have to grow the lands there. Somewhere there's got to be a happy medium. We're over in Malta, we hay over in Ballston, the fields are going fast. We try to do Ag tours, we try to get back to community as much as we can. But it's a challenge, builders have to build, people have to grow. I certainly understand that. Somewhere, I don't have an answer. But the Ag district is at least a place where we, my wife or I, can call and get information. And that's about it. Really, it's a challenging times for everyone. And agriculture is no exception. The easy thing to do turn our keys in and put the tractors away. But that's not what the generations of us are born to do. So it's a challenge. We're going to keep going forward and whatever which way we hope you will help us decide through the agricultural district to keep it alive and going, but yet you still have to help builders too. That's why you're up there. So whatever you can do to help everybody, I appreciate your time. Thank you.

**Robert Keane Jr., Town of Charlton:** Good afternoon everyone. My name is Robert Keane, Jr. Excuse me, lifelong resident of Charlton. Grew up in agriculture quite familiar with it. And I think protecting agriculture should be an extremely important part of Saratoga's future. We currently find ourselves in a situation, a very bad situation where produce is short supply, it may get worse in next few years, may get worse in next few months. Our local agriculture is a very important part of the food chain. I do a lot of my business with local agriculture. And the local Farm Stores and farms are a significant supply of our food chain, something we're finding that's a little bit disrupted right now. I think the county's plan to protect agriculture, protect farming, I realized having grown up in this for the last 60 years, agricultural mechanics and construction. It's a difficult business. It's a hard day's work. However, it's a rewarding day's work and it's a vital vital part of Saratoga's economy. The perception or the idea to level farmland, the clear cut, burn and pave mentality does not bode well with me whatsoever. I think we should concentrate on protecting the farmland, helping out the agriculture community and scrutinizing development very thoroughly. We've seen this all around us where places have been dramatically changed by development, loss of farms, farmland, even small farms can have a detrimental detrimental effects. So I'm very much in favor of protecting the Farmland Protection area. The agricultural districts there is a happy medium that can be reached. Not everybody's going to walk away delighted. However, I'm a strong, strong proponent of agriculture. Thank you very much for hearing my concern. Have a great day.

**Betty Hill, Town of Ballston:** Hi, I'm Betty Hill. I live in 581 Randall Road, I moved to the Town of Ballston in about 1976 and raised animals until about eight years ago, maybe when my husband got too sick. And it's a way of life as well as income. And in my later years, I don't want to move to an apartment and just look at other houses. I want to stay on my land. And I still at the age of 80, brush hog my fields and take care of that land. Thank you.

Written Correspondence Received from Joan H. Frank, Peaceable Street, Ballston Spa – Attached to these minutes.

Chairman Kusnierz closed the public hearing at 4:52 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Therese M. Connolly, Clerk