

Township of Franklin Agricultural Advisory Committee
Meeting of January 9, 2023 minutes

In attendance (8) Michelle Doyle, Harry Lucas, Jim Ketchum, Ralph Travaglione, Kelly Welsh, Bill Exley, Ken Atkinson, Cindy Roberts.

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chairperson Ken Atkinson at 7:05 PM after the Flag Salute. OPMAC guidelines were adhered to.

Bill Exley was introduced as our newest associate member.

REORGANIZATION FOR 2023

Nominations and elections of Chairperson and Secretary were conducted by Facilitator Ken Atkinson. Michelle Doyle was elected Chairperson for 2023 and Ralph Travaglione was elected Secretary for 2023.

The minutes of the last meeting (November 14, 2022) were approved.

FARM PRESERVATION STATUS

Ken Atkinson reported

Farms That Are Talking To Our Facilitator To Start Preservation:

Grochowski Farm. 260 acres Block 1902 lot 1 on Fries Mill Rd. This farm is zoned Business Mixed Use and is not in any of our Project Areas. This farm is on hold while a solar option on the land is in effect-until 2023. There has been no contact since February 2019. At the May Zoning Board meeting, Gloucester Solar LLC, appeared on behalf of the Grochowski family for a Conceptual non-formal Application to see if Solar was an accepted use in the Business Mixed Use Zone (BMUO). Under NJ Zoning 66.11, solar is an accepted use in any Industrial Zone. The applicant asked our Board if our BMUO zone included industrial uses. The Board voted 4-3 no, that the language in our BMUO zone does not include Industrial uses and therefore does not accept solar as an accepted use and that any solar applicant would have to come in front of the Board and request a use variance for solar. No recent activity.

Rohs Farm. 30 acres Block 6805 lot 30 on Forest Grove Rd. This farm is zoned RA and is in our PIG area. We informed him that we will be ready to assist him

when he feels that the time is appropriate. There has been no contact since November 2020. No recent activity.

Jeff Faubell Farm. 78 acres. Block 702 lots 14 & 15 on Malaga Rd in the Janvier Project Area. Zoned PRR. This farm qualifies as a Direct Easement with the SADC. Mr. Faubell will consider an application in the future. No recent activity. Shane Garrett farm. Grant Ave. Not in County or Township's ADA. They need to clear cut 1-3 acres to comply for tillable acres and then the County may amend their ADA to include their horse farm in 2024. Cindy Roberts reported that they would have to include an "Animal Waste Management Plan" since they board about 30 horses on their farm. No recent activity.

Previtera Farm. 28 acres. Block 7002 lot 11. Catawba Ave. Forest Grove Project Area. Ken and Ralph met with the owner on July 27th to discuss the preservation process. His mortgage company has not agreed to subordinate and therefore, he is considering selling the house on the property and preserving the remainder. No recent activity.

Andy Zenger has a 52 acre farm on Stanton Ave. Block 1101, lot 105. This farm is not in the Township's ADA but is in the County's. Information has been forwarded to Eric Agren at the County. No recent activity.

Nixholm Realty. 67 acres Block 6805, lots 25-29 in Q farm, Airport, Harding Highway, Downtown. The owner talked to Cindy Roberts in June and early November, and is interested. The Q farm portion of the airport is zoned Light Manufacturing (LM) and Ralph spoke to the Economic Development Committee during their August and October meetings to see if the Committee would be in favor of preserving the farm portion of the Airport. This farm is large enough for a SADC Direct Easement. Cindy Roberts is working with the potential applicant.

Carlino Farm. 20 acres Block 6804 lots 27 & 29, Forest Grove Rd, Forest Grove Project Area. Ken and Ralph met with the applicant on September 15, 2022. He currently is completing some minor site work on the property and will contact Ken in the spring to start his application.

DiGioia Farm. 15 acres Block 6401 lot 11 zoned PRR, Dutch Mill Rd, Main/Piney Hollow Project Area. They received an application on October 9, 2019. We contacted them in January 2020. They did not respond until early October 2022. Ken has made several attempts to meet with them.

FARMS THAT HAVE BEEN GIVEN GREEN LIGHT REVIEW

Thies Farm. 79 acres. Block 5802 lot 22 on Dutch Mill & Lake Rds. Main Piney Hollow Area. Zoned PRR & PAP> A one acre severable exception on Lake Rd. They received their Green Light Approval on June 6, 2022. Ken has sent out requests for quotes for the new appraisal work, and we expect the Township to approve the contracts in the next few weeks.

FARMS THAT HAVE BEEN APPRAISED AND CERTIFIED

Bellone Farm. Block 6805 lot 4.01 is 32 acres.

Block 6805 lot 6 is about 18 acres.

Phil Danko Farm. Block 6805 lot 3 is 31 acres.

All three farms are on Harding Highway in the Downtown area and the front 300 feet of these farms are zoned Highway-Commercial. Their applications were signed on July 22, 2021, and received a Green Light Review on 10-5-21.

The CMV for these farms was re-certified in September 2022 and all farms have signed and agreed to proceed with their surveys. In early October, Ken was asked by the Twp. Administrator to temporarily hold off on initiating the survey and title work for these two farms in order to provide the Township with further opportunity to review the commercial zoning associated with the properties. On December 1, Ken was given the green light to commence with survey and title work. The Township should pass a resolution to start title work and surveys on these farms at tomorrow's Twp. Committee Meeting. West Jersey Title and Frailinger Eng. have been awarded contracts. Settlement on these farms should occur by year's end.

