

**PUBLIC HEARING
ON INCLUSION IN THE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT
TO BE HELD BY THE
PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE
IN THE
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Wednesday February 3, 2016 6:45 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 P.M. by Chairwoman Nacerino who requested that Legislative Counsel Van Ross lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislators Scuccimarra, Gouldman, Addonizio, Albano, Gross, LoBue, Wright and Chairwoman Nacerino were present. Legislator Castellano was absent. Also present was Legislative Counsel Van Ross.

Chairwoman Nacerino requested the Clerk to read the Public Notice:

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Article 25-AA of the Agriculture and Markets Law of the State of New York, Section 303-b, that one or more requests have been received by the Putnam County Legislature for inclusion of predominately viable agricultural land within Putnam County's certified Agricultural District.

FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given that the Putnam County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board has considered these requests for inclusion and reported that the parcels for inclusion would serve the public interest by assisting in maintaining a viable agricultural industry within the District.

FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given that the parcels requested for inclusion are:

Town of Philipstown:

**Mercurio Farms LLC – Tax Map #82.-1-66 (8.72 acres) Total Acreage: 8.72
Cold Spring Farm – Marian & Nicholas Rockwell – Tax Map #38.-3-25 (85 acres) Total Acreage: 85.0**

Town of Kent:

**Joseph Greico – Tax Map #19.-1-36 (6.26 acres) Total Acreage: 6.26
Robert Rudemyer Jr. – Tax Map #12.-3-71 (26.7 acres) Total Acreage: 26.7**

Town of Southeast:

**Vescio Farms & Agriculture LLC – Tax Map #67.-1-3 (68.55 acres) Total Acreage: 68.55
Joshua Gurwitz – Tax Map #56.-1-60 (4.01 acres) Total Acreage: 4.01**

Town of Patterson:

Claire's Garden Center – Tax Map #14.-1-59 (9.27 acres) Total Acreage: 9.27

For a total of 208.51 acres.

FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held on Wednesday, February 3, 2016 at 6:45 P.M. in the Historic Courthouse, Carmel, New York, to consider these requests for inclusion and the recommendations of the Putnam County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board.

**BY ORDER OF THE PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE
Diane Schonfeld
Clerk**

Chairwoman Nacerino requested that anyone wishing to speak should come up to the microphone, state their name and the town in which they reside.

Rebecca Walt, Counsel to Joshua Gurwitz, who is the owner of property 8-10 Enoch Crosby Road, Brewster. She stated Mr. Gurwitz wishes to take the pre-existing greenhouse and other agricultural related buildings on the property to grow juniper for a gin distillery business. She stated the conversations she has had with the Town of Southeast have been prosperous and she believes Mr. Gurwitz will be granted As of Right Use to establish his business. She stated having this property be declared as part of Putnam County's Agricultural District will assist in creating and maintaining the integrity of the product, as it would be generated on site. She stated the Putnam County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board ("PCAFPB") did not recommend the property for certain reasons. PCAFPB did not feel this parcel meets New York State's Agricultural & Markets definition of viable agricultural land or farm operation for the proposal of growing junipers for a gin distillery. Pursuant to Agricultural & Market's Law Section 303 B2A, the PCAFPB is to give recommendations as to whether the land to be included consists predominately of viable agricultural land as defined in Sub-Section 7 of 301 of that Article. Also, PCAFPB is to look into whether the land would serve the public's interest by assisting and maintaining a viable agricultural industry. She stated there is no requirement that the commercial operation be pre-established, therefore PCAFPB's recommendation is to be whether the land is highly suitable for a farm operation and not whether a farm operation already exists. Per the Department of Agriculture & Markets, land that is within the District that is not part of the farm operation is not extended any benefits under State Law. She stated the Department of Agriculture & Markets has protected both active and startup farm operations. She stated Mr. Gurwitz is attempting to start up his farm operation. As stated by Michael Lathen in a letter to Suffolk County's Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board, without the ability to add such land to an agricultural district, new farm enterprises may not be able to be created and thrive. She stated the materials submitted to the Legislature by the PCAFPB, identifies the soils with the code ChB Charlton-Hollis-Rock, which illustrates the soil is more than sufficient to grow juniper. She stated most of the juniper will be planted in the existing greenhouse, and a small amount will be grown around the greenhouse. She stated it is in the public's best interest for this parcel to be accepted in the Agricultural District because Mr. Gurwitz is looking to establish a local agricultural based business. She requested that the Legislature approve this parcel to become part of Putnam County's Agricultural District.

There being no member of the public wishing to speak, at 7:01 p.m., Legislator Wright made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator LoBue. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant, Lisa Sommers.