

AGRICULTURE, PLANNING, TOURISM & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – July 25, 2023

AGRICULTURE, PLANNING, TOURISM & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESENT: Griffith, O'Brien

AGRICULTURE, PLANNING, TOURISM & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

ABSENT: Griffith, Campbell, Hicks, Shaw, Ferguson

SUPERVISORS: Henke, Hall, Fisher, Nolan, Clary

Debra Prehoda, Clerk of the Board

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Melissa Fitch, County Administrator

Al Nolette, County Treasurer

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Accept Minutes – June 20, 2023
- 3) Tourism Updates
- 4) Broadband Updates
- 5) Other Business
- 6) Adjournment

Chairman Griffith opened for discussion, no quorum, at 10:22 A.M. in the second floor classroom, Room B214, Municipal Center, Fort Edward.

Laura Oswald, Economic Development Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

TOURISM UPDATES:

- Washington County Fair - Will have a booth at the Fair.
- They produce a farm stand map and it has been updated. They have been doing a lot of agritourism promotion across the county on Facebook and other social media. Promoting what is open this summer.
- Struggling for quite some time with the fact that one of the biggest drivers of tourism in the County from all the feedback is events. A few venues constantly reach out to them for help, money, promotion, etc. and have many that do not ask or don't know that they can ask. They have been trying to develop some sort of policy that has consistency so they can spread the assistance better. Thinking it is best to ask the event operators what they need from us so on September 12th they are holding an *Events* event bringing panelist in from major event producers to engage in a discussion about how we can help increase participation in these events. The Economic Development Director has thought about an events coordinator as something that would be helpful.
- Chairman Griffith distributed a Montgomery and Fulton Counties Farm to Table Tour handout, attached. They work with the farmers and food operators to connect the public to the local farmers. He thought this was a great event and suggested possibly looking at something like this for Washington County to showcase our agriculture. The Economic Development Director stated this highlights something they have been struggling with in that most of the tours/events are not orchestrated and managed by the County but a group of individuals or businesses that are organizing their own tour/event and as a County we are trying to find ways to support them. The only event that the County has tried so far to organize and manage is the Flannel Fall Crawl. The Montgomery Fulton Counties Farm to Table Tour had sponsorships for a revenue source.
- 250th American Revolution Committee are meeting this week. The Economic Development Director has asked them to put together an agenda of the kinds of events that they want to be held. The last time an American Revolution committee was formed, they had a space at the

fairground and held some reenactment events. She is trying to get a concept in mind of what they are going to do and how the County can support them which will be done with ARP funding. Continuing to have conversations and work on how we should be promoting this and where should we be putting information because tourism has a website and a media company does already work on that.

- Short Term Rental Legislation – The short term rental legislation requiring all of the short term rental platforms to collect and remit occupancy tax never made it to the floor for a vote. This will probably come back up next year. The County only has an agreement with Airbnb. Short term rentals are up compared to 2022.

BROADBAND UPDATES – \$670M in Federal funding for broadband and \$5M was set aside for the State to do their planning and their final plan is due in to authorities the first quarter of 2025. Sometime in 2025, the Broadband Office will start releasing opportunities for providers to get competitive grants to do new deployments. The bottom line is completion is expected to be 2029. The Economic Development Director stated she continues to look at options to try and use funding that we have set aside to do more connections and working with the State on any other funding from other sources. She previously reported on an RFP that was issued but the County that did not receive bids on all addresses and requested quotes for those areas. The County cost to get fiber deployment to all addresses on the RFP is about \$9M and the County does not have that amount set aside for broadband. Also have \$1M in USDA funding for fixed wireless. Continuing conversations with the State and providers who have been very forthcoming and helpful in trying to sort of cope with a solution that makes this work. She thinks this can get done sooner than 2029 but it is not going to get done next week.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Closure of Essity Tissue – Essity has three plants, two in South Glens Falls and one in Greenwich. Employees are working with the State and with Department of Labor in the rapid response team. Her understanding is that employees will all be given like a 90-day severance package. The regional unemployment rate now is at about 2.9%. Employers are calling and asking how we get ahold of some of these employees. The Greenwich plant is not anticipated to close until the end of the year. She has reached out to Essity but no official notice of the closure because there is no closing date yet for Greenwich. She also spoke with LEAP that runs the career center and they did not have any information about what was going to happen in Greenwich because of no closure notice. She did inform LEAP of her efforts to reach out to the company and to be proactive in helping to make sure that the employees at the Greenwich plant have help finding another job. Amazon in Granville is going to start their hiring phase in August. The economic picture is a lot different than when GE closed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:49A.M.

