

MINUTES
MORRIS COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
30 Schuyler Place, 4th Floor, Morristown, New Jersey
May 12, 2016

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Keller at 7:33 p.m. Members present:

Aimee Ashley Myers
Dale Davis
Rick Desiderio (arrived at 7:38 p.m.)
Kathy Hammond
Kenneth Wightman

Members with an excused absence:

Harvey Ort

Also in Attendance:

Peter Nietzsche, RCE
Jennifer Wallace (departed at 7:50 p.m.)
John Wallace (departed at 7:50 p.m.)
Ms. Wallace (departed at 7:50 p.m.)

Staff in attendance:

Christine Marion
W. Randall Bush, Esq.
Katherine Coyle

COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW

Chairman Keller announced that in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of the meeting had been provided and filed with the Town of Morristown, the Morris County Clerk, the Daily Record and the Star Ledger.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of member Ashley Myers, seconded by member Davis, the Board members approved the March 10, 2016 meeting minutes. A roll call vote was taken.

Aye: Ashley Myers, Davis, and Hammond

Nay: None Abstain: Wightman and Keller

Member Desiderio arrived at this point.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

RIGHT TO FARM

Wallace Tree Farm, Washington Twp. – request for SSAMP. Mrs. Jennifer Wallace, Mr. John Wallace and Ms. Wallace introduced themselves to the Board. Ms. Coyle informed the Board that Mrs. Wallace submitted an application for a site-specific agricultural management practice (“SSAMP”) for the Wallace Tree Farm operation located in Washington Township. The operation consists of Block 46, Lot 15 and totals 27.88 acres. Mrs. Wallace wishes to construct a storage barn for machinery and equipment, a farm stand to retail horticultural and forest products, a greenhouse to produce horticultural products, and two signs to identify the farm – all in the front yard of the farm.

Ms. Coyle presented to the Board a Staff Report summarizing the application, RTF procedures, and staff review and comments. Because Mrs. Wallace’s farm management unit consists of more than 5 acres, in order to meet the Right to Farm Act’s definition of a “commercial farm,” it must produce agricultural or horticultural products worth \$2,500 or more annually, and satisfy the eligibility criteria for differential property taxation pursuant to the Farmland Assessment Act.

Mrs. Wallace had submitted proofs that her operation meets the Right to Farm Act’s definition of a “commercial farm”. Ms. Coyle informed the Board that the production, processing and packaging of forestry products and horticultural crops, as well as the construction of a barn, a farm stand and a greenhouse to be utilized for the agricultural activities, are included in one or more of the permitted activities set forth in N.J.S.A. 4:1C-9.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 2:76-2.3(h), if the Board determines that the farm operation is a commercial farm pursuant to N.J.S.A. 4:1C-3 and that the operation or practice is included in any of the activities permitted by N.J.S.A. 4:1C-9, then the Board and/or Board staff may request that the commercial farm owner or operator provide information using a checklist adopted by the Board.

On motion of member Wightman, seconded by member Davis, the Board members voted that the Wallace Tree Farm operation is a commercial farm and that the farm practices in question are included in one or more of the permitted activities set forth in N.J.S.A. 4:1C-9. The Board also approved the SSAMP Checklist. A roll call vote was taken.

Aye: Ashley Myers, D. Davis, Desiderio, Hammond, Wightman and Keller

Nay: None Abstain: None

Ms. Coyle informed Mrs. Wallace that the SSAMP Checklist would be forwarded to her after the meeting.

At this point, Mr., Mrs. and Ms. Wallace left the meeting room.

CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to P.L. 1975 Ch. 231, the Open Public Meetings Act, Chairman Keller announced that in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the Morris CADB considered closing the open portion of the meeting in order to discuss matters related to the purchase, lease or acquisition of real property, and litigation in Closed Session. On motion of member Wightman, seconded by member Davis, the Board voted to conduct a Closed Session. A roll call vote was taken.

Aye: Ashley Myers, Davis, Desiderio, Hammond, Wightman and Keller

Nay: None Abstain: None

RETURN TO MEETING

The meeting reopened to the public at 8:21 p.m.

ACTIONS RESULTING FROM CLOSED SESSION

Konkus Farm, Chester Township. On motion of member Wightman, seconded by member Davis, the Board agreed to pre-acquire the easement with the intent to close with the County paying 100% and to seek reimbursement at a future time. A roll call vote was taken.

Aye: Ashley Myers, Davis, Desiderio, Hammond, Wightman and Keller

Nay: None Abstain: None

REPORT OF DIRECTOR & ATTORNEY

Monitoring: Central & N-E Regions. Ms. Coyle informed the Board that monitoring of Central and N-E Region farms would begin on May 16 and end on June 30.

LITIGATION

Riamede Farm, Chester Township. The matter was adjourned.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to review.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to review.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to review.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion of member Wightman, seconded by member Davis, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Coyle". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Katherine Coyle
Director