

MINUTES OF FARMLAND COMMITTEE

Suffolk County Planning Department

Date: July 25, 2000

Present: Stephen M. Jones, Chairman
Charlie Scheer (At-Large)
Albert Schmitt (At-Large)
Bennett Orlowski, Jr. (At-Large)
Joseph Krukowski (Southold)
Nate Corwin (At-Large)
Jacob Rottkamp (Riverhead)
Roy Fedelem, S.C. Dept. of Planning
Albert Kilb, Jr. (Shelter Island)
Elmer Zeh (Brookhaven)
Anthony Brand, Jr., (Huntington)

Guests: William Sanok, CCE
Jim Burke, Asst. Director of Real Estate
Joe Gergela, L.I. Farm Bureau
William Talmage
Henry Talmage
Robin Gibbs
Ann M. Miloski
Maryann Wowak, Leg. Caracciolo's office
Marian Sumner, Peconic Land Trust
Dick Ryan, Southold Land Preservation Committee
Melissa Spiro, Southold Town
Kip Bedell

Absent: Brian Zitani (Babylon)
Lee Foster (Southampton)
Anthony Brand, Jr., (Huntington)
William Rutkoske (Islip)
Olney M. Gardiner (East Hampton)
Mark Zaweski (At-Large)
Russell Barnett (Smithtown)
Dan Fricke (At-Large)
Jennifer Kohn, Esq., Counsel

The meeting of the Farmland Committee was called to order by the Chairman, Stephen Jones, at 6:34 at the L.I. Horticulture Research & Extension Center, Riverhead, NY.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was put forth by Charles Scheer and seconded by Albert Schmitt to approve the minutes of the April 25, 2000 meeting of the Farmland Committee. Motion carried.

Friars Head Farm - Land Subdivision

Previously tabled from the last meeting. Representatives were present, consisting of Henry and William Talmage and Shep Sheinberg, Atty. at Law. The properties total about 131 acres on the south side of Sound Avenue. A recommendation will be made by the Farmland Committee and that will go to the Legislature for a decision. The Talmages are requesting that the Farmland Committee grant the right to subdivide the property into two (2) parcels; a 30 acre parcel and a 101.73 acre parcel which will later be subdivided into two (2) parcels; one consisting of 51 acres and one consisting of 80 acres. The Committee reviewed engineering survey maps showing the various property lines in question and their relationship to structures addressing already approved by the Committee.

Winton Farm (former Barker Farm)

A letter was received from Wendy Fein requesting permission to build a storage shed, no more than 5,000 sq. ft. in area, to house farming equipment for the purpose of agricultural production. **A motion for approval, subject to Town ordinances and codes, was made to by Jacob Rottkamp and seconded by Albert Schmitt. Motion carried.**

Bedell Cellars

Kip Bedell requested permission to build a storage building, including an area for tractor maintenance. There will be a need for electricity and any waste oil will be taken to the dump. **Elmer Zeh made a motion to approve subject to applicable town codes and ordinances and to add approval for underground utilities. It was seconded by Nate Corwin. Motion carried.**

Vigliotta Farm

Formerly Vigliotta Farm now C & V Real Estate Holding Ltd. Previously a request for an arena was rejected by the Committee. A verbal request was received for permission to build an arena and equestrian center and have horse shows. No one was present to discuss this request and therefore no discussion took place.

Criteria for Farmstand Permits

Because of the Greenways Program and the involvement of Towns as partners in the development rights interest, it has become necessary to establish criteria for permits for farmstands.

Currently the Committee has the authority to approve farmstands. It will now be necessary to obtain a permit (free of charge) lasting for a term of 5 years, which will be reviewed at the end of the term. The Towns will be given the right to refuse a permit if so desired. This refusal will be honored by the Farmland Committee and no permit will be issued. The Committee was given a draft permit to review with the understanding that the Committee would adopt the permit procedure at the October meeting.

Rules & Procedures Under the 70/30 Greenways Fund

In regard to farmstands, if the partner has a strong feeling to approve or disapprove something, we will generally honor the partner's choice.

The Committee has the right to approve temporary activities on farmland provided it does not interfere with agricultural production, as long as agricultural production is the primary function. The questions of corn maze arose. Joe Gergela suggested talking to the Ag & Markets counsel for guidance regarding corn maze.

Jim Burke indicated that a number of meetings have taken place between the County and Town attorneys and the Real Estate Division, with the Peconic Land Trust, to resolve any substantive deed covenant conflicts and ambiguities of language. Generally, the County and participating Town will be "joint tenants" and deal with the farmer as one entity under one deed covenant provision.