Debra Prehoda, Clerk
Washington County Board of Supervisors

FARM TO TABLE



TOUR

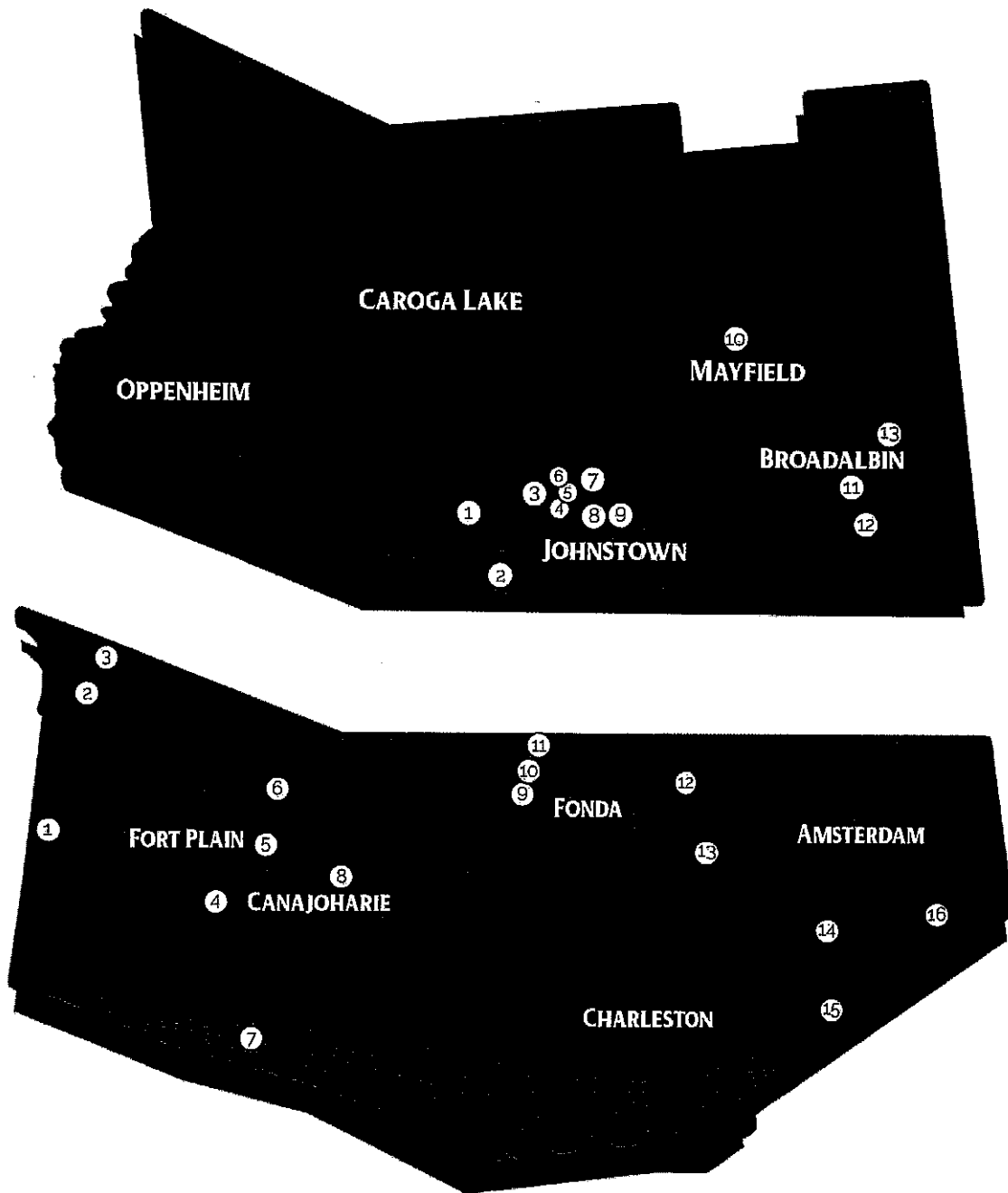
FARMTOTABLETOUR.ORG

This is an annual event focused on connecting the public to local farmers in Montgomery and Fulton Counties! The second Farm to Table Tour will be held on July 30, 2023.

Participating farms will open their doors for the day in an effort to educate and connect consumers to local goods and services.

This is a "self-guided" tour meaning that you choose your route and the farms you want to stop at! Maps will be provided on-line and in-person to help folks plan and navigate their day. Just choose your first stop!

- 1) July 30th from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- 2) This is a self-guided tour! Forge your own path! It's free to explore! We suggest bringing coolers and cooler packs so you can take home any goodies you'd like!
- 3) There are 29 farms on tour! Get to as many as you'd like.
- 4) Booklets will provide on the day of the tour. Every farm will have them! These with all of the farms and maps included! These cost you nothing!
- 5) Our website is <https://farmtotabletour.org/>. It has all of the farms and a map!
- 6) Make sure you are following this page to stay up to date with all of the goings on as well as ideas for some routes!



FarmToTableTour.Org

The official Fulton County list for July 30th!

- 1) Philia Farm-134 Miller Road, Johnstown
- 2) Fieldridge Farms LLC-801 Co. Highway 116, Johnstown
- 3) Rogers Family Orchard-260 County Highway 131, Johnstown
