

**EAST AMWELL TOWNSHIP
FARMLAND AND OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES
December 10, 2012**

Members

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| Present: | Glorianne Robbi | Chair |
| | Dick Ginman | Vice Chair |
| | Fred Gardner | Committee Member and Planning Board Liaison |
| | Pat Cregar | Committee Member and Mayor's Designee |
| | Kat Cannelongo | Committee Member and Historical Preservation Liaison |

Alternates

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| Present: | Bill duFosse | Alternate 1 – Ag Advisory Liaison |
| | Joan Sank | Alternate 2 |

Liaisons

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| Present: | Toni Robbi | Environmental Commission Liaison |
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Members

Absent: none

Alternates

Absent: none

Others:

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| Judy Conard | Administrator |
| Christine Rosikiewicz | Secretary |
| Frances Gavigan | Chair, Agricultural Advisory Committee |
| Gail Glashoff | Vice Chair, Agricultural Advisory Committee |
| Kit Crisafulli | Agricultural Advisory Committee member (Arrived at 7:57) |

The Farmland and Open Space Preservation Committee meeting was called to order at 7:30p.m. by Ms. Robbi.

IN COMPLIANCE WITH the Open Public Meetings Act, it was noted that this is a regular meeting of the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Committee pursuant to the meeting notice published in the January 19, 2012 issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat. On December 5, 2012 notice of this meeting was filed in the Township Clerk's Office, sent to the Hunterdon County Democrat and the agenda was posted on the bulletin board.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ms. Robbi moved to the Unfinished Business portion of the agenda as the Agricultural Advisory Committee was present to discuss a possible joint forum in the spring. Ms. Robbi explained that the AAC is interested in holding a forum in the spring; as is FOSPC. She provided an overview of FOSPC forums noting that they were well attended. At the last forum FOSPC presented speakers from the SADC and CADB who explained the preservation process. In addition there were speakers from non-profit conservation groups to explain what they do. Ms. Robbi referred to the draft outline for the forum and asked the AAC what kind of a forum they intend to host.

Ms. Gavigan noted that “things have been changing” as far as how “things are managed” and spoke of more pushback on productivity on farmland. She relayed concerns expressed to the AAC about preserved land going to seed which affects the viability of adjacent farms. She noted that this issue was brought to the Planning Board when they were considering a solar application. If unused land is not mowed the seeds will disperse. She explained the Noxious Weed Act which provided for a 25 cent per weed fine on unmaintained property. Ms. Gavigan spoke of the education of being a good neighbor to your farmer and considering adding language when crafting acquisitions to insure that it is understood that the preserved property must be maintained. She mentioned that there has been a number of Right to Farm challenges in different parts of the state which have been brought to court. She believes the premise of Right to Farm may be undermined.

Ms. Robbi said the forum should be around two hours long. She asked the AAC to provide ideas considering points they are most concerned with and FOSPC can do the same.

Possible speakers, topics and the format of the program were further discussed. Mr. Ginman recently made a presentation on the History of Farmland Preservation and provided information on this. The target audience was further discussed.

Mr. Gardner suggested the agendas for both committees be looked at as there will be a significant difference in objectives and audience; the question is whether they can meld into a single forum. He suggested both organizations create their own agenda and see if there is a common point. Ms. Robbi suggested the committees exchange drafts in January; the forum would be held in March or April. Speakers will need to be contacted in February.

The committees briefly discussed maintenance of open space. FOSPC are the facilitators and do not manage the land. Deeds to preserved farmland are held by the County or State. The County, D&R and HLT all have staff who inspect their properties annually. It was noted that D&R and HLT participate in deer maintenance on their properties. HLT constructs trails on their property. The County participates in both deer control and trail construction.

Ms. Gavigan and Ms. Glashoff left at this time (8:07p.m.).

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

Mr. Gardner made a motion to open the meeting to the public. Mr. Ginman seconded it. All were in favor the meeting was open to the public.

Mr. Ginman made a motion to close to the public; Mr. Gardner seconded it. All were in favor; the meeting was closed to the public.

MINUTES OF MEETING held October 8, 2012:

These minutes were tabled from the November meeting as Mr. duFosse requested comments he made at the October meeting be included in the minutes in expanded form. These comments are now added as an addendum to the minutes. **Mr. Ginman made a motion to approve the October 8, 2012 meeting minutes; Ms. Cregar seconded it. All were in favor; the October 8, 2012 minutes were approved.**

MINUTES OF MEETING held November 11, 2012:

Mr. Ginman made a motion to approve the November 11, 2012 meeting minutes. Minor changes to wording and correction to names of those in attendance were noted. These changes will be incorporated when final minutes are published. **Mr. du Fosse' seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed.**

BILLS FOR APPROVAL:

A motion was made Mr. Ginman to pay the bills as listed on the agenda, second by Ms. Cregar. All were in favor; the motion carried.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: There were no additions to the agenda.

