

Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Board Meeting

November 14, 2019 @ 8:00 pm

314 Route 12 County Complex
Building #1 | Assembly Room
Flemington, New Jersey

Members in Attendance:

Dave Bond
Robert Hoffman Jr.
Susan Blew
Ted Harwick
Dave Kyle
Gerry Lyness
John Pehinys
Marc Phillips
Liz Schmid
John Van Nuys
Forest Locandro
Kevin Milz

CADB Staff Present:

Shana Taylor, Esq. County Counsel
Ken Bogen, Supervising Planner
Bob Hornby, CADB Administrator

Open Public Meeting Act:

Chairman 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 11, 2019, to The Hunterdon Democrat, Star Ledger, The Trenton Times, The Courier News and The Express Times newspapers, and TAPinto 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: All board members present.

Approval of Minutes

- Susan Blew made a MOTION to approve minutes from October 10th meeting, Liz Schmid SECONDED. All in favor.

Communications and Administrative Business:

- **CADB Staff update**
 - **Janssen/Peacefield** (Alexandria) – At SADC, Closing Review
 - **Martin** (Delaware) – Survey complete under review at SADC
 - **DuBrow** (Franklin) – On agenda for Final Approval at the December 5th meeting at SADC
 - **Onuschak** (Franklin) – Appraisal under review at SADC
 - **Grochowicz** (Hampton, Glen Gardner, Bethlehem) – Survey complete and under review.

Because it is being partially funded by a Highlands program, SADC and Highlands are reviewing a common deed, this is the first farm to fall under Highlands grant and SADC.

- **Closings**
 - **Varela Farm** (Kingwood) - 87 acres closed Direct Easement
 - **Bellsflower** (Delaware) – 88 Acres closed Direct Easement
 - **America’s Grow a Row** (Franklin) – Closed 35.3 acres. County PIG 2017 Round.

Tonight, we have 4 farms for the **2019 Harvest Round** that we will discuss later. The PIG annual application is due in December. Working on minor changes on the target farms, removing farms that have been preserved through other agencies.

Correspondence:

- Received a letter from SADC today, they are not pursuing any properties that are in the PennEast Pipeline corridor, or any property owners that entered in to a Right of Way agreement with PennEast.

SADC Comments:

- Stefanie Miller, SADC Regional Coordinator; Gathering comments on Special Occasion Events, that has taken up most of their time along with acquisition.

Chair Comments:

- None at this time

Old Business:

- **Special Occasion Events**, CADB Comments – Bob asked the board to send him any questions or comments about this topic, and he will send a letter to the SADC. Board member asked if this is targeted to Winery’s only? The pilot program applies to wineries, but the proposed program is for all preserved farms. Could still do things in exception area. Still have to adhere to all local ordinances. Questions on the definition of an “event.” Discussion of treating wineries differently than the rest of the alcohol industry, all farms should be treated equally under the same easement.
- **Soil Protection Standards**, CADB Comments – They are looking for comments by spring. Board members asked to submit any questions or comments. Question of gravel vs. millings.
- **HC Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan** Update – Will be doing a new plan. Talking to Freeholder Board, not sure if it will be done in-house or hire outside group. Freeholders have more interest in it then just updating and putting it on a shelf. Plan to apply for a 50% grant from SADC, will put in a budget request in December and see how much they want to spend on it. Board member asked if a Municipality could forbid the preservation of a property because they don’t want any more preserved in their township/boro. Shana said not likely. They can just say they don’t want to pay anymore and it could become a Direct State Easement, Stefanie Miller added that the SADC looks for municipal support on all projects.

Right to Farm Matters:

- **SSAMP Hearing**
 - **Beneduce Vineyards.** – Alexandria Twp. asked for adjournment until next CADB meeting on December 12, 2019. Counsel called for a vote to open public hearing on Beneduce Vineyards – Bob Hoffman made a MOTION to Open the Hearing, Liz Schmid SECONDED. All in favor.
 - Counsel called for a vote to adjourn the Hearing, David Kyle made a MOTION to Adjourn and Carry the hearing until December 12th CADB meeting. Susan Blew SECONDED. All in favor.

New Business:

- **2019 Harvest Round Applications,** Site visits to all farms on Tuesday 11/12/19 by CADB Members Liz Schmid, Dave Kyle, Kevin Milz, Administrator Bob Hornby, and SADC Regional Coordinator Stefanie Miller.
 - **Schwab Farm** – Tewksbury Twp. Block 42 Lots 4 & 4.01 Top ranked farm, Liz Schmid reported; equine operation with hay and corn production, it’s a smaller farm of 38.5 acres, surrounded by preserved farms and private conservation easements. Consists of 2 lots (lot 4 and 4.01), will consolidated at closing. Main house is on Lot 4. Exception area will be 1.6 acres. Soils are 47% prime, 49% statewide, 82% tillable. Beth Davison from NJCF was in the audience and offered to answer any questions as NJCF assisted with preparing the application. John Van Nuys made a MOTION for Preliminary Approval, John Pehinys SECONDED. Board member asked how lots get merged. Bob and Shana answered that it gets merged at closing. As a general practice they like to merge lots if not separated by a road. Chairman Bond called for a roll call vote.

