

# Millstone Township Agricultural Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes  
February 6, 2012

Mr. Peck called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

The Secretary read the adequate notice.

## Roll Call

Present: (4) Butch, Dancer, Peck, Pinhas

Absent: (2) Asprocolas, Halka

## Approval of Minutes

A Motion was made by Mr. Dancer with a Second offered by Ms. Pinhas to approve the January 9, 2012, minutes.

Ayes: (4) Dancer, Pinhas, Butch, Peck

Nays: (0)

## Correspondence

- *Susan Payne, SADC Executive Director dated 01/11/12 re: Working Draft of an Agricultural Management Practice (AMP) for On-Farm Direct Marketing Facilities, Activities and Events. Farm activities must support the production of the farm; if activities don't support the production, then the activity will not be covered by Right-to-Farm protection. Council member comments can be sent to the Secretary for submission to the SADC.*

## Old Business

- **Large Animal OEM Plan:** Ms. Romano will be coordinating a meeting with a representative from the NJ Department of Agriculture.
- **Low-hanging wires and tree branches**
  - The Council sent a memo to the Township Administrator regarding low-hanging branches.
  - The Administrator consulted the Township Attorney and it was determined that, by statute, the Township is responsible for trees in the right-of-way because the Township has an active Shade Tree Commission.
  - The Administrator will set money aside in the budget and the Township will begin a maintenance program. The Township's Certified Tree Expert will assist with prioritizing a list of approximately 30 trees to be trimmed each year. Council members and residents are welcome to provide input.
- **Farm Leases**

Council members reviewed the draft of the Perrineville Road farm lease:

  - Bids to be received by the Municipal Clerk on 4/12/12.
  - The reference to the bond should be removed.
  - The buffer has been reduced from 30 feet to 15 feet.
  - The lease term will be 8/1/12 - 7/31/15.

- Irrigation will be permitted but must be approved by the Township.
- Payment in full upon execution of the lease.
- **Motor Vehicle Regulations for Agriculture/Junior Ag License:** Mr. Peck and Mr. Asprocolas attended the Central Jersey Vegetable Grower's Conference. A representative from the Farm Bureau who spoke at the convention, referred to the junior agriculture license as a dead issue which will not be pursued.
- **Horse Keeping Businesses and New Jersey Sales and Use Tax:** Ms. Butch stated that the Farm Bureau will be taking up this issue.
- **Erosion resulting from farming practices and preventive measures:** Nothing new to report.
- **2012 New Jersey Vegetable Grower's Convention:** Mr. Asprocolas, Mr. Peck and Ms. Pinhas attended the convention.

### **New Business**

- **Ordinance No. 12-02 Oath of Office**
  - First reading 1/18/12; Second reading 2/15/12
  - Everyone elected to an office, appointed to a position or who serves on a board, council or commission must take an oath of office to uphold all State and Federal laws.
  - The Township's ordinance addresses issues regarding right-to-farm protection and growing marijuana which is illegal at the federal level.
- **NJ Legislature Committee Membership**
  - Both District 12 Assemblymen, Robert Clifton and Ronald Dancer, have been appointed to the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.
- **Legislation and Communication with Representatives**
  - Direct shipping by wineries: The bill was passed; co-sponsored by Assemblyman Dancer; the Secretary will provide information on how District 12 representatives voted.
  - Right-to-Farm: Assemblyman Declan O'Scanlon introduced legislation to extend right-to-farm protection for cultivation of marijuana for medical use.
  - Farmland Assessment: Senator Beck, now District 11, introduced a bill to revise provisions of the farmland assessment law which includes increasing the minimum yearly gross sales from \$500 to \$1,000.
- **Open Space & Ag Council Newsletter**
  - A spring edition of the newsletter is planned with an article highlighting the Trapani Farm and award winning honey.
  - Additional article suggestions include the manure management plan deadline and courteous behavior to slow moving farm vehicles.

- **Thomas Baird Homestead:** An open house event is being planned for May. Mr. Dancer will be chairing the agriculture museum display. The Secretary contacted Cooper Morris of the NJ Agriculture Museum regarding their collection. Mr. Morris responded that a Transition Committee will decide where various items will go and he will notify the Committee of the Council's request for items. Ms. Butch explained that invitations will go out to all Council members for the March 1<sup>st</sup> Friends of Historic Places group meeting to plan the open house activities. Mr. Peck offered to supply materials for a children's planting activity.

Mr. Vito Cardinale, who owns a farm in Millstone, was in attendance and asked the Council questions about hunting and depredation permits. Mr. Cardinale explained that he believes there are illegal hunting activities taking place on property adjacent to his farm and showed Council members the location of the hunting activities on the tax map. Council members explained that depredation permits are issued by the State and referred Mr. Cardinale to Ray Porutski, Regional Superintendent of the NJ DEP Division of Fish & Wildlife, regarding possible depredation permit violations. Council members further explained that depredation permits allow permit holders to hunt during the night when farm workers are not in the field and are only issued for property that is being actively farmed. The Secretary will email Mr. Porutski's contact information to Mr. Cardinale.

#### **Upcoming Events**

- Monmouth County Board of Ag Presentation for Dr. Katz: Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>
- Annual NJ Land Conservation Rally: Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>
- 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Open Space Clambake Fundraiser: Sunday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>

Having no further business to discuss, a Motion was made by Ms. Pinhas with a Second offered by Mr. Dancer to adjourn the meeting and by unanimous vote the meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine Maher  
Council Secretary