

Public Hearing
Annual Agricultural District Inclusion
February 22, 2024

The Public Hearing on requests of inclusion of viable agricultural land in agricultural districts received within the designated time period in 2024 was called to order by the Chair at 10:00 A.M. Eight Legislative members were present with Legislator Weston being absent.

There were seven people in attendance.

The Clerk read the legal notice as published in the official newspapers.

Elaine Jardine, County Planning Director, of the Economic Development & Planning Department spoke. "This year the Planning Department received two (2) requests; one from Gary Demming in the Town of Tioga who produces corn, soybeans, and oats for 25.02 acres and the second one from Jacob Reeves, Little Creek Farm, in the Town of Owego who raises pigs, beef cattle, and poultry and also sells the meat from the livestock for 25.87 acres for a total of 50.89 acres added to the overall Agricultural Districts. The 25.02 acres in the Town of Tioga will be in the Spencer Agricultural District #1 and the 25.87 acres in the Town of Owego will be in the Owego/Nichols Agricultural District #2. The Ag & Farmland Protection Board met yesterday and passed a resolution to recommend approval for these inclusions, which this Legislature will address in March 2024."

Legislator Mullen spoke. "I know that the County's Real Property Department has been sending out notifications to all the people that are already in the Agricultural Districts and advising them that their property tax savings/rebate is payable back if they take the designated property out of agricultural use and that includes putting a solar farm on their property. I applaud Director of Real Property Palinosky for doing that as this is important as we work our way through the increased number of requests for solar farms, which many of them are located on agricultural district property. Property owners are unaware that property taxes are due upon the property being turned over for a commercial use."

County Planning Director Jardine spoke. "We actually started the process and then turned it over to Real Property, as we felt it would be better heard if it came through the Real Property Department. The Real Property Director has the relationship with the assessors and was able to include the notice with the ag assessment renewals that went out in January."

There being no further comments, the hearing was adjourned at 10:04 A.M.