Martorano Farm. 138 acres, 38 acres clear. Block 5901-Lots 8, 90, 92, 94, 96, 79.01. Farm is located both on Tuckahoe and Main Roads in our Main/Piney Hollow PIG area. It is in the Pinelands PRR (3.4) acre zone. They first contacted the County in June of 2019. They signed an application on August 2, 2021 and their application received a Green Light Review on 10-5-21. Martorano has agreed to preservation after a CMV of December 21, 2022. Ken has sent out requests for quotes for the required survey and title work, and expect the Twp.to approve the contracts in the next few weeks. Settlement should occur by year's end.

Graiff Farm. 22 acres. 21 acres tillable. Block 5702 lot 84 on Central Ave. in the Central Project Area. They agreed to a 1 acre non-severable exception on their farm. On March 9, 2022, Ken submitted their application to the SADC and they

received Green Light review on April 19, 2022. Tim Sheehan and Steve Bartlett submitted their appraisals on July 7th. Ken commented that the after values have risen sharply in the past year, thus reducing the easement values. The State certified the market value (CMV) on August, 19, 2022. A resolution by the Township Committee was passed to proceed with Title and survey work. West Jersey Title has won the bid and TWT Eng. won the survey bid. Both companies have begun work. The Graiffs are aware that there is conflict language with their LLC's Formulation Registration Certificate and need to amend the wording to meet the SADC's requirements. Settlement should occur by year's end.

LaRose Farm, 18 acres on Dutch Mill and Tuckahoe Rds. Block 5802 Lot 1. The SADC certified their appraisal on February 28, 2020, and we were unable to go to settlement by 2-28-22, so updated appraisals were ordered from Tim Sheehan and Mike Jones. Mrs. Durkin sold her interest in the farm to her son-in-law, Marty LaRose. The LaRose's received a mortgage with Farm Credit for the balance due on the personal note on July 27, 2022. In early September a new application was completed on the LaRose Farm. The SADC issued a new Green Light Review on September 20, 2022 and the SADC issued a new CMV with the new owner. Their new CMV is \$1,400 more. Ken has sent our requests for quotes and expects approvals in the next few weeks. Settlement should occur by year's end.

PRESERVATION PLAN REVISION

Our 10 year review with The Land Conservancy is complete. On May 26th, the SADC approved our plan. The AAC Committee has suggested that all of the AAC Members, the Planning Board Secretary and Chairman, the Zoning Board Secretary and Chairman, the Township Clerk, The County Farmland Office, The Twp. Library, Tax Assessor's Office, tax collector, and the Chair of the Environmental Committee, each receive a copy, as well as a digital copy. The 50 books are now available to be distributed. AAC members received their copy during this meeting. Ken submitted their invoice, along with the consulting work hours for both LCNJ and himself to the SADC for the Township's 50% cost-share reimbursement, which was \$10,033. This amount has been redeposited in the Twp.'s open space fund.

In November 2022, Ralph sent out the digital format of our ten year plan to: all current AAC members, its facilitator, all Township Planning Board members and its secretary, the Township Engineer, the Township Planner, The Planning Board Solicitor, the County Farmland Preservation Coordinator, The Township Clerk, the Township Environmental Chairperson, SADC's Cindy Roberts and Steve Bruder (Planner), the Township EDC members, the Township electronic

communications coordinator, the Township Zoning officer, Ken's employer (South Jersey Land and Water Trust).

Ken has had numerous correspondences with representatives of the Township's Administrative and Finance Offices, the Township's Municipal Solicitor, representatives from the Township Planning Board, and the Secretary from the Township's AAC on the projects and other items indicated in his Activity Report. He continues to have frequent contact with representatives of the SADC and the Gloucester County Office of Land Preservation to ensure that all of the projects being administered through Franklin Township's Municipal Farmland Preservation Program meet all requirements and protocols.

SADC REPORT

Cindy Roberts is working with Eric at the County on the Warren Nothnick Farm in Malaga on Nothnick La. The farm was subdivided in April 2004 and there are farm buffers along the perimeter of the 18 acre farm that the SADC will not pay to Preserve. Cindy asked the Township to see why these buffers are there, and can they be removed. Ralph will request the Planning Board to investigate PB-04-02. Eric at the County initially stated that he could pay the land owner for the affected buffer acres but would rather have the buffers removed if possible.

Cindy would like to promote a Direct Easement Program with the larger farms (greater than 63 acres) in our Township. The SADC has the funds. With a SADC acquisition, there is no cost share with the Township. She is currently working with Nixholm Reality. 67 acres Block 6805 lots 25-29 in Q farm at the Downtown Airport. Zoned Light Manufacturing (LM).

NEW BUSINESS

Ralph and Ken submitted the AAC's annual SADC PIG Application Compliance Report. Copies were also sent to the County and to the Planning Board. A draft letter was sent out to all AAC members in November.

The next meeting will be held March 13, 2023 at 7:00pm.

Meeting adjourned 7:50 pm .

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph Travaglione

Secretary