

MINUTES OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY FARMLAND COMMITTEE

Suffolk County Planning Department

- Date:** January 24, 2006
- Members Present:** Bennett Orłowski, Jr. (At-Large), Chairman
Thomas A. Isles, Suffolk County Dept. of Planning Director (At-Large)
Nate Corwin (At-Large)
Lee Foster (Southampton)
Albert Schmitt (At-Large)
Olney M. Gardiner (East Hampton)
Eugene Murphy (Islip)
Alfred J. Kilb, Jr. (Shelter Island)
Joseph Krukowski (Southold)
Ronald Bush (At-Large)
Charlie Scheer (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
Jenny Kohn, Suffolk County Department of Law
John Green, Suffolk County Division of Real Estate
- Guests:** Joe Gergela, L.I. Farm Bureau
Dan O'Neil
Larry Daniels
Marija Gardner
Harvey Gardner
Elsa Ford
Lisa Keys (Legislative Aide for Ed Romaine)
Leg. Edward Romaine
Leg. Vivian Vilorio-Fisher
Lauren Brigati
John Brigati
Steven Mezynieski
Gretchen Mezynieski
William Borella
- Members Absent:** Elmer Zeh (Brookhaven)
Russell Barnett (Smithtown)
Dan Fricke (At-Large)
Mark Zaweski (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 p.m. at the H. Lee Dennison Building, Hauppauge, NY.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was put forth by Nate Corwin and seconded by Albert Schmitt to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2005 meeting of the Farmland Committee. Motion carried. 10-0-0.

Public Comments

Chairman Orlowski opened the meeting for public comments.

Joe Gergela spoke informing the Farmland Committee that the State Ag & Markets changed its criteria for the State Farmland Program. The municipalities are limited to 3 parcels and a \$25,000 cap per acre is being applied.

Abbess Farm

Abbess Farm submitted a site plan for a metal training arena 100 X 200 ft. The arena had been previously reviewed and approved, subject to the submission of the site plan.

Chairman Orlowski introduced Legislature Vivian Vilorio-Fisher and Legislator Edward Romaine who were visiting the Farmland Committee.

White Post Farms

John Brigati of White Post Farms spoke to the Committee. He was requesting permission for a concrete walkway to move his flats from one place to another, and some additional greenhouses. He has also agreed to stop accepting and processing yard waste and selling compost.

There was a discussion on berms and whether this is regulated under the County Program. It was referred to the County Attorney. Joe Gergela said farmers should sell their development rights only and the public is not entitled to vistas. He said farmers are criticized if they put up an ugly deer fence or a solid screen.

The Vice President of the Civic Association spoke:

He asked the Committee, "What if a farmer builds 16 greenhouses then asks for approval, then builds 16 more greenhouses before asking for approval again?" Several Committee members felt that they should not be "rubber stamping" things after the fact.

Harvey Gardiner spoke to the Committee regarding the vista. Discussion followed regarding berm heights and restrictions on farmers. Elsa Ford, Friends of Huntington Farmland, informed the Farmland Committee that they provide programs for demonstration of organic methods, nature walks, projects, etc.

A motion for a SEQRA determination Type II Action was made by Chairman Orlowski and seconded by ----- . Motion carried. 10-0-0. A motion for approval of the site plan was made by Charles Scheer and seconded by Albert Kilb. Motion carried 10-0-0.

Chairman Orlowski read a letter from the Gardiners to County Executive, Steve Levy and a reply commending the Farmland Committee for its work.

Detmer Farm

Mr. Daniel O'Neil spoke to the Committee. He requested permission for a well, a 40 x 40 pergola for shade and a fence (without playground) to be attached to an existing deer fence (owned by Norman Keil) and grade change (wall). Mr. O'Neil is informed that the store must not exceed the guidelines that County Law requires (80% must be grown on premises). He agrees to stop selling products not related to agricultural production. Mr. O'Neil explained that he had permission to have a café and to grow shrubs from N.Y.S. Ag. and Markets. The Farmland Committee asked him to stop using part of the farm stand as a café, as this is a commercial use and is not allowed on County PDR land.

Mr. O'Neil said he had no plans for the barn at present. The Committee asked him to return if he was considering any use of the barn that was not related to agricultural production. A letter should be sent to Mr. O'Neil informing him of the Committee's decisions.

