

Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Board Meeting
Rt 12 County Complex Building 1 Assembly Room
October 12, 2023 @ 8:00 pm

Members in Attendance:

Dave Bond – Chairman
Bob Hoffman – Vice Chair
Christian Bench
Susan Blew
Bill Bowlby
Alex Hammerstone
Dave Kyle
John Pehinys
Marc Phillips
Liz Schmid - *via Phone*

CADB Staff Present:

Katrina Campbell, Esq. County Counsel
Aaron Culton – County Counsel
Bob Hornby, CADB Administrator
Megan Muehlbauer - NJAES

Open Public Meeting Act:

Chairman Dave Bond opened the meeting at 8:00 p.m. and read the Open Public Meeting Act:

"This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act. Adequate notice has been provided by prominently posting and maintaining so posted throughout the year on the first floor of the County Administration Building, Main St., Flemington, New Jersey a public place reserved for such announcements, and by mailing on or before January 17, 2023, to The Hunterdon Democrat, Star Ledger, The Trenton Times, The Courier News and The Express Times newspapers and TAP Into it newspaper and designated by the Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Board to receive such notices, and by filing with the Hunterdon County Clerk a schedule of the times and dates of such meetings."

Pledge of Allegiance:

Roll Call: Absent: Forest Locandro, Kevin Milz (HCSCD), Katherine Fullerton (Planning)

Approval of Minutes:

- **Minutes of the September 14, 2023 CADB Meeting** – Liz Schmid made a MOTION to approve with minor grammatical corrections. Susan Blew SECONDED. All in favor by voice vote. Dave Kyle & John Pehinys ABSTAINED

Communications and Administrative Business:

- **CADB Staff Update** –
 - Received a Thank You letter from Assemblyman Peterson regarding CADB support of the Preservation Appraisal Formula Bill (Assembly Bill 4729 and Senate Bill 3279) which provides an alternative method for preservation appraisals. It passed in the Assembly and the Senate Bill is in the Budget and Appropriations Committee. Hoping to bring it up in the General Assembly next season.
- **Active Applications**
 - **Amwell Valley Conservancy** (East and West Amwell Twps.) - On the Commissioners Agenda for October 17th.
 - **Barns Farm** (Kingwood Twp.) – Draft Survey is under review.

- **Monitoring Update:**
 - No report provided, Kevin Milz was not present

Chair Comments:

- Commented that if any Board members notice a farm that is preserved that has not been mowed to make the rest of the Board or Kevin Milz aware about it. He also said the agenda was light, so if there is anything anyone wants to discuss they can do it now.
- Bob entertained questions from the Board. Discussion on the Restrictive Covenant requiring annual mowing ensued.

State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) Updates:

Bob provided an update

- Bob stated that he spoke with Stefanie Miller earlier in the day, SADC had an event celebrating the 25,000th acre farmland preserved in the State. The State completed a clean audit on the agency. Key findings: demand is slowing, possible reallocation of the funding toward Stewardship, and possible change in cost share.

Old Business:

- Proposed Soil Disturbance Standards – Bob stated that the previous letters written to SADC will be included in public comment, also included will be a joint letter from 10 County CADB's (Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Morris, Salem, Somerset & Sussex) against the retroactive nature of the Soil Protection Standards, and oral comments from the Soil Protection Standards Public Hearing on the 27th. Public comment has been extended until November 6th.
- Chairman Bond had comments and entertained comments and questions on Soil Protection Standards from the Board. Discussion ensued.

New Business:

- None at this time

Right To Farm Matters:

- None at this Time

Public Comment:

Chairman Bond requested Public Comments limited to Soil Protection Standards.

- Daniel Herr, Stanton NJ – Wanted to thank the Board for looking after the rights of farmers, feels the SADC is abusing its power and forcing farmers already preserved to abide by the new Standards.
- Patricia Springwell, Stanton, NJ – Stated her support for the Soil Protection Standards.
- Dave DeFrance, Kingwood and NJ State Board of Agriculture – Offered his take on the development of the Soil Protection Standards. Requests the Board offer solutions.
- Chuck Bacon, Ringoes, NJ - Stated his comments and concerns relating to nursery business and the Soil Protection Standards.

Chairman Bond opened the floor to any other Public Comments.

- Daniel Herr, Stanton, NJ – Gave an update on Bill S3667 Agriculture Trespass.
- Patricia Springwell, Station, NJ – Commented on farmland owned by EXXON Corp. in Clinton Township and encourages preservation.

Adjournment:

- MOTION to Adjourn made by Marc Phillips, John Pehinys SECONDED. All in favor, meeting adjourned at 8:56 pm

Respectfully submitted:

Bob Hornby, CADB Administrator

Prepared with the assistance of Colleen Runge, Planning Department Clerk