ROLL CALL MOVED SECONDED AYES NAYS ABSTAIN ABSENT

David Bond, Chair			X			
Robert Hoffman, Jr., Vice Chair					X	
Susan Blew			X			
Marc Phillips			X			
John Pehinys		X	X			
Gerry Lyness			X			
John Van Nuys	X		X			
Dave Kyle			X			
Liz Schmid			X			
Ted Harwick			X			
Roger “Forest” Locandro			X			

10 IN FAVOR, 1 ABSTENSION, MOTION CARRIED

Herrman Farm – Delaware Twp. Block 17 Lot 20 Dave Kyle reported that the access that comes out onto Sergeantsville Rd. is a driftway across another lot, landowner is considering purchasing a 50ft. strip of land to create a conforming flag lot. Farm is bordered by a preserved farm, is 58% Tillable, 15% Prime, and 79% statewide soils. This year in soybeans and hay, some years it's corn. Stream goes through it. House is outside exception area so they can move/build new house elsewhere on the property, application is limited to one residential unit. In the family since 1929, son is planning on buying from parents. Some neighboring land has been cleared of trees and not reflected in the aerial, sign of growth of agriculture in the area. Buildings in rough shape. There was discussion about the driveway and eligibility and developability. Bob Hoffman made a MOTION for Preliminary Approval, John Pehinys SECONDED on condition that 50' frontage be established to Sergeantsville Rd. (Rt. 523) prior to final approval. Chairman Bond called for a roll call vote.

ROLL CALL MOVED SECONDED AYES NAYS ABSTAIN ABSENT

David Bond, Chair			X			
Robert Hoffman, Jr., Vice Chair	X		X			
Susan Blew			X			
Marc Phillips			X			
John Pehinys		X	X			
Gerry Lyness			X			
John Van Nuys			X			
Dave Kyle			X			
Liz Schmid			X			
Ted Harwick			X			
Roger "Forest" Locandro			X			

ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED

- **Hoyer Farm** – West Amwell Twp. Block 32 Lot 1 Liz Schmid reported; 2.5-Non-severable Exception area along Brunswick Pike with existing house and garage. 7.5-acre severable exception area on the south end of the property in a wooded area with flag access on Barry Rd. 100% statewide soils, 54% Tillable. Property is bordered by preserved farmland and West Amwell Open Space. Bob Hoffman made a MOTION for Preliminary Approval, Dave Kyle SECONDED, Chairman Bond called for a roll call vote.

	<i>ROLL CALL</i>	<i>MOVED</i>	<i>SECONDED</i>	<i>AYES</i>	<i>NAYS</i>	<i>ABSTAIN</i>	<i>ABSENT</i>
David Bond, Chair				<i>X</i>			
Robert Hoffman. Jr., Vice Chair	<i>X</i>			<i>X</i>			
Susan Blew				<i>X</i>			
Marc Phillips				<i>X</i>			
John Perekhyns				<i>X</i>			
Gerry Lyness				<i>X</i>			
John Van Nuys				<i>X</i>			
Dave Kyle			<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>			
Liz Schmid				<i>X</i>			
Ted Harwick				<i>X</i>			
Roger “Forest” Locandro				<i>X</i>			

ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED

- **Saums Farm** – Readington Twp. Block 74 Lot 4 Dave Kyle reported; borders the South Branch Wildlife Management Area on 2 sides. Readington Township looking to preserve 55 acres under a farmland easement, the remainder of the property will be Green Acres funded Open Space. Readington Twp. is under contract to purchase the property. They hope to close in December. Bob stated that the entire farm is 109 acres and Readington is dividing it. The 55 acres of farmland will be auctioned after preservation. Closing would be a condition of Final Approval. Ted Harwick made a MOTION for Preliminary Approval, Dave Kyle SECONDED, Chairman Bond called for a roll call vote.

ROLL CALL MOVED SECONDED AYES NAYS ABSTAIN ABSENT

David Bond, Chair			<i>X</i>			
Robert Hoffman, Jr., Vice Chair			<i>X</i>			
Susan Blew			<i>X</i>			
Marc Phillips			<i>X</i>			
John Pehinys			<i>X</i>			
Gerry Lyness			<i>X</i>			
John Van Nuys			<i>X</i>			
Dave Kyle		<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>			
Liz Schmid			<i>X</i>			
Ted Harwick	<i>X</i>		<i>X</i>			
Roger “Forest” Locandro			<i>X</i>			

ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED

Public Comments:

- Charles Rosen from Iron Bound Farm. Wanted to introduce himself and his colleagues to the board. They own an orchard in Alexandria Twp. and make hard cider.

Adjournment:

- MOTION for adjournment made by Bob Hoffman, Liz Schmid SECONDED.

ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED. Meeting Adjourned at 8:50 PM