

Town of New Paltz Planning Board
Memorandum

To: Supervisor Toni Hokanson and Town Board Members

From: Paul Brown, Chairman



Re: Definition of the term 'agriculture' – Referral Response

Date: February 13 2008

Cc: Planning Board, Building Department, Town Attorney

The Planning Board has discussed the issue of a definition of the term 'agriculture' per your request.

The members of the Planning Board voted unanimously at our February 11 meeting to recommend that the Town Board convene a facilitated workshop session to gather information and gain understanding of the answer to several questions prior to amending the Town Code.

The sense of the Planning Board members was that such a meeting would maximize public input. Board members also suggest that members of the New Paltz agricultural community be invited to participate.

Questions to be answered in a workshop session might include:

1. Why is an amendment to the Town Coded needed? What problem is the Town seeking to address by amending the definition? What benefit to the Town would accrue by amending the definition? Are there other options for addressing the problems or opportunities that would not involve amending the term 'agriculture'?
2. What are the options available to the Town as it seeks to amend the definition of the term 'agriculture'? What definitions are used by other Towns which are considered to be good models?
3. What criteria should be used to evaluate the options available?
4. What are the risks and possible unintended negative consequences of amending the definition of the term 'agriculture'? How can these be avoided or mitigated?