

WARREN COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Department of Land Preservation

P.O. Box 179

500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue

Oxford, NJ 07863

Meeting Minutes November 21, 2013

The regular monthly meeting was held at the office of the Department of Land Preservation, 500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue, Oxford, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Schnetzer at 7:32 p.m. An announcement was read as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6-21.

Members present: Lou Baduini, Tim Bodine, Frank Gibbs, Joe Gourniak, Joel Schnetzer, Wendy Willever

Members absent: none

Others present: C. Tierney, T. Kaminski, Staff; Michael Lavery, Special County Council; Mr. & Mrs. Walter Menegus, White Township; Alan Lowcher, George Van Veldhuisen, McCullough Land Development, Washington Township; Fred Grotenhuis, Giulia Iannitelli, WC Tourism.

Chairman Schnetzer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of the meeting held on October 17, 2013 were approved on a motion by Mr. Baduini and seconded by Mr. Gibbs. Motion carries.

Executive Minutes of the meeting held on October 17, 2013 were approved on a motion by Mr. Baduini and seconded by Mr. Gibbs. Motion carries.

Correspondence: Noted

Public Input (Non-agenda Items):

Old Business

River Edge Estates/Stampf Farm (Fee Simple) & O'Dowd Properties, Greenwich & Franklin Twps. (Fee Simple) – These farms will be discussed in Executive Session.

New Business:

CADB Approval of County Farmland Applications

- **Cericola Farm #1** – BL 58 L 8, 9, 12, 13, 13.01 & 15, Franklin Twp., approximately 182 acres. This application meets the minimum eligibility criteria of 25 tillable acres or 50% of the land whichever is less and has a County rank score of 68.31. There are 96.41 tillable acres used for corn, hay and sorghum and 71.5 acres of woodland, 10.09 acres of wetlands with Prime Soil consisting of 60.33 acres and Statewide soil at 48.250 acres. The structures on the premises to be preserved are one single family residence, one barn, and two sheds. There is a 60 foot wide Transcontinental Gas line easement. These block and lots are within the County ADA and in the Southeast Project Area and located in the Highlands Planning Area.
- **Cericola Farm #2** – BL 58 L 10, Franklin Twp., approximately 31.05 gross acres. This application meets the minimum tillable acreage eligibility criteria, has a County ranking score of 69.36, 31.05 tillable acres used for corn, 30.05 acres of Prime Soil, .003 acres of Statewide soil. The landowner is taking a 1 non-severable exception of 1 acre for a future single family residence. There are no structures on the premises to be preserved and there is a Transcontinental Gas line easement of 60 foot wide on the property. This block and lot is within the County ADA and in the Southeast Project Area and located in the Highlands Planning Area. Since this individual application falls under 40 acres, the CADB decided to waive the minimum 40 acre criteria for a County application and grant approval.

Mr. Baduini made a motion to approve the Cericola #1 & #2 County Farmland Applications and for submission to the SADC for preliminary Green Light Approval. Mr. Gourniak seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Mr. Schnetzer – yes; Mr. Bodine – yes; Mr. Baduini – yes; Mr. Gibbs – yes; Mr. Gourniak – yes;
Ms. Willever – yes

Motion carries.

- **Jack Oberly Farm** – BL 95 L 2 & 2.06, Pohatcong Twp., & BL 97 L 5, Alpha, approximately 92.35 gross acres. This application meets the minimum eligibility criteria, has a County ranking score of 67.06, 91.97 tillable acres used for soybean, 2.36 woodland acres, 86.983 acres of Prime Soil, 4.78 acres of Statewide soil. The landowner is taking a 1 non-severable exception of 1 acre for a future single family residence. There are no structures on the premises to be preserved and there is possibly a County ROW on BL 96 L 2. This Pohatcong block and lots are within the County ADA and in the South Project Area and located in the Highlands Planning Area. The Alpha lot is currently not in the County ADA, but an amendment is being made this year to include this lot.

