

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

February 9, 2022

7:30 a.m.

Call to Order

The February 9, 2022 meeting of the Cumberland County Agricultural Land Preservation Board was held in person and over videoconference utilizing Zoom meetings.

Attendees included:

Board members – Diane Stamy, *Bill Piper, Denny McCullough, Barry Frantz, Phyllis Nye

Advisory members – Vince DiFilippo, *Samantha Gehrett

Staff members – Kirk Stoner, Stephanie Williams, Mark Kimmel, Elizabeth Grant, Jessica Cohick

Solicitor – Robert Frey

Guests – None

Absent – Mike Klinepeter, Carl Goshorn

(* *attended via Zoom*)

Approval of Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda for the February 9, 2022 meeting was made by Denny McCullough and seconded by Phyllis Nye. Vote was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Denny McCullough made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2022 board meeting, Barry Frantz seconded the motion. Vote was approved unanimously.

Public Comment

No comments

Communications

Ms. Williams reported on the PFPA Spring Meeting to be held on March 15th in Gettysburg. Stephanie and Elizabeth Grant will be attending. The agenda was presented to the board and members were invited to attend if interested. The deadline to register is March 1st.

Solicitors Report

No Report

Candidate Interviews

Mrs. Stamy provided introductory comments on the selection process and explained that each of the candidates will be asked the same questions:

- Provide an overview of your resume/background
- What made you decide to get involved with local government?
- How does your township support agriculture and farmland preservation in your community?
- What role can or should the local government play in farmland preservation? Are there ways the County could better work in partnership with municipalities on the program?

Scott Mack is the Township Manager and Supervisor for Southampton Township. He worked on a dairy farm as a child, later spent time in the Army and eventually ended up working for the Township. He is a husband and father of two.

Mr. Mack is very familiar with the farmland preservation program and Southampton Township is involved in the ASA program and their comprehensive plan designates areas with the goal of preservation. The look at the farmland strategically and determine what is consistent with the future land use and zoning within the municipality. He feels that each municipality should be familiar and aware of their farmers and help educate them about the program. The partnership with the County is important and other than the ability to contribute more financially to the farmers, the process is fair. It's important to determine which farms should be preserved and which ones make more sense to allow for industrial, commercial, or residential uses.

Ron Greenway is the Township Supervisor for North Middleton Township. He was introduced to farming growing up working on farms. For years he lived out west and later married and worked on his wife's family ranch until relocating back to PA. He worked in the rehabilitation field and was owner of a physical therapy facility until he retired in 2011. He and his wife spent time on a 2-year mission in Indonesia where they worked with a lot of farmers during those years. He's been a resident in North Middleton Township since the 80's and raised his family there. He has served on his church's board and once that term ended, he moved into the municipal role.

Mr. Greenway got involved with the township to stay busy and continue to contribute to the community. He is interested in being more involved in the agricultural programs. North Middleton has a significant portion in the northern part of the municipality that is agricultural, and their goal is to continue to support preservation and educate their farmers about their options. The industrial side of things can be very hard to pass up with their offers and he would like to see farmers have more incentives to preserve.

Robert Kole is the Township Supervisor for Dickinson Township. He is serving his first term as an elected township official. He's always had interest in politics to a certain extent and wanted to start getting involved when he had some concerns within his township. The previous supervisor was not running for re-election, so he felt it was time to get involved. He's lived in Cumberland County since the 80's but grew up in central New Jersey in a rural area.

Mr. Kole is interested in getting involved and learning more about the programs available. The involvement with the township is still new to him and he is still learning the details and processes for Dickinson with the farmland preservation program, zoning and comprehensive plan. He likes the idea that the board consists of a mix of lifestyles and inputs towards each farm that comes across the table. Being new to the position, he is impressed with the relationship that municipalities and county have the open lines of communication which is important. The goal for his position is to represent the municipalities and to promote within his own township as well to educate farmers and promote farmland preservation. There is also an interest to get municipalities involved financially with a form of match program as incentive.

Following the question and answer period, the board members went around the table and gave their thoughts on each candidate. There was consensus that all three brought a lot of enthusiasm to the table and interest in being involved and learning more about the programs. Scott Mack had the most municipal level experience as well as farming background. Southampton also has a large portion of plain sect that is an opportunity to educate and expand preservation within their community. Discussion of which township has the most farmland available as well as which comprehensive plans designate farmland for preservation. Southampton and Dickinson both have a lot of acreage in the program. The Board would like to involve more township officials in the program in addition to the elected representative.

A motion to nominate Scott Mack with Southampton Township as the Township Representative was made by Denny McCullough and seconded by Bill Piper. Vote was approved unanimously.

Unfinished Business

PA Ag Discovery Center

Kirk Stoner gave an update on the proposal submitted by CAEDC. A meeting was requested with PA Dairyman's Association to discuss our letter of interest. Reported they liked the site we have proposed which is county owned property off Army Heritage Road and is adjacent to a preserved farm. The next step will be to determine funding for the feasibility study. CAEDC was advised that the group will choose a county first and then the study will be done.

Update on 2020-2021 Farms

Ms. Williams provided the following highlights from the 2020-2021 status update sheets:

2020 Round

- There are 3 farms remaining to go to settlement
- Halteman and Martin will have settlement this week
- Nealy will have settlement in March

2021 Round

- Surveys are being finalized and the next step is preparing a submission in PA Farmland for State Board approval
- There are 4 farms currently applying for Federal funding. If approved, landowners will receive a 10% bonus incentive

Rankin Subdivision Request

Ms. Williams gave an update on Rankin's request which the Board reviewed previously. Mr. Rankin has provided an official plan to show what he would like to accomplish. The request is to subdivide the 120 acre farm parcel into 2 tracts; a 17 acre tract and a 103 acre tract. The 17 acre tract will be continue to be owned by Mr. Rankin. The remaining 103 acres is proposed to be conveyed to a local farmer who wishes to purchase the farmland. Mr. Rankin indicates the purpose of the subdivision is to retain the 18 acres to provide access to a shed and to create a lot to buffer and compliment his existing home.

There was general discussion on the proposal. Concerns were expressed about the future use of the 18 acre lot as well as a potential future request to subdivide for a 2-acre residential lot, including new access to that lot. Staff indicated that any future requests would be handled separately and must fall within the program criteria.

A motion was made by Bill Piper to accept the proposal to subdivide 17.85 acres as meeting the criteria for the program and Phyllis Nye seconded. Vote was approved 4 yes to 1 no (Denny McCullough).

New Business

Mains Subdivision – Informal Review for Ritner Highway and Kutz Road

Daniel Mains owns a 372-acre easement made up of 3 parcels. 2 of the 3 parcels are described as one tract/legal description. The goal is to convey one of the 2 parcels currently describes as one tract to another farmer. Once the official plat is received it will then be presented to the board for consideration.

Adjournment

Denny McCullough made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Phyllis Nye seconded. Vote was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:19 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Jessica Cohick