

Township of Franklin Agricultural Advisory Committee  
Meeting of November 13, 2023 minutes

In attendance (7) Ralph Travaglione, Kelly Welsh, Harry Lucas, Bill Exley, Ken Atkinson, Cindy Roberts, Albert Pustuzzi.

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chairperson Harry Lucas at 7:00 PM after the Flag Salute. OPMAC guidelines were adhered to.

The minutes of the last meeting (September 11, 2023) were approved.

### FARM PRESERVATION STATUS

Ken reported:

Farms That Are Talking To Our Facilitator To Start Preservation:

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 until Ralph spoke to the applicant in January 2023. 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, RA. Ken and Ralph met with the owner on July 27 2022 to discuss the preservation process. They appeared in front of the Planning Board in September to request a 1 lot minor subdivision to remove the home from the farm-it was granted.

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 Reality. 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 2022 and is interested. The Q farm portion of the airport is zoned Light Manufacturing (LM). This farm is large enough for a SADC Direct Easement. Mr. Nixholm indicated that his contract for the VOR (communications tower) with the FAA was normally a 3-4 year contract, and now it is a yearly contract. He has spoken to a potential buyer for the tract. Cindy Roberts is working with the potential applicant. No recent activity.

Carlino Farm. 20 acres Block 6804 lots 27 & 29, Forest Grove Rd, Forest Grove Project Area. Ken and Ralph met with the applicant on June 6, 2023. He currently is talking to the County Tax Assessor to review his total acreage after a recent subdivision. No recent activity.

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 and Ralph visited with them on April 26, 2023 to discuss their application. They are now evaluating their exception option. No recent activity.

#### FARMS THAT HAVE GREEN LIGHT APPROVAL ONLY

None.

#### FARMS THAT HAVE BEEN APPRAISED AND CERTIFIED

Thies Farm. 79 acres. Block 5802 lot 22 on Dutch Mill & Lake Rds. Main Piney Hollow Area. Zoned PRR & PAP. Ralph reviewed their CMV with the applicants on August 29, 2023 after many delays to meet. Thies failed to accept our offer by October 27, 2028 (60 days) and thus rejected our offer to Preserve. His most recent offer was \$50,000 greater than his first offer.

#### FARMS THAT HAVE BEEN SURVEYED

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. Their application received a Green Light Review on 10-5-21. Martorano has agreed to preservation after a CMV of December 21, 2022. Survey work is about complete with current revisions due to ROW with the County road. Once the final survey acres have been confirmed, The SADC ,

County, and Township can execute their respective approval resolutions and work on final steps for closing. Settlement should occur in February-March 2024.

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. In early September '22, 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 (Dec. 21, 2022) with the new owner. Settlement should occur November 29th. Full settlement package is now going through the SADC's final legal review. Atlantic Electric ROW is being reviewed and may be difficult because of the current labor strike. Final Baseline inspection occurred earlier today. Applicant first contacted AAC in July of 2017.

Bellone Farm. Block 6805 lot 4.0 & 6. 50.2 acres.

The farm is on Harding Highway in the Downstown area and the front 300 feet is zoned Highway-Commercial. Their applications were signed on July 22, 2021, and received a Green Light Review on 10-5-21.

The CMV for the farm was re-certified in September 2022. The SADC has requested that the applicant combine their lots at settlement with the SADC preparing the consolidation. Township executed a Grant Agreement on October 10. Settlement should occur November 29<sup>th</sup>. Applicant first contacted AAC in March of 2017.

## FARMS THAT HAVE SETTLED RECENTLY

Nothnick farm, Block 1201, lot 24, 19 acres, on Nothnick La. Settled on October 5, 2023 with the County Acquisition. Franklin provided assistance.

Graiff Farm, Block 5202, lot 84, 22 acres on Central Ave, Settled on October 26, 2023. 21 months from application to closing.

Danko Farm, Block 6805, lot 3, 30.7 acres on Harding Highway, Settled on October 26, 2023. 64 Months from application to closing.

The County will meet on November 28, 2023 to discuss amending their ADA to include the Irv. Green Farm in Franklin Twp. Block 6103 lots 4-8 on Coles Mill Rd. Also on their Agenda is to discuss a Special Events Request on a Preserved Farm in Franklin, Block 2702 lot 13, Exley. If approved, up to 10 weddings and 5 lifetime milestone events can take place annually.

## OTHER WORK

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 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. It was suggested that we all get together and speak with the Bolinski and Tonelli families to start Preservation talks.

Cindy reviewed an Excel Spreadsheet on current activities and expenses. We have one million dollars in Base Grant money available with an additional one million in Competitive Grants available for Preservation.

## SADC Compliance

A motion was made by Ralph and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kelly, to have the ACC support Farmland Preservation for the upcoming 2024 calendar year. Motion Carried. At the November 28<sup>th</sup> Township Committee meeting, the committee will vote on the Resolution to support Preservation.

Ralph will send annual compliance letters to SADC, County, Township Planning Board.

The next meeting will be held January 8, 2024 at 7:00pm.

Meeting adjourned 8:35pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph Travaglione

Secretary