

**Lancaster County Agricultural Preserve Board
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 26, 2017**

Present: Mr. Gene Garber
Mr. Edward Goodhart III
Mr. Jeffrey Frey
Mr. Richard Hurst
Mr. Roger Rohrer
Mr. Daniel Zimmerman
Mr. Matthew Young

Absent: Mr. Gary Landis
Commissioner Dennis Stuckey

Staff: Mr. Matthew Knepper, Director
Mrs. June Mengel, Farmland Preservation Specialist
Mr. Kevin Baer, Farmland Preservation Specialist
Ms. Brittany Smith, Administrative Coordinator & Recording Secretary

Guests: Mrs. Joella Neff, Lancaster Farmland Trust
Mr. Jeffrey Swinehart, Lancaster Farmland Trust

I. Call to Order

Mr. Gene Garber called the meeting to order at 8:12 a.m.

II. Review of Mission Statement

"To forever preserve the beautiful farmland and productive soils in Lancaster County and its agricultural heritage; and to create a healthy environment for the long-term sustainability of the agricultural economy and farming as a way of life."

III. Executive Session

The Agricultural Preserve Board met in executive session on January 26, 2017, at 7:15 a.m. to discuss real estate transactions and violation of an Agricultural Conservation Easement; and potential litigation related thereto.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the December 15, 2016 meeting minutes made by Mr. Roger Rohrer and seconded by Mr. Jeffrey Frey

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

V. Announcements

A. Jeffrey Frey hosted a No-till Alliance educational workshop recently, with information on cover crops, no-till, riparian buffers, etc. The Alliance will meet again in July. He mentioned that while these conservation techniques are important, there is a delay in

seeing results of the improvement of the Chesapeake Bay. It could take up to 20 years to see changes taking place in the Bay.

- B.** Matt Knepper asked Richard Hurst to update the board regarding the recent decision made by Manheim Township Commissioners to deny approval for the Oregon Village and Shawnee redevelopment project. Mr. Hurst was unsure if it was economically feasible for him to move forward with the redevelopment of the Shawnee site without sharing the costs of road improvements with Oregon Village. Dan Zimmerman commented that it is increasingly important to be a part of regional planning and partnerships. Growth is inevitable, but it about balancing your carrying capacity with quality of life. Do municipalities and regions have the infrastructure to support growth? Jeffrey Swinehart, with the Lancaster Farmland Trust, commented that they had denied the proposal for eminent domain on the grounds that the project would benefit a private entity over public. This issue would only be resolved from a letter with the IRS. As a member of the Manheim Township Planning Commission, Swinehart was in support of the development on the grounds that the proposal was within the urban growth boundary and had adequate density. The denial was indeed a “missed opportunity”.

VI. Business from Guests

No business from guests was presented.

VII. Old Business

No old business was presented.

VIII. New Business

A) Requests for Subdivision/Land Development

- 1. Land Development:** Robert, Abram, and Thomas Barley, Acq #847, have proposed construction of two calf barns and associated concrete pads and aprons for a total addition of 22,298 SF'. The project is within the impervious surface limit of the FRPP Addendum. Staff recommends approval, as it is within the impervious surface limit.

Motion to approve the Construction Request as it was presented Mr. Roger Rohrer and seconded by Mr. Jeffrey Frey.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- 2. Agricultural Subdivision:** Glenn S. and Charlene F. Reiff is requesting an agricultural subdivision to their 105.94 acre farm, creating two farms 55 and 50.79 acres respectively. The Agricultural Conservation Easement incorporate the 2002 Corrective Subdivision Guidelines (originally approved in 1995), which permit an Agricultural Subdivision if it does not create parcels of less than 50 acres.

Dan Zimmerman's Comments

This farm is under the Wellhead Protection program. Warwick Township requires riparian buffer zones, as stated in their zoning ordinance.

Matt Knepper's comments:

In order to comply with the Warwick Township zoning ordinance and the Agricultural Preserve Board's easement, the Reiff Conservation Plan would need to be updated, adding the riparian buffers as part of Best Management Practices (BMPs). Staff recommends approval once all Conditions of Approval have been verified as complete.

Motion to approve the proposal with condition that the Conservation Plan is updated and all the conditions of approval discussed and noted on the Board Summary as submitted with the Board materials are followed was made by Mr. Roger Rohrer and seconded by Mr. Jeffrey Frey. Voting to approve the motion: Mr. Gene Garber, Mr. Jeffrey Frey, Mr. Richard Hurst, Mr. Roger Rohrer, Mr. Dan Zimmerman, and Mr. Matthew Young. Voting against the motion to deny the proposal: Mr. Edward Goodhart, III

MOTION CARRIED

B) 2016 Year in Review: To date, the Agriculture Preserve Board has preserved 19 farms, and approximately 1,200 acres in 2016. The Board has spent 1.35 million dollars in County funds. Including state and other shares, that cost totals 4 million dollars. The total preserved farms were appraised for 4.8 million and we have averaged 83% in bargain sales. The County's share is only 33% of total, with a \$1,139 per acre average, with the rest of funding coming from state and municipal shares. Mr. Knepper reviewed a graph presenting the average (by acre) Appraised Easement Values and Purchase Prices of the last 5 years. Purchase prices are trending up, as well as appraised easement values.

C) 2017 Funding: The APB currently has 193 farms on the 2016 ranking list, with 27 of applications being new this year. The Lancaster Farmland Trust has 35 farms on their 2017 waiting list. Typically, when there is low funding for preservation the board sees few applicants, and vice versa. Mr. Knepper projects that with current funding the APB should be able to preserve between 20 and 30 farms in 2017. At the Commissioner's Tuesday work session, funding for the APB was approved for 1.5 million dollars. Lancaster Farmland Trust will receive 250,000. State funding will be approved in February. The APB will compete for 30 million dollars of state funding.

D) Additional Discussion: Mr. Knepper added that one of the members of the Stewardship Committee will most likely be stepping down this year. He asked the Board for suggestions for a potential new member for the Stewardship Committee, preferably a younger farmer. Since the stewardship committee has involvement in what the APB does, he asked the Board to view this potential new committee member as a possible potential board member in the future, as the right qualified person and opportunity arose.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 a.m.

The next schedule meeting of the Agricultural Preserve Board:

Thursday, February 23, 2017, at 8:00 a.m.

Lancaster County Government Center

150 North Queen Street, Room 104

Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17603