

DRAFT
CT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FARMLAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

Draft Minutes of Meeting

June 1, 2009

CT Department of Agriculture, Hartford – 9:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: George Hindinger, Robin Chesmer, Steven Reviczky, Susan Rose, John Guskowski, Jim Krissel, James Zeoli, Ben Freund, Lucy Nolan, Terry Jones

MEMBERS ABSENT: Norma O’Leary

ALSO PRESENT: Commissioner Prelli, J. Dippel, Lance Shannon, Katherine Winslow, Denise O’Meara, George Krivda, Henry Talmage, Elisabeth Moore, Ben Bowell, Jennifer Bass

- I. **Call to Order:** Chairman George Hindinger called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.
- II. **Review of March 9, 2009 minutes:** The minutes of the March 9, 2009 meeting of the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board (FPAB) were approved (James Zeoli/John Guskowski).
- III. **Membership Terms and Reappointment:** Commissioner Prelli indicated that six members of the FPAB are up for reappointment (including Steve Broderick). DOAg will send a letter to the appointing authorities and will check with the AG regarding reappointments. Individuals should also confer with their respective appointing authorities.
- IV. **Any Old Business:** Discussion of – (1) SB 1082 – An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-Owned Agricultural Land; (2) Substitute HB 5267 – An Act Concerning the Use of Small Town Economic Assistance Program Funds to Convert Prime Farmland to Nonagricultural Use; and (3) the Community Farms program statute (technical change).
- V. **Farmland Preservation – Agency Report:**
 1. **Program update summary** – Director Dippel handed out a summary of the status of closings and pending projects as of June 1, 2009. Of special note, the acquisition of development rights to the 250th farm under the State’s Farmland Protection Program was discussed. The Wisneske farms in Franklin and Norwich total 181 acres and was a joint project between the State of Connecticut, the USDA/NRCS and the Connecticut Farmland Trust.
 2. Also, the program submitted a request for \$13 million federal reimbursement through the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program.
- VI. **Subcommittee Reports:**
 1. **Community Farms Program Criteria Report** – Director Dippel handed out minutes from the May 19, 2009 meeting of the subcommittee. George Krivda

spoke to the board about the process of enacting regulations, which can be a long, tedious process. Director Dippel stated that he hopes to have draft regulations for the next (September) meeting of the FPAB. Revised draft scoresheets and applications were handed out to the board members. It was requested that any comments on the scoresheets and applications be received by DOAg on or before June 29th, the date of the next meeting of the subcommittee. It was noted that there is expected to be a separate funding stream for the Community Farms Preservation Program from that of the current Farmland Preservation Program.

2. **Stewardship and Policy Report** – Director Dippel handed out minutes from the April 21, 2009 meeting of the subcommittee. Robin Chesmer mentioned that the group had discussed a handbook for property owners, a Do's and Don't's handout, and potential uses/activities that might not be allowed on preserved land or might be allowed under certain conditions.

VII. **New Business:**

1. **Community Investment Act funds** – Director Dippel announced that DOAg's portion of the first two quarters for this past year have been deposited into the account.
2. **Connecticut Siting Council ("CSC") Application** – Director Dippel alerted the board to an application filed with the CSC to site a cell tower on preserved property.
3. **Terry Jones Essay.** The group was handed a copy of Terry Jones' essay from the Spring 2009 issue of American Farmland.

VIII. **Next meeting – Monday, September 14, 9:30 at:** The next meeting shall be held at the Connecticut Farm Bureau, Windsor, CT.

IX. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 pm (Zeoli/Reviczky – unanimous).

Respectfully submitted: Lance P. Shannon.
Date 6/4/2009.