

WARREN COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Department of Land Preservation

P.O. Box 179

500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue

Oxford, NJ 07863

Meeting Minutes September 21, 2023

The regular monthly meeting was at the Department of Land Preservation offices. The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Mathez at 7:30 p.m. An announcement was read as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6-21.

Members present: Tim Bodine, Bradley Burke, Rene Mathez, Matthew Hood, Melissa Watters, Jason Menegus

Members absent: Joel Schnetzer

Others present: C. Tierney, T. Kaminski, Staff; Paul Mitchell, County Counsel; Phyllis Burke, Hope Township; Timothy Willmott, SADC.

Minutes of the meeting held on August 17, 2023 were approved on a motion by Mr. Bodine and seconded by Mr. Menegus. Mr. Hood and Mrs. Watters abstain. Motion carries.

Correspondence:

Public Input (Non-agenda Items): No comment from public.

Old Business:

Montalvena Farms, BL 5200 Lot 600 Hope Township SSAMP RTF Hearing continued – Mr. Tierney had stated that Hope Township will no longer be participating in the hearing. Mr. Culton advised Mr. Montalvo's attorney that they'd have to re-notice again for another hearing when a date has been set.

Soil Protection Standards Discussion Regarding Public Comments

The Board talked about the CADB collective letter received from Sussex County on whether they would participate in this letter along with the other Boards, send their own individual comments, or have their own Board letter sent in for the formal comment period that ends October 5, 2023. The Board will not be participating in the collective CADB letter, but would rather provide their own individual comments.

New Business:

Resolutions

➤ #23-07 Drake Certification of Commercial Farm, Allamuchy Township

Mr. Menegus made a motion to accept the resolution as presented which was seconded by Mr. Burke.

Roll call: Mr. Mathez – yes; Mr. Bodine – yes; Mr. Burke – yes; Mr. Hood – abstain; Mrs. Watters – abstain – yes; Mr. Menegus – yes. Motion passes.

SSAMP RTF Hearing

➤ Drake Acres, BL 201 L 11 & BL 203 L 1, Allamuchy Township

Mr. Tierney stated that both parties (Drake & Allamuchy Township) agreed to pursue an ag mediation with the SADC. It may come back to the Board depending on the outcome.

Schnetzer Farms, BL 48 L 13, Franklin Township

The Board acknowledged the plans of his building and made no decision on the matter.

Administrator's Report

New Applications:

County Applications

Total Applications: 0 Total Acres: 0

Non-profit Applications

- **Thunder Ridge Farms** – Harmony (Approx. 23 acres)

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 23

Awaiting Green Light Approval: None

Received Green Light Approval:

Municipal Applications

- **Murray** – Knowlton (Approx. 21 acres)

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 21

Non-profit applications

Total Applications: 0 Total Acres: 0

Received CMV & Offer Made:

County Applications

- **Carafo** – Mansfield (Approx. 57.50 acres) Accepted verbal offer. Contract sent out, under landowner and attorney's review. PAR Environmental RFPs went out. Survey RFPs to go out soon. Title ordered.

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 57.50

Municipal Applications

- **Rick Smith Farm** – White (Approx. 25 acres)

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 25

Non-profit applications

Total Applications: 0 Total Acres: 0

Under Contract (Title Search & Survey):

County Applications

- **Ferri** – Washington Township (Approx. 65 acres) \$4,200 CMV. Sent revised survey and title to SADC to review. SADC replied many issues with new surveyor.
- **McEvoy #1** – White Township (Approx. 102 acres) CMV \$4,800. Sent draft survey to Engineering and County Counsel for review.
- **McEvoy #2** – White Township (Approx. 20 acres) CMV \$5,200. Received New deed to clear up title, can move forward. Survey at Engineering for review.

Total Applications: 3 Total Acres: 187

Non-Profit Applications

- **526 Delaware Road** – Hope (Approx. 125 acres) – \$4,950 CMV. Survey underway.

