

# Farmland Conservation Easement Commission

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

Wednesday, November 10, 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 8:32 a.m.

## 2. Roll Call

Commission members present included Burlingham, Rinard, Poulson, Nass, Molinaro (ex-officio) and Hadler. County staff present was 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

Audience was asked to sign in. Poulson believes that the Commission should send a letter to the Jefferson County Parks Committee asking to work together to secure agricultural easements along park lands. Molinaro explained that currently with DNR monies the land must be converted out of farmland. Molinaro wants to contact DNR to ask that this policy be changed so the Commission may take advantage of grant monies provided by the DNR.

## 6. Review & Approval of the October 11, 2010 minutes

**Motion** by Rinard, seconded by Poulson to approve the October 11, 2010 minutes with the change that the adjournment time be shown as 10:00. **Motion carried** on a voice vote with no objection and as amended.

## 7. Correspondence

Staff handed out literature on conservation easements provided by Waupaca County conservation easements program.

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

## 9. Discuss staffing in reference to monitoring the Conservation Easements

Molinaro stated that the Commission received \$60,000 extra monies from the sale of the County Farm to the DOT. Burlingham reported that Mark Watkins from Land and Water Conservation stated he did not have time to provide the baseline information for the two easements proposed for purchase. Burlingham asked Jim Welsh to do them. Molinaro will ask Watkins to come to the Commission's next meeting to discuss the current staffing issues.

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

Welsh stated that with the Lea easement the Federal government would prefer only one homestead on the property covered by the easement. Currently Lea has two. Welsh stated that the second homestead may be split from the farm. Staff explained the farm consolidation process to create a separate parcel for the second homestead.

Welsh stated that Schultz has until December 15<sup>th</sup> to clean up the property. Welsh also informed the Commission that the easement language stated that Schultz cannot dump materials on this property in the future. Welsh indicated that he will call Schultz to remind him of the deadline. Molinaro stated that if Schultz needs help for clean up the members

of the Commission are willing to help him. Welsh informed the Commission that the State of Wisconsin is finalizing all of its PACE easement language within the next week or so.

Nass arrived at 9:01am.

At this time DATCP does not have an appraisal progress and is running similar to the DNR process. Welsh stated that Jefferson County's two easements should not require a second appraisal.

**10. Update on the 2010-2011 Application process**

Staff named off the 7 applications sent to the Commission. Welsh indicated that the Federal grant deadline is April 1st. Welsh and Staff will work on ranking the applications for next month's meeting. Burlingham stated that all 7 applications will be placed on next month's agenda for review.

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

The Commission discussed that the State of Wisconsin modified their application and ranking for next year. They added additional points if the landowner is next to a water source. Commission feels it should target lands along the GHA for fall of 2011 applications. Burlingham indicated that prime soils are the highest ranking factors for the applications.

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

Molinaro stated that Corporation Counsel Ristow did review the form and he felt it was good. Burlingham will be changing it to fit the Commission purposes. She also stated that next month's agenda will add an item a discussion the criteria for non-profits such as how much money will be available for non-profits, will it be a set amount or percentage, will the county want to be co-holder of the easement, etc.

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

Burlingham reviewed the Work Plan for the month of October. Burlingham, Welsh and DATCP went out to the Schultz property to see how a baseline report is done. Burlingham would like to continue to work with Welsh to see how the ranking of applications is done. Halder indicated it would be nice if the Commission interacted with the landowners on a regular basis. Welsh indicated that the Town of Dunn has a yearly landowner meeting with details on how the Conservation Easements program works. Burlingham indicated that all the Commission members should be viewing the properties before the Commission discusses them. Rinard suggested that the Commission site inspects them similar to the Zoning Committee's site inspections. Burlingham will call all of the applicants to tell them we received their applications. The Commission discussed that in January they will work hard on the communication strategy.

**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 that the State Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary of Department of Natural Resources toured the Weenonah Brattset farm. Rinard had contacted Perry Goetsch, Town of Ixonia Chairperson to make them aware of the program and, if interested, to contact the Ashippun/Oconomowoc AEA.

**16. Suggestions for the Next Agenda**

Application rankings, contact Watkins to come to meeting.

**17. Future Meeting Dates**

Future meetings are January 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am and February 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am.

**18. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:34 a.m. was made by Rinard, seconded by Poulson. Motion carried on a voice vote with no objection.

Mariah Hadler -- Farmland Conservation Easement Commission Secretary      Date