

Farmland Conservation Easement Commission

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

Monday, October 11, 2010 8:30 am

Members: Margaret Burlingham (Chair), Amy Rinard (Vice-Chair), Mariah Hadler (Secretary), Steve Nass and Blane Poulson.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Burlingham at 8:38 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Commission members present included Burlingham, Rinard, Poulson, Nass, Molinaro and Hadler. County staff present was Steve Grabow (Community Resource Educator, UW-Extension) and Michelle Staff (Zoning Technician, Zoning Department).

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 change to the agenda.

5. Public Comment

No public comment. Audience was asked to sign in.

6. Review & Approval of the September 8, 2010 minutes

Motion by Nass, seconded by Molinaro to approve the September 8, 2010 minutes. **Motion carried** on a voice vote with no objection.

7. Correspondence

None

8. Discuss Budget in association to staffing for the Farmland Commission

Molinaro explained that with the sale of Countryside Home there was an additional 15 acres of farmland sold. The Commission will be asking for an additional \$60,000 from the sale of farmland. Welsh reported that we hope to close on the two easements by April 1, 2011. If the County does not close by that date each easement would need to be re-appraised. Welsh stated the baseline documentation is due at the time of closing. Molinaro stated that Mark Watkins from Land and Water Conservation will be doing the baseline documentation. Welsh estimated that it took 20 hours for each easement which was approximately \$1400 each. Nass asked if we should set a cap for paying Welsh.

Burlingham and Joe Nehmer from the Parks Department had a meeting with the Department of Natural Resources to discuss the Glacial Heritage Trail and whether the DNR would be willing to provide grant funding for easements next to areas identified in the Glacial Heritage Trail.

Motion made by Hadler, seconded by Nass to allocate \$12,000 for outside consultant. **Motion** carried on a voice vote with no objection.

9. Discuss and possible action on DATCP and State Funding for the Lea and Schultz Conservation Easements

Mr. Schultz was given until December 15 to clean up his site. It was discussed that Staff, with a Commission member, should inspect the property to see if the property was in compliance with the Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance. It was discussed that the County should have signs on farms that have conservation easements purchased by the County. Hadler is in touch with a graphic designer and will see how much it would cost to design a logo for a sign.

10. Update on the 2010 Application process

Staff indicated that she sent out the application to all persons interested, in addition to all the previous applicants. Burlingham stated that calls should be made to previous applicants. Burlingham will be on the Michael Clish radio show Friday morning at 9:30 a.m. to promote the program. Burlingham created a press release that Staff sent to all the media.

11. Discuss encouraging applications from areas that may receive more points in the State grant applications

It was discussed that the Commission should target areas that would receive more points on the State PACE program or areas where the DNR is willing to fund grants. It was suggested to write letters to these individuals. Hadler suggested it would be more effective if the Commission meets with the individual landowners and discusses the program with them, instead of mass mailings.

12. Discuss and development of application for non-profits to apply for grant monies from Jefferson County.

Marx asked if there will be opportunities for non-profits to receive monies from the County. The Commission discussed that non-profits should have the opportunity for monies but should have an application form. The State created an application form for non-profits and the Commission should have the similar application. Molinaro will give it to Philip Ristow, Corporation Counsel to review it. It was discussed that if the County did make monies available for non-profits, will they want to be co-holders? In addition, how much money should be available for non-profits. The Commission stated that this issue should be discussed with Ristow at a later date.

13. Review Commission's Overall Strategy/Work Plan for 2010-2011 – Outreach & Communications

Grabow handed out the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission 2010-2011 Workplan Workshop dated September 8, 2010. Grabow reviewed the document with the Commission. Burlingham stated that this item should be put on the agenda each month to review the timeline.

14. Update from the Steering Committee on the 2010 Farmland Preservation Plan

Vandewalle and Associates is working on the draft plan and should have it done by the first of the year.

15. Discussion on Agricultural Enterprise Areas proposed by DATCP

Marx stated there was nothing new. The Land Trust is waiting for the State Legislature to pass the proposed rules to create the AEAs. Marx stated that the next step is for landowners to sign agreements.

16. Suggestions for the Next Agenda

Discussion of application process for the non-profits.

17. Future Meeting Dates

Future meetings are November 10th at 8:30 am and December 8th at 8:30 am.

18. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 a.m. was made by Hadler, seconded by Rinard. Motion carried on a voice vote with no objection.

Minutes transcribed by Michelle Staff, Zoning Department

Mariah Hadler -- Farmland Conservation Easement Commission Secretary Date