

Farmland Conservation Easement Commission

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

Monday, May 11, 2009 12:00 pm

Members: John Molinaro (Chairman), Margaret Burlingham (Vice Chairman), Steve Nass (Secretary), Daphne Holterman, Carlton Zentner and County Board Chairman Sharon Schmeling (ex-officio).

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Molinaro at 12:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commission members present included Molinaro, Nass, Zentner, Holterman, Schmeling and Burlingham. Members absent none. County staff present were Steve Grabow (UW-Extension) and Michelle Staff (Zoning).

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. Review and Approval of April 13,2009 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Nass, seconded by Burlingham to approve the April 13, 2009 minutes. **Motion carried** on a voice vote with no objection.

12:03pm Holterman Arrived.

6. Public Comment

Grabow introduced Heidi Johnson, the interim ag agent for UW-Extension. She will be working through the summer approxmently 20 hours a week.

Holterman was named the Dairy Women of the Year by the World Dairy Expo.

7. Possible land application for donation of Farmland Conservation Easements

None

8. Correspondence

None

9. Discussion with Dave Jelinski from DATCP on Working Lands Initiative as proposed in Assembly Bill 75

Jelinski introduced himself to the Commission. He explains the procedure for writing and preparing regulations through the State. Jellinski will give a summary AB75, talk about the

farmland preservation plan, and focus on three areas of the proposed Working Land regulation; PACE, zoning component and Enterprise Areas. Jelinski explained the proposed PACE program. The State would like the criteria to be flexible. Jelinski stated that DATCP will have a citizen group (ie, council or task force) to review the applications and will advise the Secretary on the properties to be purchased. Currently, in the draft rule, there is no weight system but there are 10 criteria listed in the proposed rule. Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA) are different than the Agricultural Enterprise Zones (AEZ). The AEA is a 2 year pilot project. AEA are an agreement with 5 individual land owners and DATCP. AEA takes the place of the farmland agreements. AEA's are areas to support agricultural infrastructure such as roads, implement dealers, large animal vets, etc. These areas are unzoned and not currently in a zoning district.

Molinaro explained that the County would like to proceed with their PACE program but had concerns that to receive the PACE monies from the State, the County would have to update Farmland Preservation Plan. Jelinski stated currently there is no land use elements for criteria at this point in time, but there possibly could be as the program develops. The Secretary will be appointing a task force to work on the PACE program. The local government will enter into an agreement with the State which then the local government pays for the entire easement, and will be reimbursed by the State at a later date.

Jelinski explained rezoning conversion fees. The applicant pays the conversion fee with the local government, and then the local government sends the monies to the State. The local government may impose additional fees to the conversion fee for administrative costs.

10. Review draft election criteria and discussion of weighting criteria as proposed by Jim Welsh – Natural Heritage Land Trust

Welsh handed out and explained the proposed Jefferson County PACE Criteria. Commission discussed all categories and made some changes within the categories. The Commission set an overall policy that number 1 "Quality of Farmland and Neighborhood" would be worth 40%, number 2 "Development Pressure and Conflicting Land Uses" would be worth 40%, number 3 "Other Considerations" would be worth 20% and number 4 "Conservation Motivation of Landowner" would be bonus points. Marx mentioned that NRCS gives additional points for monitoring projects. There was a discussion on monitoring of properties. Molinaro stated the County does not have the staff time to monitor properties. Commission focused on each section individually. Section 1 the Commission was in agreement with all listed. Section 2 the Commission would like to change priority to number of splits, proximity to urban service areas and proximity to rural hamlets. Section 3 should be clusters of projects such as the glacial heritage. Welsh will revise the criteria for the June meeting. The Commission would like to take the criteria to the public for comments.

11. Review Current Easement Application Form

The Commission will discuss it at a different time because there was not enough time to discuss it at this meeting.

12. Discuss County Fair Exhibit

Schmeling briefly explained this year's County Fair displays. The Commission agreed to discuss this issue more the next meeting.

13. Suggestions for the Next Agenda

Continue with Welsh discussion on criteria, talk about County Fair, review application form and talk about public comments on criteria.

14. Future Meeting Dates

- a. June 8, 2009 at Noon Room 202
- b. July 13, 2009 at Noon Room 202

15. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:55 p.m. was made by Molinaro, seconded by Nass. 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.

MJS