

**MILLSTONE TOWNSHIP
OPEN SPACE FARMLAND PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 25, 2007**

At 7:32 PM, Chairwoman Butch called the meeting to order.

The Secretary read the Adequate Notice.

Roll Call

Present: Abilheira, Blanco, Butch, Morelli, Siedman
Absent: Alves, Denardo, Mullarkey, Romano, Schloss
Late: Wingerter (arrived 7:37 PM)

Public Comment

Public Comment portion of the meeting was opened at 7:34. Mr. Leonard Doucette was in attendance to inquire about where Millstone Township stands on funding for the Open Space program. Mr. Doucette is interested in preserving his property. Ms. Morelli had performed a site assessment of Mr. Doucette's property. Chairwoman Butch explained the Farmland Program Minimum Eligibility Criteria to Mr. Doucette and that if his property didn't meet the criteria for the Farmland Program because the property is not currently farmed and mostly woodland, that the property may qualify for Green Acres funding for preservation.

Chairwoman Butch mentioned that there are currently 6 or 7 properties due to close: the Teller/Klein property is scheduled to close next week and the Baldwin property is expected to close shortly.

The public portion of the meeting was closed at 7:37 PM.

Correspondence

Chairwoman Butch reviewed correspondence as follows:

- ***Open Space in-lieu-of Tax Payment Program***: Millstone received a grant in the amount of \$24,114.38 for Fiscal Year 2008 from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Funds were electronically transferred on October 5, 2007.
- ***Monmouth County Farm Lease Program***: a letter dated 10/10/07 addressed to Chairman Romano of the Agricultural Advisory Council was received regarding the process by which county-owned land is leased; this item will go to the Agricultural Advisory Council for review and discussion
- ***Keep It Green***: Mr. Abilheira mentioned that the program may be in trouble due to misinformation regarding how the program works and that some residents are concerned that the program is funding eminent domain property seizures and preservation of property owned by politicians; Chairwoman Butch mentioned that an article was placed in the fall issue of the OSFP Newsletter to inform residents of the importance of the program.
- ***Farmland Preservation News (Fall 2007) and the "Farm wisdom and good neighbors"***: these news items were distributed to members for review.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the September 27, 2007, minutes was tabled by Chairwoman Butch until the next meeting.

Old Business

- Appointment of New Secretary to OSFP Council: The new OSFP secretary, Lori Maher, was introduced; a Motion was made by Mr. Wingerter to accept the appointment of the new secretary with a Second offered by Mr. Abilheira; Abilheira, Blanco, Butch, Morelli, Siedman and Wingerter vote yes and by unanimous vote the Secretary is appointed to the Council.
- Trails
 - Industrial Park – the trail has been cleared but paperwork needs to be done
 - Trailblazers received a \$25K grant for the Wagner Park/Charleston Springs trail
 - Another \$25K grant is anticipated and earmarked for the Buono to Industrial Park trail through to the Assunpink
 - The installation of a 2 rail fence along Prodelin Way for safety was discussed due to the close proximity of the trail to the road
 - Boss Winds/County Road crossing progress has been slow due to County involvement
 - The New Master Plan has been approved
- Lichtman Management Agreement: Chairwoman Butch spoke with Renee Jones of the Green Acres program; further discussion necessary.
- Fall Bulletin has been published and will be mailed on Friday, October 26th.
- Spring Bulletin: Ms. Butch stated that Ms. Schloss volunteered to Chair the Spring issue; various ideas for the Spring issue were discussed including an article about the closing of preserved properties.
- Ms. Butch read an article published by the Monmouth County Parks System regarding seasonal hunting and suggested placing the article in the next Township Newsletter; Mr. Wingerter agreed that the article contained good information and should be placed on the Township website; there was agreement to post the information to the website and include the article in the December issue of the Township Newsletter, condensing the article to remove reference to the Oct. 31st permit deadline.

New Business

- New OSFP & Ag Council Secretary
- New Farmland Plan Update: draft will be complete by 11/9/07 and will be available to the public on 12/5/07; the plan needs to go to the Township Committee for vote; Chairwoman Butch asked the committee to vote to accept the state's criteria to eliminate additional restrictions being placed on residents;
 - Mr. Wingerter made a Motion to follow the State's minimum criteria requirements with a Second offered by Ms. Siedman and by unanimous vote, the New Jersey State minimum criteria requirements are accepted by the Council.
- Project Area Names: Mr. Butch presented descriptive names for the Deed-restricted project area as follows – The northern half of Millstone Township would be named "Perrineville East" and "Perrineville West" and the southern half of the township would be "Clarksburg East" and "Clarksburg West".

- Mr. Blanco made a Motion to accept the names suggested by Ms. Butch with a Second offered by Ms. Siedman and by unanimous vote the names were accepted by the Council.
- Re-appointments/Appointments to Council 2008 will be tabled until the November meeting
- Calendar of Meetings for 2008
 - Mr. Wingerter made a Motion to accept the Calendar of Meetings for 2008 with a Second offered by Ms. Morelli and by unanimous vote the Calendar of Meetings for 2008 was accepted.

Events

- Clambake: Ms. Butch stated that Mr. Wingerter's participation in a 2008 clambake fundraiser event would be critical to its success; Mr. Wingerter agreed to participate in the event and will check the availability of the Clarksburg Inn for either Sunday, June 1, 2008, or Sunday, June 8, 2008; one suggestion for the event would be to utilize tickets specifying time slots to alleviate overcrowding.
- There was agreement that the Map fundraiser should be done every other year
- Ms. Butch stated that a big event to celebrate the Lee Farm closing would be a good way to inform residents about the activities of the OSFP Council and the importance of farmland preservation.
- Other ideas for fundraising events include a barbeque, rodeo and Time Capsule
 - Mr. Blanco made a Motion to move forward with a Clambake fundraiser for 2008 with a Second offered by Ms. Morelli and by unanimous vote the Council agreed to hold a Clambake fundraiser

Committee Reports:

- **Finance:** Meeting agenda packet contains a finance report for committee review
- **Preservation Signage:** Restine will get sign soon
- **Legislative Awareness:** Assemblywoman Jennifer Beck wants legislation to ensure that the Farmland Assessment program is not being abused
- **Stewardship:** The Detwiller Green Acres easement signs are down and need to be put back up
- **Agricultural Advisory Council:** the Ag Advisory Council is hosting a "Farmland Assessment" seminar on Monday, October 29th presented by Bob Bruch, the Economic Development Representative for the New Jersey Department of Agriculture; Ms. Butch stated that it is important for landowners with >6 acres of property and horses to understand the qualifications of the program; Two additional seminars have been planned – "Right to Farm" will be held on 11/8/07 and "Farm Conservation Plan" will be held on 12/13/07

At 8:32 PM a Motion was made by Ms. Morelli to move to Executive Session with a Second offered by Mr. Blanco and by unanimous vote the Council moved to Executive Session.

At 9:27 PM the Council returned to regular session and having no further business to discuss, a Motion was made by Mr. Blanco and with a Second offered by Mr. Wingerter and by unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 9:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine Maher