In an effort to expedite matters, small subcommittees will be created to move requests along in between meetings. They can then be ratified at the next available Farmland Committee meeting. The Committee will need to adopt this subcommittee concept as part of its rules and proceedings. No Greenways farms have been acquired yet, so additional discussion on this can take place.

A revised edition of rules and regulations will be included in the packet for the next meeting, which will have been reviewed by the County Attorney's office.

Signs Denoting Farms in the County PDR Program

Deputy County Executive, George Gatta has requested that this issue matter be brought up at tonight's meeting. The County Executive's office is interested in knowing how the Farmland Committee feels about putting signs on the properties that are in the County Development Rights Program indicating that they are in the program. These signs would be recognizable from passing cars. Elmer Zeh informed the Committee that Pennsylvania has small, blue signs (approximately 18' by 24") denoting PDR property. Town ordinances would apply regarding signs. This would be done on a voluntary basis on the part of the owner. Southold has put signs up. A suggestion was made to use an emblem or logo indicating preserved farmland. The Committee was not opposed to using a means to identify preserved farmland.

New Parcels to be Added to the Waiting List

The first three parcels are owned by Elak & Sutter in Mattituck. The Elak parcels contain 36.8 acres and scored 17. The Sutter property was 24 acres and scored 16. **A motion was made to approve these parcels by Bennett Orłowski and seconded by Albert Kilb. Motion carried.**

The next property was the 119 acre Pollak farm in Eastport. This is in the Pine Barrens Core but because of the extensive road frontage the Committee felt there was a danger in not buying the development rights. **A motion was made to approve this parcel by Albert Kilb and seconded by Jacob Rottkamp. Motion carried.**

The Zimmer piece in Orient, consists of 17.4 acres, zoned two acres, in the ag district. Mr. Zimmer would like to leave out 5 acres. There are some existing structures. There is also a Nature Conservancy piece on the east side. **A motion was made to approve this parcel by Albert Kilb and seconded by Jacob Rottkamp. Motion carried.**

Macari has five parcels in Mattituck totaling 267.4 acres. These parcels have a combined road frontage on Bergan Avenue of over half a mile and scored 15 in the rating system. **A motion was made to approve these parcels by Bennett Orłowski and seconded by Charles Scheer. Motion carried.**

Three parcels in East Marion were considered together as they are all farmed by the same person. They are the 33.0 acre Ghassemi property, which scored 14, the 17.2 acre Niamontakis property, which scored 12 and the 18.8 Koutsolakis property which scored 11. **A motion to approve these parcels was made by Bennett Orłowski and seconded by Elmer Zeh. Motion carried.**

The next parcel was the 42.1 acre Bowles horse farm on Edwards Avenue in Calverton. This scored 13 in the rating system and is home to deer, skunk and protected cactus. It is three (3) lots north of the Pine Barrens Compatible Growth area. **A motion to approve this parcel was made by Nate Corwin and seconded by Albert Kilb. Motion carried.**

The Macari parcel in Riverhead on Sound Avenue followed, consisting of two pieces, 117 acres and zoned RA. There is 160 ft. of frontage on Sound Avenue. It scored a 13 by the Committee. **A motion was made by Bennett Orłowski and seconded by Charles Scheer. Motion carried.**

The last parcel is the Wagner piece on River Road in Calverton. It is a flag lot with a 54 ft. road frontage in the Ag district. It scored an 11 by the Committee. **A motion was made by Tony Brand to table this parcel until a letter is sent to the surrounding property owner to solicit their interest in the PDR program. It was seconded by Jacob Rottkamp. Motion carried.**

The following three pieces of property have not been farmed within the required two years: Litteri, McGunnigle and Macari (2 pieces), and therefore were not considered.

Other Business

James Burke, Real Estate Department, feels that in an effort to have things move more quickly, they are trying to streamline the appraisal process. A suggestion was made to possibly use bids on Development Rights property. There is a need to offer a price the farmer will accept.

The reconfiguration of the Talmage property was discussed again. **A motion was made by Elmer Zeh to approve the initial subdivision and subsequent re-subdivision provided it is ultimately divided into two (2) pieces of approximately 80 acres and 50 acres. The motion was seconded by Albert Kilb. Motion carried.**

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October , 24, 2000 in the Riverhead Town Hall at Riverhead.

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:39 by Jacob Rottkamp. It was seconded by Bennett Orłowski. Motion carried.