

TOWN OF GORHAM
CONSERVATION BOARD
MINUTES
MARCH 4, 2008

The Town of Gorham Conservation Board met on Tuesday, March 4, 2008 at 7:00 PM at the Gorham Town Hall. Present were, Chairman Steve Horrocks, Andrew Hoover, Bob Brancato, John Foust, Fred Lightfoote, Bill Johnson, Carl Sheer, Bill Hershey and Nancy Hollenbeck.

Bill Hershey from Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District spoke to the Board about AEM, Agricultural Environmental Management. Conducting an ARM Risk Assessment is a way to take a comprehensive look at a farm's impact on natural resources and acquire information for long-term business planning. This assessment can help to document environmental stewardship, prioritize areas presenting risk, identify opportunities to save money and locate available resources to address potential concerns. Free, confidential assessments can be scheduled through OCSWC which includes completion of a questionnaire, watershed site evaluation worksheet, etc. Some of the "core" worksheets that may benefit farm operations are manure management, farmstead water supply, barnyards, stream and floodplain management, pasture management and soil management. There are specific worksheets tailored to dairies, greenhouse operations, vineyards and horse farms. All is available on the web. Copies of some of the worksheets and questionnaires were available for review. Mr. Hershey explained how this all ties in with applying for various grants, keeping farms viable so that conservation may not be necessary, etc.

The newsletter was briefly discussed. A few corrections and changes were made. Everyone is encouraged to read what has been prepared and make any further suggestions, or changes as appropriate. Bob Brancato will talk to Allyson Adam-Anderson about the preservation of the Gathercole property in the Town of Gorham. It might be good to have that information in the newsletter. We would like to have a draft to Nancy within about two weeks so that it can be passed on to Sue Irvine who will get it ready for printing. It is hoped that we could have a draft for approval at the April 8th meeting.

Boardmembers also discussed the need for a "cheat sheet" so that when anyone gets phone calls or questions about the Conservation Board or preservation tools, etc., that everyone would be able to give the same answers. Bob agreed to start writing something up for the Board to review.

The minutes of the February 5, 2008 meeting were approved by a motion from Andrew Hoover. Motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting will be the second Tuesday of April, the 8th at 7:00 PM. It is hoped that Betsy Landry from the Finger Land Trust will be available to meet with us.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 PM by a motion by Mr. Foust, seconded by Mr. Brancato.

Nancy Hollenbeck
Secretary