- 4) Peaceful Valley Maple Farms-116 Lagrange Rd., Johnstown
- 5) Hadcock Family Farm-126 Lagrange Rd., Johnstown
- 6) Dreamroad Farm Store-193 LaGrange Rd, Johnstown

- 7) Stump City Brewing-521 West Fulton St, Gloversville
- 8 Rizzo Farm-333 N Perry Street, Johnstown
- 9) Westmeadow Farm & Dairy-251 North Comrie Ave, Johnstown
- 10) Brower Family Farm, LLC-249 Jackson Summit Road, Mayfield
- 11) Perry's Sunflower Maze, LLC-176 Midline Road, Broadalbin
- 12) Korona Farm-1979 County Highway 107, Amsterdam
- 13) Out Of The Blue Berry Farm-397 Stevers Mills Road, Broadalbin

The official Montgomery County for the tour!

- 1) Hu-Hill Farm-232 Lighthall Rd, Fort Plain
- 2) Damin Farm-8075 State Hwy 5 St. , Saint Johnsville
- 3) Crum Creek Meats-192 Crum Creek Rd, Saint Johnsville
- 4) Shults Family Farm-487 Clinton Road, Canajoharie
- 5) Dygert Farms Creamery-243 Dygert Street, Palatine Bridge
- 6) Ouderkirk Farms-463 Stone Arabia Road , Fort Plain
- 7) Little Ann's Flowers-7424 State Highway 10, Canajoharie
- 8 Tylutki Family Farms-197 Caswell Road, Palatine Bridge
- 9) Sand Flats Orchard LLC.-371 Martin Road, Fonda
- 10) Appleridge Farm-201 Commons Road, Fonda
- 11) Hickory Hill Farms-1421 Old Trail Road, Fonda
- 12) Samdil Farm-612 Stoner Trail Rd, Fonda
- 13) Karen's Produce & Ice Cream-2311 State Hwy 5s, Amsterdam
- 14) Plaid Farm Stores LLC.-6419 State Highway 30, Amsterdam
- 15) Willow Tree Wisdom-6907 State Highway 30, Amsterdam
- 16) Dellavale Farm-795 Pattersonville Road, Pattersonville