

FRELINGHUYSEN FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMISSION

JOINT MEETING

Minutes of Meeting of Wednesday, April 1, 2009

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jim Banta, at 7:10 pm.

**Announcement of Proper Notice**

Notice of this meeting was provided by posting notice at the Township Municipal Building in Johnsonburg, and advertising in the New Jersey Herald and Express Times, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. As advertised, action may be taken at this meeting.

**Attendance**

**Members Present:** Jim Banta, Debra Natyzak, Charlie Schaffer, Tom Charles, Robin Randolph, Rich Dericks, Cliff Kimball, Rick Rogers, Maureen Cullen, Leigh Kramer, and Nancy Nicholoff

**Members Absent:** Dan Carson and Bob Young

**The Land Conservancy Present:** Megan Haidet

**Minutes**

Charlie Schaffer made a motion to carry the March 4, 2009 Farmland Preservation minutes to the May 4, 2009 meeting, seconded by Rich Dericks, all in favor – aye.

**Public Comment**

**Joint Meeting**

- Ms. Haidet of the Land Conservancy invited Bob Cooper – Landmark I Appraisals – to come and speak to the group for familiarizing themselves of appraisals. Mr. Cooper told of all aspects that impact the value of a piece of land (i.e. Wetlands, steep slopes, easements, views, etc.). He also discussed parcels with prime soils and tillable acres will have an increased value. Mr. Cooper answered many questions that the board members asked.
- Mr. Banta inquired about the difference for farmland vs. open space. Mr. Cooper explained that with farmland preservation, they buy the development rights, but the farmer still owns the property. Open space is more of a direct fee acquisition – buying the whole property.
- Robin Randolph asked about the farmland appraisals and how they are in the market now. Mr. Cooper said that although the values are staying up, it is tougher for builders to develop now with more SADC restrictions.
- Debra Natyzak asked if using pre highlands values or today's values? Mr. Cooper said they can go back earlier to get '04 conditions to today's values.
- Charlie Schaffer asked if looking at a farm that is adjacent to already preserved farmland – how that affects the appraisal. Mr. Cooper said it doesn't affect the appraisal as they are looking at development perspectives. Creating "belts" works the best for the State when looking at that scenario.

- Debra Natyzak referred to different values around the different counties. Wanted to know if you go to different areas or only stick to Frelinghuysen? Mr. Cooper said that they will go to different counties but sometimes the values are not as high.
- Leigh Kramer asked what the difference between restricted and unrestricted land is. Restricted has an easement on the property and unrestricted has the development rights on the property still.
- Jim Banta asked what the difference is to sell the easement for farmland or sell to green acres for open space. Mr. Cooper explained that if you sell easement then you stay on property but if you sell via open space then the state owns the property.
- Charlie Schaffer asked if there are appraisers that are consistently higher. Mr. Cooper said that sometimes there are possibly because they don't understand the land. The state is getting very strict about this.
- Charlie Schaffer inquired about if you sit on the board for farmland you may not put your farm in preservation – is it the same for Open Space? Megan Haidet will look into this and let us know at the next meeting.
- How much has farmland preservation dropped this year? Mr. Cooper stated that unrestricted properties have taken the hardest hit.

## **New Business**

## **Correspondence**

## **Adjournment**

As there was no further business, a motion was made by Rick Rogers, seconded by Robin Randolph to adjourn the meeting. All members present were in favor of adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Donna Zilberfarb  
Farmland Preservation Secretary  
Open Space Advisory Commission Secretary