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 125

Waiting to Close (Final Legal Review):

County Applications

Total Applications: 0 Total Acres: 0

Municipal Applications

Total Applications: 0 Total Acres: 0

Non-Profit Applications

- **Stecker** – Harmony Township (Approx. 18.988 acres) CMV \$5,175. Waiting on SADC to clear for closing.
- **Kimball** – White Township (Approx. 43 acres) SADC sent preliminary review regarding survey and title for final documents.

Total Applications: 2 Total Acres: 61.988

Other:

- Belvidere Road -Harmony Township - waiting on landowner signed letter to put out RFPs on appraisals.
- Allen, Mansfield – Will be sending for appraisal RFPs soon.

On hold:

Non-profit applications

- **Shotwell Family Partnership, LP** – Blairstown Township (Approx. 154.5 acres) This property has been sold. TLC-NJ reaching out to new landowner for preservation.
- **Watercress** – Frelinghuysen Township (Approx. 117 acres) This property has been sold. TLC-NJ reaching out to new landowner for preservation.
- **Brunkhorst Land Donation** - Mansfield (Approx. 49.83 acres)
- **Sigler** – Franklin (Approx. 173 acres) Mill & farmhouse now an option first for purchasing to be discussed with BORC.

Total Applications: 4 Total Acres: 494.33

Pohatcong Contamination Area Projects:

Seeking Highlands Council Open Space Funding cost-share

- **Myers/Toretta #1**– Franklin Township (Approx. 38 acres) Sent final survey and title to landowner's attorney. Waiting on LSAC to start the closing document process.
- **Oberly** – Franklin/Greenwich (Approx. 96 ac.) Revised contract sent to Mr. Russo, landowner's attorney. County Counsel and Mr. Russo working on contract. Adding severable exception area around house and buildings. Waiting to receive appraisal to do new contract, will check with landowner on the one acre severable exception for that zoning. Landowners checking with Zoning Officer regarding exception and access easement and width for Lot 7.01.

Total Applications: 2 Total Acres: 134

Recent Closings:

- **Hoh** – Knowlton (29.293 acres) – Closed on 9/18/21!
- **Promised Land (M. Santini)** – Franklin Twp. (54.386 ac.) Closed on 9/20/21!
- **Santini (O'Dowd South)** – Franklin & Greenwich Township – (121.945 ac.) Closed on 9/20/21!

2023 Closings YTD: 9 farms, 684.624 acres

Program Totals: 336 farms totaling 29,168.950 acres

SADC Update

Timothy Willmott stated that if anyone wanted to comment on the Public Hearing on September 27, 2023 for the Soil Protection Standards, they have to register by Monday, September 25th in order to do so. The SADC will be having their monthly meeting on Thursday, September 28, 2023.

SADC approved updates to the Agriculture Mediation Rules Program with expanded subjects eligible for mediation and added a continuing education requirement for mediators seeking Certification. These rules will be submitted to the NJ Public Register as a proposed rule and will be subject to the 60 day comment period.

Mr. Willmott stated that the Caruso preserved farm that is a SADC Direct Easement was overgrown and will be sending a letter to the owner letting them know that the overgrowth needs to be mowed down and they are near violation status.

Mr. Willmott stated that the mapping for soil disturbance will be run every 5 years.

Administrator's Report:

New Applications:

County Applications

- **Brunkhorst Land Donation** - Mansfield (Approx. 49.83 acres)
- **Sigler** – Franklin (Approx. 173 acres) Mill & farmhouse now an option first for purchasing to be discussed with BORC.

Total Applications: 2 Total Acres: 222.83

Non-profit Applications

- **Thunder Ridge Farms** – Harmony (Approx. 23 acres)

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 23

Awaiting Green Light Approval: None

Received Green Light Approval:

Municipal Applications

- **Murray** – Knowlton (Approx. 21 acres)

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 21

Non-profit applications

Total Applications: 0 Total Acres: 0

Received CMV & Offer Made:

County Applications

- **Carafo** – Mansfield (Approx. 57.50 acres) Accepted verbal offer.

