

Farmland Conservation Easement Commission Agenda

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

Monday, October 17, 2011 12:30 p.m

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

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Burlingham at 12:32 p.m.
2. Roll Call
Commission members present included Burlingham, Rinard, Poulson, and Nass. Member absent was Hadler and John Molinaro (ex-officio.). County staff present was Michelle Staff.
3. Certification of Compliance With Open Meetings Law Requirement
Burlingham verified that the meeting was being held in compliance with open meetings law requirements.
4. Review of Agenda
No changes to agenda.
5. Public Comment
None
6. Review & Approval of the September 12, 2011 minutes
Motion made by Poulson, seconded by Rinard to approve the September 12, 2011 minutes. Motion passed on a voice vote, with no objection.
7. Correspondence
Burlingham received a letter from John Petty, Administrator, Division of Agricultural Resource Management of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection clarifying that the only PACE applications approved for funding were the 16 in 2010.
8. Discussion on 2012 Budget
Staff received a call from Molinaro before the meeting. Molinaro wanted the Commission to be aware that there is a proposed amendment to the 2012 County budget to remove monies allocated to the Commission for PACE.
9. NRCS/Federal update on Conservation Easements
Burlingham indicated that Jeff Everett from NRCS will be working with Gathering Waters to provide a workshop on alternative funding options for local governments.
10. Discussion and possible action on Klaas & Susan van Zanten Interest Form

Mrs. van Zanten was present at the meeting. Van Zanten indicated that there was a conflict with legal descriptions and their neighboring property. Burlingham indicated that van Zantens would need easement language and an appraisal. Burlingham stated that to receive the federal tax credits, this would need to be completed by December 31, 2011. The Commission will provide sample easement language to the van Zantens.

11. Discussion and possible action on County/DATCP/Federal Funding, grant requirements for the 2010 Lea Conservation Easement
Welsh updated the Commission about the closing on the Lea easement. The County needed the final version of the easement, a DATCP contract for funds and payment of funds in 2011 and 2012. Welsh indicated that the Commission needed to contact DATCP Secretary Brancel because the contract for funds is being held up within DATCP's legal department.
12. Discussion and possible action on County/DATCP/Federal Funding and grant requirements for the 2010 Schultz Conservation Easement
DATCP or NRCS has not reconsidered funding this easement. Burlingham indicated that this item should be taken off next month's agenda.
13. Discussion and possible action on 2011 PACE applications
Dale Neupert, Jeffrey & Monica Gerner and Greg Wilke.
Welsh indicated that the contract with the appraiser to complete the appraisals ends November 11, 2011. Burlingham indicated that she will be writing letters to all three applicants to make them aware of the next steps. Welsh indicated that if they are donating some of their easement, this would require a separate appraisal.
14. Discussion of Alternative Funding Sources for Conservation Easements.
Burlingham stated that the Commission should work with the GHA because there could be possible stewardship dollars through them. Past applicants such as Zastrow and Lehmann may benefit from it. It was noted that there is limited funding available.
15. Discussion on Establishing County Conservation Easements on County-Owned Lands.
Poulson asked for this item to be put on the agenda so that county lands, such as the County Farm land, would be preserved. There was discussion on the County Farm land in general. It was stated that most of the farm has been annexed into the City of Jefferson and the remainder of lands were in the urban service area. It was agreed upon that no action will be taken by the Commission on the issue at this time.
16. Update on donation of Conservation Easement on Tom and Margaret Burlingham Property, Town of Palmyra
The easement has been recorded.
17. Update on the Jefferson County Farmland Preservation Plan
Nass indicated that the County has been conditionally certificated by DATCP pending final adoption from the Jefferson County Board.
18. Update on Agricultural Enterprise Zones
The only agreement signed in the AEA is Burlinghams'.

19. Work Plan, Outreach and Communications Implementation

A) Work Plan Review

Professor Steve Grabow will be coming to the December 12 meeting to work on a new work plan.

B) Discuss and possibly take action on brochures, signs, and publicity.

Burlingham sent letters to the three easement donors, indicating that they could pick up a sign.

C) Discussion on farm-related events

None at this time.

20. Future Meeting Dates

a. November 14, 2011 at 12:30 pm in Room 202

b. December 12, 2011 at 12:30 pm in Room 202

c. January 9, 2012 at 8:30 am

d. February 13, 2012 at 12:30 pm in Room 202

21. Suggestions for the Next Agenda

22. Adjourn

Motion by Nass, seconded by Rinard to adjourn the meeting at 1:25 p.m. Motion carried on a voice vote with no objection.

***The Commission may discuss and/or take action on any item specifically listed on the agenda.

Individuals requiring special accommodations for attendance at the meeting should contact the County Administrator at 920-674-7101 24 hours prior to the meeting so appropriate arrangements can be made.

Minutes by Michelle Staff, Zoning Technician, Jefferson County Planning and Zoning Department