

MINUTES OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY FARMLAND COMMITTEE
Suffolk County Planning Department

Date: January 23, 2007

Members Present: Bennett Orłowski, Jr. (At-Large), Chairman
Thomas A. Isles, Suffolk County Dept. of Planning Director (At-Large)
Nate Corwin (At-Large)
Jeffrey Rottkamp (Riverhead)
Lee Foster (Southampton)
Olney M. Gardiner (East Hampton)
Alfred J. Kilb, Jr. (Shelter Island)
Heather Lanza (Brookhaven)
Joseph Krukowski (Southold)
Charlie Scheer (At-Large)
Mark Zaweski (At-Large)
Eugene Murphy (Islip)
Dale Moyer (At-Large)

County Staff Present: Janet Longo, Suffolk County Div. of Real Estate
Robert Zaher, Suffolk County Div. of Real Estate
Roy Fedelem, Suffolk County Dept. of Planning
Ted Klein, Suffolk County Dept. of Planning
Jenny Kohn, Suffolk County Department of Law

Guests: Lawrence Foglia
Liz Dewar
Doug Dittko
Fred Hammerle
Ralph Freeman
Joseph Gergela
Lee Koppelman, Center for Regional Policies Studies
William Sanok
Dennis Cole, Town of Brookhaven, Div. of Env. Protection
Sharon Wohlgemuth, Town of Brookhaven, Dept. of Land Management
Robert Nolan, President, Long Island Farm Bureau
John Kennedy, Chairman, Town of Brookhaven Ag. Committee
Annette Eadenesto, Town of Brookhaven, Law Department
George Proios

Members Absent: Albert Schmitt (At-Large)
Russell Barnett (Smithtown)
Dan Fricke (At-Large)
Ronald Bush (At-Large)

Chairman Orłowski, called the meeting of the Suffolk County Farmland Committee to order at 3:15 p.m. but *a quorum was not reached until 3:35* at the Arthur Kunz Memorial Library, H. Lee Dennison Bldg., 4th fl., Hauppauge.

NEW MEMBERS

Chairman Orłowski introduced Heather Lanza the new representative from Brookhaven replacing Elmer Zeh, and Jeffrey Rottkamp representing Riverhead.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was put forth by Charles Scheer and seconded by Nate Corwin to approve the minutes of the October 24, 2006 meeting of the Farmland Committee. Motion carried. 12-0-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Orłowski opened the meeting for public comments. There being none, the Chairman moved to the next item on the agenda.

ROSENBAUM LAVENDER FARM - PARKING SPACES (Previously tabled)

Gail Wickham will return to Committee if in the future she needs the parking spaces. Remained tabled.

FORMER HEILBUT FARM - COOKS LANE, SOUTHAMPTON

The County inspector determined that Heilbut Farm is building a house next to the PDR parcel and using the farm road (on the PDR land) as access to the house. Access was previously requested and had been denied by the Farmland Committee. Mary Jane Asato, the attorney for the owner, tried to get to the meeting but got lost. The Committee continues to monitor the situation.

FRED HAMMERLE - GREENHOUSES ON FORMER ZEH FARM IN MANORVILLE

Mr. Hammerle spoke to the Committee. He proposes to erect temporary greenhouses, gutter connected with no continuous foundation, 4 inch post, with plastic covering, to be done in stages, three (3) to six (6) years apart. Production area consists of a greenhouse structure 18,000 sq. ft. concrete floor, machine to make soil mix, machines to transplant, no soil removal, annual, perennials and vegetables. One hundred percent (100%) wholesale. This is a "partnership parcel" with the County owning 70% and Brookhaven Town owning 30%.

John Turner, Director, Town of Brookhaven, Dept. of Environmental Protection, spoke to the Farmland Committee. He feels the soil, vistas and rural character of the land are not being preserved. Mr. Turner and the Town of Brookhaven have concerns that not enough time has been allowed to get the necessary answers to many of the questions. Brookhaven's Town Board expressed concern also and asked that the Committee defer any decision so that this can be studied further.

Annette Eadenesto, Council to the Town of Brookhaven, spoke. She felt that vistas and topsoil should be protected. She requested that this be tabled.

Dr. Lee Koppelman, Chairman of Center for Regional Policies Studies, spoke to the Committee. The Town of Brookhaven Bond Act's initial program was designed to protect unique soils. Temporary greenhouses are a permanent use. He said greenhouses are viewed as an ancillary use. He urges the Farmland Committee not to approve these types of applications.

Doug Dittko, Chairman of the Brookhaven Planning Board, spoke as a private resident. He felt that this is development of farmland. This is really an industrial use.

Joe Gergela felt that greenhouses are agriculture. The definition of a temporary greenhouse is a non-

continuous foundation; aesthetics are important. He urged Mr. Hammerle to work things out with the Town and recommended tabling the request.