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 57.50

Municipal Applications

- **Rick Smith Farm** – White (Approx. 25 acres)

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 25

Non-profit applications

Total Applications: 0 Total Acres: 0

Under Contract (Title Search & Survey):

County Applications

- **Ferri** – Washington Township (Approx. 65 acres) Sent revised survey and title to SADC to review.
- **McEvoy #1** – White Township (Approx. 102 acres) Sent draft survey to Engineering and County Counsel for review.
- **McEvoy #2** – White Township (Approx. 20 acres) Received New deed to clear up title, can move forward.

Total Applications: 3 Total Acres: 187

Non-Profit Applications

- **526 Delaware Road** – Hope (Approx. 125 acres) – Survey underway.

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 125

Waiting to Close (Final Legal Review):

County Applications

Total Applications: 0 Total Acres: 0

Municipal Applications

- **Hoh** – Knowlton (Approx. 31 acres) CMV \$4,800. Update to subordination agreement.

Total Applications: 1 Total Acres: 31

Non-Profit Applications

- **Promised Land (M. Santini)** – Franklin Twp. (Approx. 58 ac.) CMV \$4,650. County Counsel working with landowner's attorney for closing. Received signed subordination agreement final surveys.
- **Stecker** – Harmony Township (Approx. 18.988 acres) CMV \$5,175. Working on closing. Received final survey deliverables.
- **Kimball** – White Township (Approx. 43 acres) County counsel reviewed revised survey.

Total Applications: 3 Total Acres: 119.988

Recent Closings:

- **Anema, Ralph** – Washington Township (Approx. 123 acres) Closed on July 19, 2023!

Sold:

- **Rapid NJ LLC** – Allamuchy (Approx. 92 acres)

On hold:

Non-profit applications

- **Shotwell Family Partnership, LP** – Blairstown Township (Approx. 154.5 acres) This property has been sold. TLC-NJ reaching out to new landowner for preservation.
- **Watercress** – Frelinghuysen Township (Approx. 117 acres) This property has been sold. TLC-NJ reaching out to new landowner for preservation.

Total Applications: 2 Total Acres: 271.5

Pohatcong Contamination Area Projects:

Seeking Highlands Council Open Space Funding cost-share

- **Myers/Toretta #1** – Franklin Township (Approx. 38 acres) Received revised survey with exception area location change. Will be working on closing. Waiting for County Counsel to review revisions are complete.
- **Oberly** – Franklin/Greenwich (Approx. 96 ac.) Revised contract sent to Mr. Russo, landowner's attorney. County Counsel and Mr. Russo working on contract. Adding severable exception area around house and buildings. Waiting to receive appraisal to do new contract, will check with landowner on the one acre severable exception for that zoning. Landowners checking with Zoning Officer regarding exception and access easement and width for Lot 7.01.
- **Santini (O'Dowd South)** – Franklin & Greenwich Township – (Approx. 132 ac.) Received final survey deliverables. Coordinating for closing.

Total Applications: 3 Total Acres: 266

2023 Closings YTD: 6 farms, 479.032 acres

Program Totals: 332 farms totaling 28,963.3320 acres

Executive Session

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:55 pm on a motion by Mr. Menegus and seconded by Mrs. Watters. Motion carries. Mr. Burke made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Watters to come out of Executive session. Motion carries. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Board came out of Executive Session at 9:59 pm where no action was taken and contractual and litigation matters were discussed and that these minutes will be available when the Board deems no harm to the public.

Adjournment: A motion for adjournment was made by Mrs. Watters and seconded by Mr. Bodine. Motion carries. Vice-Chairman Mathez adjourned the meeting at 10:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Teresa Kaminski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Teresa" and last name "Kaminski" clearly distinguishable.

Teresa Kaminski