Lee Foster arrived

A motion for a SEQRA determination Type II Action was made by Albert Kilb and seconded by Charles Scheer. Motion carried. 11-0-0. A motion for approval of a installation of a 45 gallon/minute well, retaining wall (to remain in same location), use of existing pergola as a display and grow area (free of non-agricultural products), fencing to remain "as is"(any addition fence he will return to the Committee), a discontinuance of the café, and everything non-agricultural be removed from playground, was made by Albert Kilb and seconded by Charles Scheer. Motion carried. 11-0-0

Wolffer Farm

Requested permission for a barn, walker for exercising horses and a pond for work previously done without permission. The Farmland Committee had previously requested a site plan be submitted. **A motion for a SEQRA determination Type II Action was made by Lee Foster and seconded by Thomas Isles. Motion carried. 11-0-0. A motion for approval, subject to a survey on the barn showing location and dimension, was made by Lee Foster and seconded by Charles Scheer. Motion carried. 11-0-0.** . A letter should be sent to Mr. Wolffer reminding him to come to the Committee.

Owen Brothers

Requested permission for a barn 60' x 100' to be used for a heated/unheated shop area with bathroom. **Tabled** because of request for heat and bathroom. A letter should be sent informing them that this be an unheated storage facility without a bathroom and should not be used for storage of landscaping equipment.

Family Residences & Essential Enterprises - Concrete sidewalks

Due to lack of site plan and no one present for discussion, no action was taken.

Rosenbaum Lavender Farm Farmstand - Request for up to 5 unpaved parking spaces

Lavender Farm is applying to the Town of Southold for a farmstand that is adjacent to PDR property. The Town is concerned about inadequate parking spaces. They are asking permission from the Farmland Committee to have up to 5 unpaved parking spaces on the PDR property to meet the Town's parking requirements. Decision to **Table** and wait for the decision of the Town.

Mezynieski/Roufanis/Fleming Farm - House, Barn Fences

Steven Mezynieski spoke to the Committee. He requested permission to demolish and rebuild a house (4 bedroom-2,100 sq. ft.) on existing footprints, barn renovation, a horse carousel, a fence and a well. **A motion for a SEQRA determination Type II Action was made by Nate Corwin and seconded by Olney Gardiner. A motion for approval was made to rebuild the house on the original footprint (meeting the Town's setback of 60'), square off the house and repair barn with access to a hay loft, a fence installation, and a well was made by Nate Corwin and seconded by Olney Gardiner. 11-0-0.** Mr. Mezynieski will return with a site plan to include the barn.

William Borella (Szuster Farm) Greenhouse

Requested permission for a 100' x 20', frame with plastic greenhouse 75' off the road, to be used for annuals and a 500 sq. ft. farmstand. **A motion for a SEQRA determination Type II Action was made by Charles Scheer and seconded by Olney Gardiner. A motion for approval, provided a survey is submitted showing locations and driveways, was made by Charles Scheer and seconded by -----.** Motion carried 11-0-0.

Discussion on Christmas Tree Sales

There was mention of Christmas tree sales on Development Rights property. The discussion will be continued at the April 25, 2006 meeting.

New Parcels

Miller Farm - 14.7 acres located in East Hampton scored 3 by the Farmland Committee. **A motion for disapproval was made by Albert Schmitt and seconded by Nate Corwin. Motion carried. 11-0-0.**

So. Country Properties - Manker - 6.3 acre nursery in East Patchogue in the Town of Brookhaven which scored 15 by the Committee. **A motion for approval was made by Ron Bush and seconded by Lee Foster. Motion carried. 11-0-0.**

Michael Barry - 11.2 acre in East Patchogue in the Town of Brookhaven scored 10 by the Committee. **A motion for approval was made by Ron Bush and seconded by Lee Foster. Motion carried 11-0-0.**

TriState Horticultural Services - Tabled from October 25, 2005 meeting, consisting of 26.1 acres in Aquebogue in the Town of Riverhead scored 15. **A motion for approval was made by Lee Foster and seconded by Charles Scheer. Motion carried 11-0-0.**

Lee Foster told the Farmland Committee that the price of restricted farmland is going for outrageously high prices.

Other Business

There being none, the Chairman moved to adjourn the meeting.

A motion to adjourn was made at ----- P.M. by Lee Foster and seconded by Joseph Krukowski. Motion carried. 11-0-0.

Next Meeting: April 25, 2006 at 6:00 P.M. at the L.I. Horticulture Research & Extension Center, Riverhead, NY