

# Farmland Conservation Easement Commission

Jefferson County Courthouse, Room 202  
320 S. Main St.  
Jefferson, WI 53549

**Monday, January 11, 2010 12:00 pm**

Members: John Molinaro (Chairman), Margaret Burlingham (Vice Chairman), Steve Nass (Secretary), Daphne Holterman, and County Board Chairman Sharon Schmeling (ex-officio). County staff present was Mark Watkins (Land and Water Conservation).

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Molinaro at 12:05 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

Commission members present included Molinaro, Nass, Schmeling, Holterman, and Burlingham.

**3. Certification of Compliance With Open Meetings Law Requirements**

Staff verified that the meeting was being held in compliance with open meetings law requirements.

**4. Review of Agenda**

No changes were proposed.

**5. Public Comment**

None

**6. Review and Approval of October 19, 2009 and November 9, 2009 Meeting Minutes**

**Motion** by Holterman, seconded by Burlingham to approve the October 19, 2009 and November 9, 2009 Meeting Minutes. **Motion carried** on a voice vote with no objection.

**7. Correspondence**

No correspondence

**8. Discussion and possible action on amending application form**

Mark Watkins said that state and federal privacy requirements require the PACE applicant's permission to access their conservation plan and he asked that a signature line be added to the application that states in effect "I agree to allow any and all conservation plan materials to be released to the consultant of the Jefferson County Farmland Conservation Easement Commission for use in the application procedure". **Motion** by Nass, seconded by Holterman to add the signature line to the application. **Motion carried** on a voice vote with no objection.

2:12 Nass arrived.

**9. Discussion and possible action on PACE applications**

Seven applications to the PACE program were received and ranked by Jim Welsh, consultant, with assistance from the Zoning Department and Land and Water Conservation Department. Out of 100 points, the ranged from 63 to 89 points. When extra points for willingness to do a bargain sale were subtracted, the points ranged from 59 to 73 points. All applications were for large acreages and all ranked similarly. One application was within the Johnson Creek Urban Service Area and may not be eligible for federal, state, or county funding. Molinaro will check with the Village of Johnson Creek to see if the property was excluded from the Urban Service Area in the new Village land use plan. Land trusts may be able to help with funding or appraisal costs for two of the applications and one is in a proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area

Next steps: Molinaro will send a letter to all applicants thanking them for their application, informing them that all the applications ranked similarly, and that Jim Welsh will contact them to answer questions. Welsh was directed to tell the applicants that in order to move forward on the appraisal they will need to pay a fee of \$1000 by February 1, 2010 to the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission to defray consultant, appraisal, and County staff expenses. The County Clerk will send a receipt. The County must know what parcels need to be appraised in order to solicit bids from appraisers and the property must be appraised in order to apply to state and federal matching grant programs.

**Motion** by Holterman, second by Nass, to authorize Chair Molinaro to approve appraisal bids prior to the next Farmland Conservation Easement Commission meeting on February 8, 2010. **Motion carried** on a voice vote with no objection.

**10. Update and Discussion on new LESA maps**

Professor Poulson will update the LESA maps with the PACE application criteria at some point.

**11. Discussion Agricultural Enterprise Areas proposed by DATCP**

The Drumlin Area Land Trust plans to submit an application to the AEA program, which provides additional tax credits to landowners who voluntarily agree to preserve their land for 15 years. This is a trial program.

**12. Discussion on Chapter 91, State Statues, Farmland Preservation Program**

Jefferson County is looking at an update of its Farmland Preservation Plan over the next two years, which should be a 12-18 month process. State rules are not finalized at this point.

**13. Discussion regarding assignment of support staff duties**

Molinaro will transcribe the December 14, 2009 minute. Burlingham will continue to do the minutes in the absence of staff. Molinaro will do the agenda.

**14. Suggestions for the Next Agenda**

On the next agenda will be easement monitoring requirements, December 14, 2009 and January 14, 2010 minutes, discussion and possible action on PACE applications, update and discussion on new LESA maps, discussion of Agricultural Enterprise Areas proposed by DATCP, Discussion on Chapter 91, State Statues, Farmland Preservation Program, Discussion regarding assignment of support staff duties.

**15. Future Meeting Dates**

- a. February 8, 2010 at Noon, Room 202
- b. March 8, 2010 at Noon, Room 202
- c. April 12, 2010 at Noon, Room 202
- d. May 10, 2010 at Noon, Room 202
- e. June 14, 2010 at Noon, Room 202

**16. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:50 p.m. was made by Holterman, seconded by Burlingham. Motion carried on a voice vote with no objection.