

**Cazenovia Area Community Development Association, Inc. (CACDA)
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MEDIA ADVISORY

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CACDA Cazenovia Republican Column: CACDA Chronicles

The last several weeks have been busy ones for CACDA (Cazenovia Area Community Development Association, Inc.). On April 17th we co-hosted a public informational meeting about available Farmland Protection tools. Our speakers were Judy Wright, a local representative for the American Farmland Trust, and Nancy Hourigan, a farmer from Onondaga County who has applied for and received funding from the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets for Purchase of Development Rights grants or PDR.

PDR is a voluntary technique to protect agricultural land. It helps active farmland owners who are willing to permanently save their land for agricultural uses by paying them for property development rights. Generally, a landowner holds many different rights regarding their property, such as rights to water resources, timber harvesting or developing parcels in a manner consistent with local ordinances.

A portion, or all, of these rights can be sold or transferred to another person. Utilizing a PDR program, landowners can sell just the development rights for their property. In New York State, farmers generally are offered the difference between the fair market value and the restricted value of the land. This allows the land to remain on the tax rolls with its taxable value based on the remaining rights.

Several local farmers expressed interest in applying for PDR grants. Since applicants must be sponsored by a county or municipality, CACDA has been collaborating with the Town of Cazenovia to develop a process that will allow participation in the current funding round. Pre-applications have been sent to qualifying farmers and are due back to the Town office by May 31st. The Town can sponsor up to three applications for the grants.

The PDR program can help ensure that the high quality soils located in the Cazenovia area are maintained for agricultural purposes, and that the intrinsic rural scenery and character are preserved. Our sincere thanks to everyone who helped shape this process.

CACDA has also recently formed a partnership with the Syracuse University Whitman School of Management. Their Whitman Consulting Club, composed of graduate students and headed by Professor Ravi Shukla, will be updating the 1996 Cazenovia market study. Information gained through surveys and other actions will provide a better idea of the types of retail businesses that are desired and would be supported by residents. Activities will officially begin in the fall. We hope everyone will contribute to this important community effort.

The Lakeside Park project to remove riprap along the shoreline and replant with native species is also moving forward. Adding more plant materials to the buffer zone next to the water will assist the health of the lake in several ways. It can provide a better filtration system for runoff, reduce erosion at the shoreline, protect terrestrial and aquatic wildlife, and supply more oxygen through photosynthesis and cooling of the water. SUNY ESF Landscape Architecture graduate students have completed a draft planting plan that is under review. Actual planting at the site will occur this fall.

We are also working on several other projects throughout the community, so stay tuned for the next edition of the CACDA Chronicles. If you have questions, suggestions or comments, please contact me at 655-7651 or e-mail director@cacda.net