Mr. Gourniak made a motion to approve the County Farmland Application and for submission to the SADC for preliminary Green Light Approval. Mr. Baduini seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Mr. Schnetzer – yes; Mr. Bodine – yes; Mr. Baduini – yes; Mr. Gibbs – yes; Mr. Gourniak – yes;
Ms. Willever – yes

Motion carries.

McCullough Land Development Application Discussion – BL 47 L 9, Washington Township –

This 40.08 net acre County Farmland application contains one non-severable exception of one acre and one severable exception of 4 acres both for future single family residence. The SADC denied granting Green Light Approval for this application because the landowners had applied for an extension for their preliminary subdivision approval and the SADC stated that this violated their policy. Mr. Tierney has reached out to other conservancies for funding cost-share and had stated that this application does qualify for FRPP funding cost-share. He is working with The New Jersey Conservation Foundation on obtaining FRPP and additional grant money for this project. The Board decided to discuss land values in Executive Session before making a decision on supporting the funding on the application.

Alba Vineyards request to move winery – Mr. Tierney stated that Mr. Sharko would like to move his wine making operation, which is an agriculture use, from a non-preserved area of his farm to the preserved area. In addition, Mr. Tierney stated that Mr. Sharko would construct a Morton building for storage. Mr. Tierney stated that he spoke with Chuck Roohr of the SADC and received confirmation that this was allowable. Mr. Baduini stated that he feels the Board should review the request in writing along with a site drawing. Mr. Tierney will request this information from Mr. Sharko for an upcoming meeting.

Schanzlin/Bigelow Farm, BL 17, L 9 & 20, Harmony Twp. – Ms. Giulia Iannitelli, of the Highlands Tourism Partnership, addressed the Board regarding the the Last Fling Pumpkin Sling activities that are held on the preserved Schanzlin/Bigelow farm in Harmony Township. Ms. Iannitelli stated that most of the attendance for the event is from outside of the County and that it brings repeat visitors for other events and that, if those visitors were to spend \$50 during their trip, this would bring approximately \$125,000 for the local economy. The Board reiterated its concern that the event's activities, including sand sculptures, hot air balloon rides, and commercial food vendors are in violation of the deed of easement because they are not directly related to marketing the agricultural output of the preserved farm. Ms. Iannitelli stated that the fields used on the Schanzlin farm are under the NJ Audubon Society are growing warm grasses and that there is one year left in the program. The grasses are cut before the scheduled event. Chairman Schnetzer stated that while the intentions by the Pumpkin Sling were well intended, some of the activities that take place during the annual event were in violation of the deed of easement because the availability for increased agricultural production must be the first priority use. Ms. Iannitelli stated that finding a farm suitable for the event is difficult because of the distance needed for the pumpkin slinging as well as finding a farm that is flat and producing grasses. Ms. Iannitelli questioned whether the deed language prohibits these activities and Mr. Lavery confirmed that such commercial activities are clearly prohibited by the deed of easement. Ms. Iannitelli left the meeting, but subsequently requested that her notes for the meeting be attached to these minutes.

Discussion of Farmland Applications not in the ADA – Mr. Tierney went over the information and mapping for the amendments to the ADA with the Board. Mr. Gourniak made a motion to hold a public hearing at the next hearing in December regarding the amendments to the ADA. Mr. Gibbs seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Mr. Schnetzer – yes; Mr. Bodine – yes; Mr. Baduini – yes; Mr. Gibbs – yes; Mr. Gourniak – yes;
Ms. Willever – yes

Motion carries.

Administrator's Report: Mr. Tierney briefly went over the status of the applications on the report.

New Applications:

- **Bartha** – White/Oxford Twps. (Approx. 52 acres) Two lots outside ADA.
- **Bullock** – White Twp. (Approx. 64 acres) Processing application.
- **715 Harmony Station Rd. (Crouse, Rich)** – Harmony Twp. (Approx. 108 acres) Processing application; requested more info.
- **Burke/Dinsmore Farm #1** – Harmony Twp. (Approx. 81 acres) Processing application.
- **Burke/Dinsmore Farm #2** – Harmony Twp. (Approx. 18 acres) Processing application.
- **Kinney Estate** – Blirstown/Knowlton Twps. (Approx. 34 acres) Waiting for subdivision.
- **Smith, Skip** – Franklin Twp. (Approx. 44 acres) Processing application.
- **Smith/Demers** – Knowlton Twp. & White Twp. (Approx. 79 acres) Investigating access issues with road. Applicant claims lawyer has requested documents regarding parcel ownership in White Twp.; request made to lawyer to acquire access easement from NJ DEP.

