

December 8, 2008

The Tewksbury Township Agricultural Advisory Committee met at 6:35 pm on the above date at the Mountainville Meeting Hall 60 Water Street, Mountainville.

Members present were: Shaun C. Van Doren, chairman, Theodore G. Koven, Peter L. Melick, Scott Clucas and Hank Klumpp.

Mr. Van Doren read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement indicating the meeting was noticed by the Township Clerk on December 1, 2008.

Correspondence

The following correspondence was received:

1. A memo dated April 10, 2008 from Susan Craft, SADC re New publication: "Farmer-to Farmer Advice for Avoiding Conflicts with Neighbors and Towns;
2. A memo dated June 23, 2008 from Susan Craft, SADC re Preliminary Conditional Approval of Planning Incentive Grant Applications;
3. A memo dated July 16, 2008 from Susan Craft, SADC re Preliminary Conditional Approval of Planning Incentive Grant Applications;
4. A letter dated July 29, 2008 from Susan Craft, SADC, re a signed copy of offer agreement accepted by John Crimi to preserve his 307 acre farm at a cost of \$ 22,000 per acre;
5. A letter dated August 11, 2008 from Susan Craft, SADC re SADC Planning Incentive Grant Final Approval – Tewksbury Associates Farm – CV \$ 19,000 per acre;
6. A memo dated August 25, 2008 from Susan Craft, SADC re Adoption of Equine Rules; Upcoming Outreach meetings;
7. A letter dated September 18, 2008 from Bill Millette, CADB Administrator re County Farmland Preservation Program Targeted Farms;
8. A letter dated November 10, 2008 from Gary Pohorely, SADC re SADC 2006 Direct Easement Purchase Application Gimbel Farm Block 13 Lot 21 requesting whether the Township wishes additional road right-of-way on Sutton Road;
9. A memo dated November 12, 2008 from Bill Millette, CADB Administrator re 2008 Draft Hunterdon County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan.

Mr. Van Doren passed out the correspondence to members and requested they initial the front page if they wanted copies.

Minutes

Mr. Koven made a motion to approve the regular session minutes of January 21, 2008 and February 25, 2008, seconded by Mr. Klumpp. AYES: 5, NAYS: 0.

Farmland Preservation Plan

Mr. Van Doren indicated that no response has been received from the SADC on the Township's plan and it is not known when it can be expected since its overdue. He also commented that funding is now very competitive for County \$ which Mr. Melick confirmed. Mr. Melick recommended setting criteria and scoring any future municipal applications that are received since funding will be an issue on the municipal level as well. There is a deadline of March 1, 2009 for municipality on funding

Pascale Committee

Mr. Van Doren indicated that the Township Committee requested the AAC to recommend an agricultural representative to sit on a new committee that would begin in January 2009. The purpose of the Committee is to review the existing plans that were drawn up by an ad hoc committee for the Pascale Farm and implement them over the course of several years. Mr. Melick volunteered to serve.

Pascale Farm Plan – NJ Audobon

Mr. Koven recused himself and left the meeting as he is a Board member of NJ Audobon. Mr. Van Doren recognized Troy Ettl and John Parke from NJ Audobon and Tom Murphy and Carmen Natale from the Park Committee as well as an NRCS representative.

Mr. Van Doren indicated that the Project Agreements for Pascale and Christie Hoffman Farm had been distributed previously. The Township Committee had referred these to the Parks Committee and AAC. The proposal was originally put forth in 2006-07 to Parks but there was never a consensus on how to proceed. Mr. Parke explained that the grant runs out on December 31 so the Township needs to lock in before then on either or both of the agreements. The new Federal Farm Bill changed the criteria for the WHIP program and municipalities will not be eligible for this money in 2009 and beyond. There was 45 acres proposed for inclusion at the Pascale Farm. Mr. Melick raised the issue of farming vs. protecting endangered species and that new restrictions come out constantly that restrict farming.

Christie Hoffman Farm (CHF) – NJ Audobon

Mr. Clucas recused himself and left the meeting room since he has a contract to farm at Christie Hoffman Farm. The agreement references the planting of warm season grasses. Members discussed taking only parts of the agreement such as the brush clearing and using in-kind labor. Mr. Parke indicated that this would have to be approved by NRCS and is not sure they will act favorably but would ask.

Mr. Melick made a motion to include 11.5 acres at CHF in the program subject to final approval by the farmer on the location of the fields to be used, NRCS and the Township Committee and recommend to the Township Committee to approve. Mr. Klumpp seconded the motion. AYES: 3, NAYS: 0.

Mr. Clucas returned to the meeting table at this time.

It was recommended to defer Pascale to a future meeting next week so as to be able to discuss with Robert Hoffman, Jr., who farms at Pascale.

STATUS OF PENDING FARMLAND APPLICATIONS

Mr. Van Doren reviewed the status of the various applications:

Young

The Township continues to work with the Young's and County to resolve the mowing covenant language.

Kneser

There is an easement issue that continues to delay the closing. A similar issue is being studied by the SADC and until that is resolve no action will be taken on this matter.

Koebel

Property owner has accepted CV and signed agreement.

Vernon

Final paperwork continues to be reviewed by SADC. A trail easement on the property has slowed the process down.

Eliot B. Stewart & James C. Brady

Titlework and surveys ordered.

Emmet III

Closed

Tewksbury Associates (Von Culin)

CV accepted by property owner \$ 19,000 for 56.58 acres; titlework and survey being performed

Melick

CV accepted \$ 20,000 per acre for 46.72 acres; titlework and survey being performed.

SADC Direct Easement

Simpson – Alder Creek Road

Closed

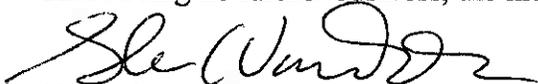
Gimbel – Sutton Road

Closed

Crimi/Serenity Hills Farm

Landowner has accepted the value offered and additional impervious coverage. SADC is currently handling paperwork with closing to be done by the County since funding is from State and County.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 pm.


Shaun C. Van Doren