

MIDDLESEX COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

40 LIVINGSTON AVENUE
NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. 08901
TEL: (732) 745-4014
FAX: (732) 745-3011

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FREEHOLDER LIAISON
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STAFF
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Supervising Planner

LAURIE SOBEL
Senior Environmental Planner



MINUTES
MIDDLESEX COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Meeting of December 10, 2014
8:00 p.m.
Held at the Cranbury Township Municipal Building

ATTENDANCE:

Voting Members:

Alan Danser
Jim Giamarese
John Riggs
David Moskowitz

Staff:

Mirah Becker
Laurie Sobel
Barbara Koonz, Esq.

Other:

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. VonThun	not present
Mr. Moskowitz	present
Mr. Mancuso	not present
Mr. Jany	not present

III. Completion of Reorganization

The CADB completed its reorganization at tonight's meeting. Mr. Danser asked for nominations for the position of Secretary. Mr. Danser nominated Mr. Riggs. There were no other nominations. Mr. Riggs was unanimously chosen to serve as Secretary.

IV. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting and Closed Session of September 10, 2014

The minutes of the regular meeting and Closed Session of September 10, 2014 were distributed to the members in advance of today's meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Danser, seconded by Mr. Giamarese and approved to adopt the minutes as presented.

V. Correspondence

A. FY2016 PIG Application

Ms. Sobel stated that earlier this week the FY2016 PIG Application was submitted to the SADC. A summary table was distributed for the Board's review. There were a total of 121 targeted farms covering 4,488 acres. The total aggregate size of the project area was 21,313 acres. Fifty development easements covering 4,776.25 acres have already been purchased. There are two applications covering 79.52 acres with final approval. The Board expressed their appreciation to the staff and the Board of Chosen Freeholders for their efforts.

B. "Preparing for Later Life Farming" Workshops

Ms. Sobel distributed information on "Preparing for Later Life Farming" Workshops which will take place on February 9, 10 and 11, 2015 at three different locations around the State.

C. Articles – Biocontrol of Mexican Bean Beetle & Tillage Tools for "Breaking Ground"

Ms. Sobel distributed the above referenced articles from the latest edition of Sustainable Farming on the Urban Fringe.

D. Middlesex County Web Site

Ms. Sobel announced the launch of the County's new interactive web site. The address is www.co.middlesex.nj.us. A Farmland Preservation page, a County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) page, and a Farmland Preservation Process page have been added to the site. There is a lot of information about the Farmland Preservation program which is being made to the public. The Board suggested that staff share this information with the municipalities so that links from municipal web sites can be established.

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	This matter is still pending in the NJ Superior Court.
Roy Reinhardt	Revisions/finalization of closing documents is currently underway.
Protnick Farm	Appraisals will be reviewed in Closed Session.
EJG Properties	Landowner did not respond to the CADB's offer letter.
J,B, Heatherwood Farms	Landowner has revised/increased exception area in order to meet the minimum tillable acreage requirement. Currently waiting for SADC's determination of granting "Green Light Approval".

VII. New Business

A. SADC's Pilot Program, Special Occasion Events at Wineries on Preserved Farms

Implementation of P.L. 2014, Ch. 16, S837 signed into law in July authorized special occasion events to be held at wineries in preserved farmland under certain conditions as part of a 44-month pilot program. The SADC at its October 3rd meeting approved a pilot program and discussed the need for outreach to CADBs and potentially affected wineries and municipalities to ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities under the law.

The SADC considers the pilot program to have been effective as of July 2, 2014. All wineries that hold special occasion events on preserved farmland outside of an exception area are subject to the requirements of the law and are automatically part of the pilot program. The SADC has compiled a list of 18 wineries on preserved farms. None of these are located in Middlesex County.

The CADB's responsibilities are as follows:

- Determine what constitutes a Special Occasion Event (SOE). The law defines an SOE as a "wedding, lifetime milestone event, or other cultural or social event as defined by the appropriate CADB;
- May order audit of winery (and request additional information) if necessary to determine compliance with the gross income requirement;
- Approve CPA conducting the audit or may establish a list of approved CPAs for conducting audits, and
- Forward wineries' annual certifications of meeting gross income requirements to the SADC.

The CADB Administrators will be meeting next week. Ms. Sobel will keep the Board informed of any further developments.

VII. New Business (continued)

B. Marketing Campaign for New Applicants

Ms. Sobel asked for the Board's input on how to get more landowners to apply to the program. In light of the fact that funding will be available this year, Middlesex County needs to get some new applicants. The members recommended doing a mailing to the landowners who are eligible for the program and planning an informational session for potential applicants.

VIII. Public Comment

There were no Public Comments 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.

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. Giamarese, seconded by Mr. Moskowitz and approved to approve the appraisals for the Protinick Farm and forward them to the SADC.

XII. Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for January 14, 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 9:00 p.m.