ACTIVE PROPERTIES UPDATE/ADMINISTRATORS REPORT:

Judy Conard made the following report:

- Scibilia: This property is moving towards closing.
- Hay: Two appraisals are assigned. We should receive the appraisals in early January.
- Prosser: Steve Prosser applied directly to the CADB; this application is being processed.
- Perkovich: Stephanie Miller has been working with the family. Ms. Conard will follow up.
- Plimpton: Approval was received for one appraisal to get an indication of value. We await results of detailed discussion between D&R Greenway and executors before appraisal go forward.
- Wiedemer: D&R Greenway expects to close before year end.
- Polhemus: The contract was signed; D&R hopes to close by year end.

- Ms. Robbi said that both the Wiedemer and Polhemus funding ordinances will have the required second reading at the Township Committee meeting on December 13th. Mr. Ginman will attend the meeting.
- Ms. Conard said she contacted Mrs. Kupczak's daughter via email to express our continued interest in her property on Route 31 but received no reply.
- It was reported that the eleven acre Pantel sub-division was purchased by the adjoining property owner.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Forum: Ms. Robbi asked Committee members to submit ideas for the forum to Ms. Conard. The Committee briefly discussed who the target audience for the forum could be.

OLD BUSINESS:

Report on list of Targeted Farms with additions and scoring for new additions: Ms. Conard explained that the SADC requires submittal of a list of targeted farms and a report by December 15th. She has revised the list based on the Committee's suggestions from last month and reviewed the changes.

Ms. Robbi shared a report made at the last SADC meeting that provided preservation statistics. East Amwell received a \$500,000 grant for farmland preservation.

Mr. Ginman said that the County will consider properties less than forty acres if they are contingent to preserved farmland and asked if FOSPC wants to consider these properties. He suggested properties that fit the criteria. Ms. Conard advised that any changes to the targeted farm list would need to be made as soon as possible. It was noted that some of the properties were not in the ADA; work on expanding the ADA would need to start soon for next year's list. Mr. Gardner suggested authorizing Ms. Conard and Mr. Ginman to meet and make a list of farms less than forty acres and flagging properties that are not in the ADA. It was agreed Ms. Conard would add two properties to the targeted farm list.

Report on meeting with Park Commission regarding property in West Amwell: Mr. Ginman reported that he and the others who have been working on this project met with the Park Commission. The Park Commission may do some initial grading of the property and possibly create a parking lot if funding could be provided for maintaining the property by the Townships; this is similar to the arrangement for Deer Path Park. The commission would like to see all the local municipalities participating. The delegates would like to proceed; Frank Bell asked them to determine what type of fields is desired. Ms. Robbi said Kevin Richardson advised the municipalities that Township open space trust funds could be used or the Township could apply to the County to utilize County open space trust funds.

Update on Trail Work:

Stony Brook Trail: Mr. Ginman reported that he is waiting for Attorney Cushing to provide the go ahead on the memorandum agreement for the proposed trail at Stony Brook.

Alan Hershey will not build a trail on the property unless dedicated parking is provided.

Omick Trail: Mr. Robbi noted that there are some trees down on the southern section of the trail since the October storm.

NEW BUSINESS:

2013 Reorganization Meeting: Ms. Robbi announced that the 2013 FOSPC Reorganization Meeting will be on January 14, 2013.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- Historic Preservation: Ms. Cannelongo reported favorably on the recent Lindbergh bus tour. Work on the Clawson House may start soon.
- Planning Board: Mr. Gardner reported that the Planning Board will be hearing an application for a subdivision at their December meeting.
- Agricultural Advisory: Ms. Gavigan reported on this item earlier in the meeting.
- Environmental Committee: Mr. Robbi reported that there will be a Plant Exchange next year tentatively scheduled for May 4, 2013.
- Recreation Committee: Ms. Rosikiewicz reported that the Tree Lighting was held on December 9 and was a success. The Recreation Committee is looking for members.

CORRESPONDENCE: There were no comments on any correspondence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **CADB:** The next meeting is December 13th.
- **TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE:** The next meeting is December 13th.
- **SADC:** The next meeting is on December 13th at 9:00a.m. Ms. Robbi reported that she will attend this meeting. The Rutgers report on noise from wind turbines is on the agenda; the report is not available before the meeting.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

Ms. Robbi opened the meeting to the public. No members of the public were present. **Mr. Gardner made a motion to close to the public; Ms. Cannelongo seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed.**

Ms. Robbi noted that Bill du Fosse resigned as Alternate 1 and as liaison from the Agriculture Advisory Committee. She thanked Mr. du Fosse' for serving on the committee. His participation and insights were helpful to the work of FOSPC.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m. by motion of Ms. Cannelongo, second by Mr. Gardner and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:
Christine Rosikiewicz, Secretary