

MIDDLESEX COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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LAURIE SOBEL, PP, AICP
Senior Environmental Planner

MINUTES

MIDDLESEX COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Meeting of July 22, 2015

8:00 p.m.

Held at the Cranbury Township Municipal Building

ATTENDANCE:

Voting Members:

Alan Danser
Jim Giamarese
John Riggs
Robert Von Thun
Thomas Mancuso
Rodger Jany

Staff:

George Ververides
Mirah Becker
Laurie Sobel
Barbara Koonz, Esq.

Others:

Dan Knox
Michael White

I. Notification of Adequate Public Meeting Notice

Mr. Danser called the meeting of the Middlesex County Agriculture Development Board to order at 8:00 p.m. Ms. Sobel stated that the meeting had been properly noticed according to the Open Public Meetings Act and all notifications had been provided to all local media outlets.

II. Roll Call

Ms. Sobel called the roll as follows:

Mr. Danser	present
Mr. Riggs	present
Mr. Giamarese	present
Mr. Von Thun	present
Mr. Moskowitz	not present
Mr. Mancuso	present
Mr. Jany	present

III. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting and Closed Session of March 11, 2015

The minutes of the regular meeting and Closed Session of March 11, 2015 were distributed to the members in advance of today's meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Mancuso, seconded by Mr. Giamarese and approved to adopt the minutes of the regular meeting and closed session as presented.

IV. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 15, 2015

The minutes of the regular meeting of May 15, 2015 were distributed to the members in advance of today's meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Mancuso, seconded by Mr. Riggs and approved to adopt the minutes of the regular meeting as presented.

V. Correspondence

A. Announcements -- Garden Field Day – 8/15/15 & Taste of Somerset Agriculture Picnic – 7/25/15

Information on the Somerset County Board of Agriculture's 10th Annual "Taste of Somerset Agriculture Picnic" scheduled for July 25, 2015 from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Suydam Farms was also distributed. This event is held annually in celebration of the life of Thomas Everett. The picnic is a joint effort of Somerset County & Middlesex County.

Ms. Sobel announced that the Rutgers Cooperative Extension's Annual Open House which will take place on August 15, 2015 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the E.A.R.T.H. Center. David Smela from the Rutgers Extension Office asked if any of the CADB members would be interested in manning a table at this year's Open House. Ms. Sobel would not be available, but would be happy to provide a display board and handouts on the Farmland Preservation Program.

B. SADC News Release – NJ Land Link Website

Ms. Sobel distributed a SADC news release regarding the launch of NJ Land Link, a new interactive website that will connect farmers who are seeking land or farming opportunities, with those who have farmland or business opportunities available. To view the site visit www.njlandlink.org.

C. News Articles and Newsletters -- News from NJDA -- June 2015 , Legislating the Lust for "Local" and Fast Tracking Soil Organic Matter & NJ Department of Agriculture's Newsletter

Ms. Sobel distributed the latest edition of News from NJ Department of Agriculture and the above referenced articles from Sustainable Farming at Rutgers.

V. Correspondence

D. Letter from Monroe Township Regarding Preserved Farms

Ms. Sobel informed the Board that she received a copy of Monroe Township's Cease and Desist of Mulching Activities Letter to various property owners in the township which included two preserved farms. A brief conversation followed in which it was determined that CADB Counsel, Ms. Koonz would be issuing two letters for the court's record of what is allowed on preserved farms regarding mulching activities on the two farms that received cease and desist letters and in general.

VI. Old Business

A. Update on the Individual Farm Easement Purchase Applications

Ms. Sobel presented a report on the current status of easement purchase application as listed below:

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Status</u>
Jesse Voight	The landowner has decided to proceed towards closing.
Protinick Farm	The landowners were granted a 60-day extension by the CADB. There has been no contact and the 60-day extension expired.
J.B. Heatherwood Farms	Appraisals will be reviewed later this evening.

VII. New Business

A. Preliminary Approval of the lafelice Farm, Cranbury Township

Ms. Sobel presented the lafelice Farm application. The farm is a 32 acre horse farm located in Cranbury Township. The farm is in an ADA. Cranbury Township has submitted a letter of support for the application. No exception areas were requested. GIS analysis indicated 69.2% tillable land (21.6 acres). Staff analysis showed a SADC Quality Score of 68.95 out of a maximum possible score of 110. Mr. Jany and Mr. Knox had some concerns regarding the GIS analysis and it was decided to table a decision on the application until the next meeting.

B. Annual Farm Monitoring Season

Ms. Sobel stated that she is currently performing annual monitoring of preserved farms. Mailing of monitoring of questionnaires to landowners was done in May. Staff will be submitting reports on the SADC's electronic monitoring system again this year.

VIII. Public Comment

There was no Public Comment made at this evening's meeting.

IX. Convene a Closed Session

A motion was made by Mr. Riggs, seconded by Mr. Giamarese and approved to convene a Closed Session to discuss an acquisition matter.

X. Reconvene the Regular Meeting

A motion as made by Mr. Riggs, seconded by Mr. Giamarese and approved to reconvene the regular meeting.

XI. Action as a Result of Closed Session

A motion was made by Mr. Jany, seconded by Mr. Von Thun and approved to accept the appraisals for the Melissa Beck Farm. Appraisals will be forwarded to the SADC. .

XII. Next Meeting

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for August 12, 2015 at 8:00 p.m. at the Cranbury Township Municipal Building.

XIII. Adjournment

A motion was made, seconded and approved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

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