Total Applications: 8 Total Acres: 480

CADB Approval:

- **Cericola Farm #1** – Franklin Twp. (Approx. 182 acres) On Agenda for CADB Approval.
- **Cericola Farm #2** – Franklin Twp. (Approx. 31.5 acres) On Agenda for CADB Approval.
- **Oberly, Jack** – Pohatcong/Alpha (Approx. 92 acres) On Agenda for CADB Approval; requested more info. Alpha lot outside of ADA.

Total Applications: 3 Total Acres: 306

Awaiting Green Light Approval:

- **Brandywine** – Franklin Twp. (Approx. 64 acres)
- **Klimas** – Independence/Mansfield Twp. (Approx. 174 acres) Two lots outside of ADA.
- **Race, Sam & Jean** – White Twp. (Approx. 85 acres)
- **Santini** – Lopatcong/Greenwich Twp. (Approx. 105 acres) State Direct Application.
- **Santini, R&S** – Harmony Twp. (Approx. 71 acres)
- **Smith Farm #1, J&K** – Harmony Twp. (Approx. 49 acres)
- **Smith Farm #2, J&K** – Harmony Twp. (Approx. 53 acres)
- **Meadows at Mansfield** – Mansfield Twp. (Approx. 124 acres) Application on hold until appeal is resolved.
- **Myers/Toretta** – Franklin Twp. Muni-PIG (Approx. 48 acres)
- **Smith, John & Jean** – Harmony/White Twp. (Approx. 119 acres) Awaiting Highlands response.

Total Applications: 10 Total Acres: 892

Active Projects:

State Applications

- **Kleindienst** – Frelinghuysen Twp. & Stillwater Twp., Sussex County (Approx. 130 acres, 45 acres in Warren) Survey & Title Search underway.

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 45

County Applications

- **Beaver Brook Farm** – Hope Twp. (Approx. 137 acres) Appraisals being conducted.
- **Bowers** – Pohatcong Twp. (Approx. 50 acres) Waiting for FRPP review & CMV before closing date can be set.

- **Czar Farm** – Pohatcong Twp. (Approx. 94 acres) Survey underway; requested title search; Received SADC final approval 11/14.
 - **Cooke** – Hope & Frelinghuysen Twp. (Approx. 59 acre County-PIG) Survey underway & RFP's for FRPP appraisal, requested title search. Received SADC final approval 11/14.
 - **Freedom Group, L.P.** – Mansfield Twp. (Approx. 42 acres) CMV \$9,000; awaiting landowner decision.
 - **McConnell** – Oxford Twp. (Approx. 52 acres) Survey being reviewed by SADC; ownership issue on Lot 11.
 - **Pruden** – Hope Twp. (Approx. 162 acres) Under final legal review; expect to close soon.
 - **A. Schnetzer** – Franklin Twp. (Approx. 62 acres) Under final legal review; expected to close soon.
- Total Applications: 8 Total Acres: 720**

Municipal Applications

- **Appar Cider Press** – Harmony (Approx. 19 acres - Muni PIG) CMV \$7,000.
 - **Al-Ruby Farm** (Waters & Schanzlin) – Harmony Twp. (Approx. 27 acres – Muni PIG) CMV \$7,000
 - **Anderson** – Knowlton Twp. Muni-PIG (Approx. 119 acres) Appraisals being conducted.
 - **Erhardt** – White Twp. Muni-PIG (Approx. 27 acres) SADC waiting for closing docs.
 - **Farley Acres (Stern)** – Harmony Twp. (Approx. 108 acres - Muni PIG) Appraisals received.
 - **Ritter** – Knowlton Twp. Muni-PIG (Approx. 7 acres) Under final legal review; expected to close soon.
 - **Schanzlin** – Harmony Twp. (Approx. 87 acres - Muni PIG) CMV \$6,000.
 - **Walburn Farm** – White Twp., (Approx. 28 acres – Muni-PIG) CMV \$5,900; received signed contract, waiting for town to execute.
- Total Applications: 8 Total Acres: 422**