John Kennedy, Chairman, Town of Brookhaven Ag. Committee, said greenhouses are an acceptable use of the property and this is unfair to Mr. Hammerle. He also said that this is not the best farm soil.

Fred Hammerle clarified that the drawing was to scale. He considered placing greenhouses further back, but Brookhaven Town suggested closer to the street.

Olney Gardiner felt that here was no question that he had a right to farm. The Farmland Committee should go ahead and make their own decision and let the Town decide on their own. They should not be influenced by Brookhaven's request. He also said that cement walkways were necessary for that type of farm operation.

Tom Isles suggested postponing the decision.

Mark Zaweski felt that the Town has a tendency to overlap open space and PDR property.

Charles Scheer said Southold paid more for PDR land with an agreement not to put up greenhouses. This was done prior to the PDR purchase. He also felt that Mr. Hammerle has taken all the right steps. **Mr. Scheer made a motion to table and set time frame to let the lawyers talk and make a provision to bring it up at the next meeting. The report should include additional square footage information. Seconded by Lee Foster. Motion carried. 13-0-0.**

Chairman Orłowski made a few comments on the survival of the farmland program.

Heather Lanza spoke about the effect on topsoil and the impact on vistas.

William Sanok spoke on the evolution of agriculture and greenhouse operations.

Nate Corwin felt that walkways are not a problem. They can be easily removed and are needed.

A discussion by various members on walkways, the need for flexibility in the program, and soil and vista preservation followed.

NEW PARCELS

Andrews Family- 24.8 acres located in Wading River in the Town of Riverhead scored 19 by the Farmland Committee. **A motion for approval was made by Mark Zaweski and seconded by Nate Corwin. Motion carried. 13-0-0.**

Cahill Orchard – 8.1 acres located in Fort Salonga in the Town of Smithtown scored 5 by the Committee. **A motion for disapproval was made by Charles Scheer and seconded by Dale Moyer. Motion carried. 13-0-0.**

Foglia – 10.3 acres located in the Town of Huntington scored 7 by the Committee. **A motion for disapproval was made by Lee Foster and seconded by Gene Murphy. Motion carried. 13-0-0.**
Sent back to Town of Huntington for outright purchase.

Raleigh Egg Farm - 16.3 acres in Kings Park in the Town of Smithtown scored 3 by the Committee. **A motion for disapproval was made by Lee Foster and seconded by Nate Corwin. Motion carried. 13-0-0.**

Visone & Partners - 33.8 acres located in Calverton in the Town of Riverhead scored 15 by the Committee. **A motion for approval was made by Nate Corwin and seconded by Mark Zaweski. Motion carried. 13-0-0.**

Wulforst Family Farm - 187.4 acres located in Calverton in the Town of Riverhead scored 15 by the Committee. **A motion for approval was made by Lee Foster and seconded by Albert Kilb. Motion carried 12-0-1. (Abstention by Jeff Rottkamp).**

Zaweski, Dan - 26.4 acres located in Jamesport in the Town of Riverhead scored 17 by the Committee. **A motion for approval was made by Dale Moyer and seconded by Joseph Krukowski. Motion carried. 12-0-1 (Abstention by Mark Zaweski).**

Peconic Homes - 11.3 acres located in Laurel in the Town of Southold scored 16 by the Committee. Even though this has greenhouses, it is surrounded by preserved land in the Laurel Lake area. **A motion for approval was made by Albert Kilb and seconded by Charles Scheer. Motion carried. 13-0-0.**

Fresh Bet (Guichard) - *Tabled from the 10/24/06 Meeting* - 4.8 acres in Manorville in the Town of Brookhaven scored 5 by the Committee. **A motion for disapproval was made by Nate Corwin and seconded by Gene Murphy. Motion carried. 13-0-0.**

OTHER BUSINESS

Charles Scheer wanted to know why there is so much activity on the Finn Farm (Schembri Holmes) in Calverton in Riverhead. Roads have been cut through the woods. The Town wants to know what the status is. There is a subdivision filed on the property.

Brad Reeve requested permission to put in a well. **A motion for approval was made by Nate Corwin and seconded by Mark Zaweski. Motion carried. 13-0-0.**

Roy Fedelem discussed the draft letter to Joe Annunziata. Lee Foster requested the addition of comment that... "no vendor trucks be located on PDR land".

Discussion of meeting scheduling, use of e-mail, special topics per meeting, special event guidelines, etc., and the increased value of restricted farmland as well as the need to keep prices low for the future of farming.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mark Zaweski and seconded by Olney Gardiner at 5:07 P.M.

NOTE: CHANGE OF LOCATION

Next Meeting: April 24, 2007 at 6:00 P.M. at the Cornell Cooperative Extension, 423 Griffing Avenue, Riverhead, NY