

**MILLSTONE TOWNSHIP
AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL
AUGUST 6, 2007
MEETING MINUTES**

Chairman Romano called the Meeting to Order at 7:00 p.m.

The Secretary read the Adequate Notice.

Roll Call: Present: Romano, Halka, Pinhas, Butch. Absent: Wilson

Approval of July 9, 2007 Minutes: One correction was made to the minutes. Ms. Pinhas made a Motion to approve as corrected and Ms. Butch offered a Second. Roll Call Vote: Pinhas, Butch and Romano voted yes to approve.

The invited guest for this evening's meeting, Mr. Tom Dancer was unable to attend the meeting. He will attend the September 10th meeting offer his presentation on Manure Management. The Council discussed the presentation. The Secretary will contact Mr. Dancer one week prior to confirm the September 10th presentation that will be held at 215 Millstone Road, Millstone Twp. Inthe OEM offices.

Ms. Joanne Mattei appeared before the Council to offer a presentation concerning her request to subdivide her farmland preservation piece of property. Ms. Mattei resides at 28 Spring Road. She offered a brief history of her farmland preservation piece and the particular personal circumstances that she and her family find themselves in. The 80-acre preserved farm is divided by Spring Road; 38.92 acres with a home on the east side and 34.22 acres on the west side. The property consists of wetlands, pasture and hay. She explained the plan she and her family have to subdivide the preserved piece. She explained her dilemma whereby she was not aware that you could not subdivide a preserved piece. This was not brought to light during the preservation of her property.

She advised that a Mr. Joe Santicola wishes to purchase the preserved piece, which is across the street from the portion where she resides. Mr. Romano advised if she sells the property, the purchaser could not build a home on the property. Ms. Butch confirms this.

Mr. Halka advised the Council that the County voted to allow this subdivision. The County has not heard anything from the SADC regarding this subdivision. The Council took a vote and all attending members supported writing a letter to the SADC in support of this subdivision.

Mrs. Mattei thanked the Council for their consideration.

Chairman Romano discussed the feasibility of a Farmer's Market in Township perhaps one time per week, once a month. In Town, local farmers could set up their tables and sell their produce. Ms. Pinhas discussed the importance of a prime location and suggested a central location such as the Middle School parking lot. Visibility is key. She explained how Jersey Fresh works in the State for funding and aiding farmers. She explained how Jersey Fresh vouchers to assist pregnant woman and young children purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.

Mr. Halka offered that an open stand, perhaps year round would promote farming. The Council discussed such markets that are already in existence and how they are working for the community. The Council discussed 3 or 4 farmers on a weekday evening would be better, perhaps 5p.m. to 8 p.m. while people are on their way home from work. The need for established farm business was discussed. The Council discussed how to get the word out via the Website, newspapers, the PEG Channel and the Township newsletter. The board discussed the benefits of giving the Township farmers a chance to sell what they grow locally. The Council discussed location, seasonal sales, etc.

The location across the street from the Wagner Farm Park was discussed as a possible location. The Council would discuss this with the Mayor. The Township would require an insurance rider for liability purposes. A "hold harmless" clause would be necessary. This would be discussed and information provided to the Council for the next meeting.

Animal Rescue Demonstration – Allen Schwartz of the ASPCA does a presentation for mud rescue of large animals. Ms. Butch explained that he has developed a system of using an air compressor to release the animal from the suction in the mud. His contact information was provided and would be kept in the AG Council work book at the Town Hall

Ms. Pinhas advised that Jimmy is obtaining a trailer to prepare a demonstration at the firehouse. The Council discussed the best time for the Trailer Rescue and discussed the second week in November.

Right –To-Farm – Dave Kimball of the SADC is willing to offer a presentation. Monday evenings are good for his schedule. The Secretary will check the availability of the Courtroom (to videotape the presentation and play it on the PEG Channel).

Ms. Butch advised that the NRCS has come up with a plan to help farmers best utilize their property. She advised it is a free service and noted the benefits.

Ms. Butch discussed the Rapid Entry System Ordinance wherein; farmers are exempt from RESO if they choose. This helps fire departments aid them in the case of fire.

Ms. Butch discussed the PIG program. It was done last month. The SADC has adopted a rule, whereby they review any comments/suggestions made. Ms. Butch advised that they did take some of our suggestions, just some. Additional SADC farmland preservation information has been requested. Ms. Butch attended a meeting on July 20th and the SADC gave us a new outline of information for us to research and provide back to them. This is placed on a excel spreadsheet.

Ms. Pinhas provided a flyer regarding the Whole Foods Market in Middletown has scheduled for 8/18/07 a market for farmers to sell their products and keep what they make. The Secretary will post on the Land Use bulletin board and placed on the Township Web Site.

At 9:20 p.m., Chairman Romano made a Motion to go out of Regular Session and into Executive Session for purposes of discussing sensitive material and Vice-Chairman Halka offered a Second and by unanimous roll call vote the Council went into Executive Session.

At 9:45, the Council returned to the Regular Session to continue with the meeting.

The project for the council this evening was to come up with farm properties for the 2008 Preservation list. Ms. Butch explained the criteria of the properties to be targeted and placed on the list. The list was constructed and the Secretary would work with the Assessor and the Council in preparing the excel spreadsheet of information for the next meeting.

At 10:30 p.m., by Motion to Mr. Halka and Second offered by Ms. Pinhas, and by unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela D'Andrea
Acting Secretary