

Township of Franklin Agricultural Advisory Committee
Meeting of September 13, 2021
Minutes

In attendance (6) Michelle Doyle, Harry Lucas, Jim Ketchum, Ralph Travaglione, Ken Atkinson, Amy Mandelbaum.

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

The minutes of the last meeting (July 12, 2021) were approved.

Soy Unkow has resigned as an AAC member and we will ask her to submit a letter of resignation to the Township clerk.

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.

DiGioia Farm. Dominick & Tammy. Block 6402, lot 11. Dutch Mill Rd. 15 acres in the Main/Piney Hollow PIG. Pinelands PRR. They received an application on October 9, 2019. There has been no contact since January 2020.

Hunsinger Farm. Block 5901 lot 88, 23 acres. They received an application in June of 2018. Ken called and left a voice mail if they were still interested. Jeff There has been no contact since January 2020.

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.

Graiff Farm. 22 acres. 21 acres tillable. Block 5702 lot 84 on Central Ave. in the Central Project Area. This farm was purchased in September 2020, and has been actively farmed for 100 years, but lost its Q status. Mr. Graiff has re-entered the Q program and we have received confirmation that Q status will be achieved in January 2022. In August, Ralph spoke to them and said we will start their application by January.

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.

Jeff Thies Farm. 79 acres. Block 5802 lot 22 on Dutch Mill & Lake Roads. Main Piney Hollow Area. Zoned PRR & PAP. Mr. Thies rejected the SADC offer and will resubmit his application in February 2022. This will be two years from his original application submittal and will allow new appraisals to be done on that property that will better reflect the current value of his Pineland Development Credits. The County has also agreed to pay for one of the new appraisals, so that the Township doesn't have to absorb the full cost of both.

FARMS THAT HAVE SIGNED AN APPLICATION

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 these 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 are now at the SADC for Green Light Review.

Martorano Farm. 138 acres. 38 acres tillable. Block 5901 Lots 8, 90, 92, 94, 95, 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 is now at the SADC for Green Light Review.

FARMS THAT HAVE BEEN APPRAISED AND CERTIFIED

LaRose/Durkin Farm, 18 acres on Dutch Mill and Tuckahoe Rds. Block 5802 Lot 1. The SADC certified their appraisal on February 28, 2020. The appraisal value does not cover the full mortgage value, and this must be worked out between the co-applicants. Each co-applicant shares 50% title. The LaRose's have applied for a full mortgage on the property. Once the loan has been approved and paid off to Mrs. Durkin, the plan is to have Mrs. Durkin's name removed from the deed and add Mr. LaRose's name. Preliminary Title work has indicated that the mortgage was never filed with the County.

FARMS THAT HAVE JUST SETTLED

McAlister Farm, 59 acres on Dutch Mill and Marshall Rd. Block 5701 lot 17 and 81. After 2 ¼ years, settlement was on July 29, 2021 after a lot of work by everyone involved. The preserved farm is contiguous and/or in close proximity to more than 430-acres of previously preserved farmland. A number of other parties assisted the SJLWT in the preservation of this farm, including the SADC, the Gloucester Co Board of Commissioners, and the Franklin Township Committee, who all provided funding for the acquisition of the property's development rights. The Gloucester Co. Office of Land Preservation also provided a great deal of technical support throughout the preservation process. Ken will submit to the SADC for soft costs (appraisals, title, survey) reimbursement of approximately \$8,000 in the near future.

PRESERVATION PLAN REVISION

Our 10 year review with The Land Conservancy continues. LCNJ has submitted the draft of the revised plan and will make the 2nd public presentation during the October Planning Board meeting on the 17th. All members have received a copy of the draft.

SADC REPORT

Amy Mandelbaum handed out the SADC's August Monthly Report. Amy spoke about the SADC Direct Easement Program. If a farm is greater than 63 acres in Gloucester County, we the Township, will not participate in its Preservation and therefore save our 20% cost share. The farm size can go down to 46 acres to

qualify. Amy laid out a proposal of contacting our larger farm owners to address the Direct Easement Program. A marketing plan is being developed to approach these large farm owners possibly with a simple post card. Amy thanked us for being a very active community in the preservation process. The SADC is only working in office, two days a week due to Covid-19 restrictions. Our Township has a \$1.0m balance and a reserve of \$1.0m in competitive funds available from the SADC. We also had in the Township account \$678,000 at the end of 2020.

NEW BUSINESS

Ken stated that its time to review and renew our township's contract with South Jersey Land & Water Trust for his time as our Farmland Preservation Facilitator.

The next meeting will be held November 8, 2021 at 7:00pm.

Meeting adjourned 7:50pm .

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph Travaglione

Secretary