

SUSSEX COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

MINUTES

DECEMBER 15, 2014

The meeting opened at 7:36 p.m. by Chairperson Brodhecker in the Freeholder Meeting Room at the Sussex County Administrative Center, One Spring Street, Newton, New Jersey. The meeting was held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 of 1975, as amended. Notice has been forwarded to the newspapers and posted on the bulletin board maintained at the Sussex County Administrative Center for public announcement.

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jane Brodhecker, Chairperson
Lori Day, Vice Chairperson
Cece Pattison
Joan Snook Smith

STAFF PRESENT: Autumn Sylvester, Program Manager
Rudy Dragan, Planning Aide
Antoinette Wasiewicz, Recording Secretary

ALSO PRESENT: Steve Komar, Ag. Agent, Rutgers Cooperative Extension

MINUTES CORRECTION/APPROVAL:

Minutes were not available.

CORRESPONDENCE:

A. ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

Autumn discussed two articles which appeared in This Week in Farm Bureau. One related to the Governor's vetoing the Pig Crates Bill and the other was Senate Bill S2021, which Farm Bureau is supporting. The Bill would allow temporary agriculture structures in ag. modified wetlands. Currently the DEP restricts the use of hoop houses or greenhouse structures in these areas. Farm Bureau is arguing that an exemption merely allows for and is consistent with the continuation of common farming practices in these areas.

There was an article in NJ.Com regarding the open space money ballot question. There was a Senate Hearing December 8 to discuss the division of the funds. The constitutional amendment passed last month creates a lasting source of funding for New Jersey's open space, but does so at the expense of other environmental programs, including contaminated site remediation and improvement projects at State parks.

Information was received regarding the New Jersey Agricultural Convention & Trade Show and the 2015 Annual State Agricultural Convention. The conventions are being held on February 3-5, 2015 at the Tropicana Casino & Resort in Atlantic City. There were also invitations to the luncheon and convention dinner.

B. SADC MEETING RE: SPECIAL OCCASION EVENTS:

Autumn reported that CADB Administrators met with the SADC at the beginning of December to discuss Special Occasion Events. The regulations require each individual Ag. Development Board to come up with their definition of Special Occasion Events instead of the SADC. The Administrators felt that this would leave a lot open to interpretation and that there would not be uniformity from county to county.

CADB Administrators met today to discuss this issue but they were not able to agree on a definition. They will prepare a draft from what was discussed today and send it to wineries for their input. This policy will only be for wineries on preserved farms that do not have exception areas.

C. DECEMBER CADB ADMINISTRATORS REPORT:

Autumn reported that at the December CADB Administrators meeting, they discussed soliciting new applications for farmland preservation. Some of the Administrators wanted to know what other counties were doing, whether they were doing division of premises and if they had fees for division of premises. They also discussed the SADC's proposed soils disturbance policy relating to nurseries and greenhouses. The SADC will be using a 10% impervious coverage threshold.

D. HIGHLANDS COUNCIL RMP MONITORING MEETING:

There was a separate meeting of the Highlands Council for Planning staff. The Highlands Council is reexamining and updating their Regional Master Plan and they want to develop a factual basis for potential amendments. They developed a list of 50 indicators that they are going to be paring down to measure whether or not the Act is working and why. There was also discussion on economic development and increasing communication between the Highlands and the counties. There will be an outreach meeting in northern New Jersey (Vo Tech) around the end of January or beginning of February.

E. UPDATE ON S1050 – HIGHLANDS PROVISION EXTENSION:

There was an update on Senate Bill S1050 which relates to the Extension of the Highlands Provision. This was approved by the Senate on December 2 but the Assembly has not voted on the companion bill, A3058.

Lori Day reported that she attended a Sussex County Economic Development Partnership meeting today. Tami Horsfield attended the Highlands Council meeting and had asked for Myth vs. Fact Sheet. Lori received a copy of this sheet and was told she could share it with the CADB this evening. Ms. Horsfield said about six months ago, she and others offered to help the Highlands Council with Agri and Ecotourism. The Highlands Council did not accept their help at that time, but it seems now they are looking for help in those areas. Lori gave the Fact Sheet to Autumn who will e-mail it to the Board.

Jane Brodhecker said the soil disturbance regulations first came to the SADC last week. They have until next month to review them and decide whether or not they want to change anything. From there, the public will have another month or two to provide input; so the SADC's proposal is not set in stone. At the meeting, Farm Bureau said they are not in favor of a lot of soil disturbance regulations. The SADC wants people to understand that it is not called an Impervious Cover Regulation; it is a Soil Disturbance Regulation. More information will be coming out.

AG. AGENT'S REPORT:

Steve Komar reported that in the first or second week of January, they will have representatives from Crop Insurance come to speak specifically about the new regulations for grain producers.

Steve said there is a new Ag. Curriculum at the Sussex County Community College and that he is involved as a consultant. The college plans to have an active internship program and hopes to get the ag. community involved. Rutgers will probably help with this aspect.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. 31 ROY ROAD COMPLAINT UPDATE:

Autumn said the Health Department investigated Roy Road Farms and did not find any violations. The pipe at issue is actually going the opposite way; it is pulling water from the stream into the barn, not from the barn into the stream. The inspectors did not find any evidence of construction debris burial. A roof collapsed and the landowner is cleaning up the wood for reuse.

B. MC NERNEY SSAMP RESOLUTION:

Autumn provided the Board with a Resolution to memorialize the Board's approval of the McNerney SSAMP. Lori pointed out a minor typo and noted that for purposes of signing a legal document, her name is Lorelee Day.

Autumn said she sent a letter to the town two days after the Board approved this SSAMP. She has not heard anything from Mr. McNerney and assumes he received his permits.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Joan Snook Smith to approve the Resolution memorializing the approval of the McNerney SSAMP. The motion was seconded by Cece Pattison. All were in favor, with an abstention from Jane Brodhecker.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. SPECIAL OCCASION EVENT DISCUSSION:

Autumn touched on this issue under Correspondence. She planned a more in-depth discussion but suggested that the item be tabled for a meeting when the full Board is present.

B. SSAMP CHECKLIST REVIEW:

This issue will also be discussed at a meeting when the full Board is present.

C. FPP:

Applicant Meeting – The meeting with the applicants is scheduled for Wednesday, December 17 at 5:30 p.m. The applicants will then have 30 days to accept the offers in writing. When asked about the out-of-state applicants, Autumn said they will be included in a conference call and that his sister will attend.

Kleindienst closing (SADC Direct Easement) – The Kleindienst farm closed last week. This was a direct easement purchase from the SADC. Half of the farm is in Frelinghuysen and the other half (87 acres) is in Stillwater. The signed deed has not been filed yet, but it was approved.

D. 2016 SADC PIG GRANT:

Autumn said she submitted the 2016 PIG Grant to the State today. This year the SADC is requiring all the project summary forms and then the whole application. Last year they only asked for a letter providing the status. Autumn was advised that it normally takes a few months for the SADC to review the application.

E. 2015 MEETING DATE SCHEDULE:

The Board was provided with a 2015 SCADB Meeting Schedule. All the meetings are scheduled for the third Monday of the month, with the exception of January and February. During those months the meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of the month.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Lori Day to accept the 2015 Meeting Schedule as written. The motion was seconded by Joan Snook Smith and carried unanimously.

Lori Day asked if there was anything new at the State level regarding the Brodhecker issue. Jane said they haven't said anything different and that it wasn't even mentioned at the last meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

All business having been completed, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Joan Snook Smith. The motion was seconded carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.