Non-profit Applications

- **K-J Farm** – Harmony Twp., Non-Profit (Approx. 104.72 acres) \$3,175 CMV.
 - **May** – Hope Twp., Non-Profit (Approx. 22.8 acres) \$5,950 CMV.
 - **Star D Farm** – Harmony Twp., Non-Profit (Approx. 46.74 acres) \$6,900 CMV.
 - **Sunny Hill Farm** – Harmony Twp. & Lopatcong Twp., Non-Profit (Approx. 30.647 acres) \$6,650 CMV. Under contract.
- Total Applications: 4 Total Acres: 205**

County Fee Simple::

- **O'Dowd Farms** – Greenwich/Franklin Twps. County-PIG (Approx. 385 acres) Appraisals received.
 - **Stampf Farm** – White Twp. (Approx. 82 acres) Appraisals received.
- Total Applications: 2 Total Acres: 467**

SADC Denial Reconsiderations:

- **Domingues** – Greenwich Twp. Muni-PIG (Approx. 63 acres) Application denied; reconsideration pending.
- Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 63**

Withdrawal

- **Estate of Roy Chambers** – Pohatcong Twp. (Approx. 89 acres)

Public Comment: Mr. Donaldson of Mansfield Township addressed the Board regarding a piece of property that is for sale that he was interested in purchasing. Mr. Tierney had met with the realtor regarding this acquisition. The portion of the property that Mr. Donaldson is interested in purchasing is Block 1105.10 Lot 5, a 57 acre piece of land that runs along Allen Road. The realtor approached the County about purchasing the 143 acre listing that is located in Mansfield and Liberty Township. It has a portion of the Morris Canal on the property. Mr. Tierney stated that the County was not presently interested in purchasing the property because there would be no immediate connection for the Morris Canal to other county-owned property in that area.

Mr. Gourniak made a motion to enter into Executive Session which was seconded by Mr. Gibbs.
 Roll Call: Mr. Schnetzer – yes; Mr. Bodine – yes; Mr. Baduini – yes; Mr. Gibbs – yes; Mr. Gourniak – yes;
 Ms. Willever – yes
 Motion carries. The Board entered into Executive Session at 8:44 pm.

Mr. Gourniak made a motion to come out of Executive Session which was seconded by Mr. Baduini.

Roll Call: Mr. Schnetzer – yes; Mr. Bodine – yes; Mr. Baduini – yes; Mr. Gibbs – yes; Mr. Gourniak – yes;
Ms. Willever – yes

Motion carries. Mr. Lavery stated that the Board came out of Executive Session at 9:26 pm where contractual matters were discussed regarding McCullough Land Development, LLC County application, Stampf Farm and the O'Dowd & Associates and the Brian O'Dowd properties and where no official action was taken and that these minutes will be available to the public when the CADB deems there will be no harm to the public.

McCullough Land Development, LLC application, Washington Township – The Board asked if \$7,000/acre was acceptable for their easement value on their property. Mr. Lowcher responded that this amount was acceptable. Mr. Baduini made a motion to approve funding of \$7,000/acre on this application that is also contingent upon receiving the FRPP grant funding for cost-share. Mr. Gourniak seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Mr. Schnetzer – yes; Mr. Bodine – yes; Mr. Baduini – yes; Mr. Gibbs – yes; Mr. Gourniak – yes;
Ms. Willever – yes

Motion carries.

Stampf Farm, White Township – Mr. Bodine made a motion for the County to conduct a site visit on the property and to report back at the next meeting before the Board decides how to proceed further on this proposed fee simple purchase. Mr. Gibbs seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Mr. Schnetzer – yes; Mr. Bodine – yes; Mr. Baduini – yes; Mr. Gibbs – yes; Mr. Gourniak – yes;
Ms. Willever – yes

Motion carries.

