

Minutes of the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission

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

Monday, December 12, 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, John Molinaro (ex-officio) and Nass. Hadler was absent. County staff present was Steve Grabow and Michelle Staff.
3. Certification of Compliance With Open Meetings Law Requirements
Burlingham and Staff 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 November 14, 2011 minutes
Motion made by Rinard, seconded by Poulson to approve the November 14, 2011 minutes. Motion passed on a voice vote, with no objection.
7. Correspondence
None
8. Discussion on 2012 Budget
Molinaro informed the Commission that the 2012 Budget has been passed by County Board. The Commission has approximately \$270,000 to purchase easements.
9. NRCS/Federal update on Conservation Easements
Burlingham reported that she talked to Jeff Everett from NRCS and he is planning to set up workshops on possible funding sources for municipalities. Everett has not set dates yet.
10. Discussion and possible action on County/DATCP/Federal Funding, grant requirements for the 2010 Lea Conservation Easement
Welsh reported to the Commission on final preparations for the closing on the Lea easement. The easement closing is scheduled for next week. Welsh stated that the baseline documentation will be given to Burlingham and Mark Watkins from the

Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department. Welsh has been in touch with DATCP and NRCS on final paper work.

Nass arrived at 12:45pm

11. Discussion and possible action on 2011 PACE applications

Dale Neupert, Jeffrey & Monica Gerner and Greg Wilke.

Mr. and Mrs. Neupert and Greg Wilke were present. Welsh handed the Committee a copy of the appraisals for the Wilke and Neupert property. Welsh stated that the Gerners' property did not have any available divisions left according to the Town of Oakland so the appraisal was not finished. Welsh handed out another sheet showing how much the County would contribute if the landowners were willing to donate a portion of the easement. The Commission would like to receive a Farm and Ranch Protection Program grant from NRCS. Welsh explained the Federal application process. Burlingham stated that at the January meeting, the Commission will need to go into closed session to discuss the offer to the landowners for easements. Welsh explained to Wilke and the Neuperts that if they are willing to donate a portion of the easement, a second appraisal will be required.

12. Discussion and possible action on Timothy Hunn Interest Form

Mr. Hunn and his accountant Luke Walsh were present. Hunn would like to donate a conservation easement on this farm. Burlingham stated that in the past the Commission was not concerned with Hunn's request because his farm was in the urban service area, but the proposed Jefferson County Farmland Preservation Plan removed Hunn's farm from the urban service area. The proposed plan has not been adopted by County Board yet but may be passed by March or April. The Committee agreed to support the donated easement. Motion by Nass, seconded by Poulson to reimburse Mr. Hunn \$1,000 for appraisal costs when the easement is recorded. Motion passed on a voice vote with no objection.

13. Discussion of conservation easements on lands with no residential development rights.

Burlingham explained that it came up, where a landowner was interested in donating an easement but there are no residential lots available on the property. Burlingham would like the Commission to have a policy on this. It was discussed that zoning may change in the future to allow additional residences and that landowners may want the County to oversee the easement. Molinaro stated that the Commission may want to take each as they are presented to them because with the County's standard agreement there may be easements they want to accept and others they may not want to accept.

14. Update on Agricultural Enterprise Zones

The Commission was given the most up-to-date materials on AEA. Burlingham stated that there is a workshop in January on AEAs.

Rinard left at 1:15 pm.

15. Work Plan, Outreach and Communications Implementation

Commission discussed work plan, outreach and timeline with Grabow.

16. Future Meeting Dates

- a. January 9, 2012 at 8:30 am in Room 112

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

Nass indicated that he will not be available for the January meeting.

17. Suggestions for the Next Agenda

None

18. Adjourn

Motion by Nass, seconded by Poulson to adjourn the meeting at 2:00 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

Secretary Signature

Date