

Ocean County Agriculture Development Board
Minutes of July 10, 2024
New Egypt Town Hall

Attendance: Doug Hallock, Chair; Kathleen Sucharski, Vice Chair; Herbert Marinari (OCADB); Glenn Riccardi (OCADB); Jeff Vogel (OCADB); Martin Lynch (OCADB); Timothy Gleason (OCPLD); Thomas Thorsen (OCPLD); Bob Kuhne (OCPLD); Mat Thompson (County Counsel); Charles Roohr (SADC); Katie Mazzella (SADC); Dr. Stephen Yergeau (OC Ag Ext).

Public Attendees: Diane Vogel, Robert Bowen, Greg Matthews

I. Flag Salute

II. Call to order and Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act- Mr. Hallock (Chair) called the meeting to order at 8:00 pm by stating the Open Public Meetings Act requirements had been met.

III. Roll Call

IV. Approval of Minutes from May 9, 2024

A **MOTION** was made by Ms. Sucharski to approve the May 9, 2024 minutes. Mr. Vogel seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

V. SADC Statewide Formula Valuation Presentation – Charles Roohr presented the proposed formula valuation to the Ag Board, which will allow a weighted ranking of several new factors in coming up with appraisal values. A consultant has been hired to come up with the formula. This new law is intended to allow the state, nonprofits, and local governments to better compete with developers. Preservation entities have had declining success in getting accepted offers for farmland easements. The Board was asked for their input. Ms. Sucharski asked how zoning would be considered into the formula. Mr. Roohr replied that zoning is subject to change, so giving more weight to land capability as opposed to current zoning is being considered. Mr. Lynch advised that the appraisal formula should have consistent metrics so that values are consistent and fair. Mr. Thompson expressed concern about how the formula could upset some people and have other unforeseen effects.

VI. New Business:

- Annual Farm Inspections – Mr. Gleason presented a photo slideshow of the results of the annual farm inspections.

- I&G Farms – Division of Premises – Mr. Gleason presented the farm owners reasons for their interest in dividing the farm. The farm consists of two non-contiguous lots separated by a highway and another privately owned farm. The owner wants to sell one of the lots to an outdoor nursery operation and keep the smaller lot containing a greenhouse/nursery operation. Mr. Hallock asked Mr. Roohr what he thought of the application. Mr. Roohr replied that the 10-acre greenhouse operation is much smaller than other farms that have seen approval for a division. He was also concerned that the farm would not meet the criteria of providing a variety of agriculture types.

A **MOTION** was made by Ms. Sucharski to approve the I&G Farms Division of Premises application and send the application to the State Agricultural Development Board (SADC) for their determination. Mr. Vogel seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

VII. Public Comment

Dr. Yergeau updated the Board on current efforts made by the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Cooperative Extension of Ocean County. This included the annual Ocean County Fair and work the office is doing to get information out about heat stress and protection from heat in agriculture. He also informed the Board of recent updates on the ongoing spread of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), commonly known as Bird Flu and available resources for poultry and livestock operations for prevention and to combat the infection.

Ms. Mazzella informed the Board that the Notice of Substantial Changes of the Soil Protection Standards will be published in the New Jersey Registrar on July 15th, 2024 with a 60-day public comment period.

Mr. Bowen asked the Board if there is annual outreach to farms for potential preservation. Staff replied that the office periodically sends out applications to target farms in the County and are expecting to do a mass mailing in the near future.

Mr. Matthews spoke to the Board about the importance of smaller farms in New Jersey.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Lynch to move into closed session at 9:22 pm. Ms. Sucharski seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Vogel to move out of closed session into open session at 9:38 pm. Ms. Sucharski seconded. Roll call. All in favor, motion carried.

There will be no action taken on the farm discussed in closed session.

VIII. Adjournment

A **MOTION** to adjourn at 9:43 pm was made by Mr. Vogel and Ms. Sucharski seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Next Meeting: August 8th, 2024 at 8:00pm
New Egypt Town Hall

Respectfully Submitted,



Larisa Paxton
Assistant Planner