Chairman Schnetzer, Mr. Bodine, Ms. Willer and Corey Tierney will proceed with a site visit in December.

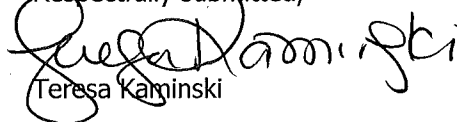
O'Dowd & Associates and Brian O'Dowd properties, Greenwich & Franklin Townships – The Board discussed preserving the properties into three separate farms. Mr. Baduini made a motion to have three new appraisals performed on the properties which was seconded by Ms. Willever. Mr. Gourniak would like Mr. Tierney to contact the landowners regarding the three separate applications.

Roll Call: Mr. Schnetzer – yes; Mr. Bodine – yes; Mr. Baduini – yes; Mr. Gibbs – yes; Mr. Gourniak – yes;
Ms. Willever – yes

Motion carries.

Adjournment: A motion for adjournment was made by Mr. Baduini and seconded by Mr. Gourniak. Motion carries. Chairman Schnetzer adjourned the meeting at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Teresa Kaminski

Written Notes as submitted by Giulia Iannitelli for inclusion of the Minutes in regards to Schanzlin/Bigelow Deed of Easement Violations:

"Highlands Tourism Partnership started up 5 years ago when the Skylands Tourism Regional Council disbanded. Over the years I was noticing the Warren County tourism effort and budget dwindle and I knew Warren County would be left behind. Eventually the tourism budget was cut out altogether.

Our concept was to develop an event that would help us to be self-sustaining rather than to rely on tourism grants that are relied upon by New Jersey's tourism industry. We would spend proceeds on promoting agritourism, ecotourism and cultural heritage. Our focus would be on agritourism because that is where there is more opportunity for economic growth and benefit to the communities. Efforts have reflected more what Warren County has to offer because that is my backyard and what I am most familiar with.

My time is all as a volunteer, using my skills to write grants, build a website, design brochures and do a limited amount of copy writing. All free. All for the purpose to grow our local economies.

The first year we held the event the last weekend in October. It was at a farm that had a farm stand. We made a very conscience decision to hold it then because our mission was to support the local farms and we did not want to detract from the other farms during their busy October weekends.

We include the Christmas Tree Growers Association and developed a flyer to encourage people to come back for another season. We included a bus tour that took visitors to local farms, historic and ecological sites.

Our advertising dollars are limited so each year we promote the event more heavily outside our area than in our own area so that we can get people to travel here.

Each year we have held the event the attendance has been more from outside the area than within. Tracked by a survey.

This year we had 3,700 visitors. 2/3's were from outside the area. That is about 2,500 people. If each of those people spent an average of \$50 that is 125,000 left in our local economy in the days.

In our ads in the star ledger, who has always generously sponsored, we have always highlighted other area events in our full page ads. This year it included Pohatcong House Tour, even though they overlapped with us. This also included the Hoff Vannatta Open House, Quilt show at the high school and Christmas in the Country Trail. At no charge to any of them.

We know people return to the area once they visit the first time. The first day of the Warren County Farmers Fair a woman from Staten Island stopped at my booth and said, this is a very nice event. I never knew about it. I asked her how she heard about it and she said she came to the Pumpkin Sling the year before. Terry Lee also reported to us that people returned the following week to their open house. We take people there on our bus trip and give them a little sampling of what they can see during the open house.

There are other examples of what we do, but to be sure, our entire purpose is to promote farming in Warren County, not just the farm we are holding the event. I volunteer my time quite honestly for our youth. I believe that the more people that visit the area that our businesses will prosper. Tax dollars will fill the coffers, small farms may be able to add a few more part time hands and hopefully one day many more full timers. When I was young I worked at Matarazzo Farms. It paid for my college. It taught me to work hard. I want that opportunity here in my community for others."

By Giulia Iannitelli