

MINUTES OF THE MERCER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD
MEETING HELD MONDAY FEBRUARY 3, 2020
IN THE EXTENSION SERVICE BUILDING
1440 PARKSIDE AVENUE, EWING, N.J.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Steve Jany called this meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

II. COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was given to the Trenton Times, Trentonian, Mercer County Clerk, and posted in the Mercer County Administration Building.

III. ROLL CALL

A. Voting Members:

Steve Jany, Chairman – Present	Gary Mount – Present
Frank D’Amico, Vice-Chairman – Present	Kristine Walsh – Present
Scott Ellis – Present	Theodora Wang – Present
Laurie Emde – Present	

B. Non-voting Members:

Bill Agress/County Planning Board Liaison – Present
Meredith Melendez/Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension – Absent

C. Others Present:

Emily Blackman, CADB Secretary	Public: Ashley Kerr, Dan Pace
Leslie Floyd, County Planning Director	
SADC Staff: Susan Payne, Jeffery Everett,	
Amy Mandelbaum, Cindy Roberts	

IV. REORGANIZATION: ELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS & ADOPTION OF 2020 MEETING SCHEDULE

Mr. Ellis made a motion to reelect Mr. Jany as Chairman, Mr. D’Amico as Vice-Chairman, Ms. Blackman as Secretary and Ms. Bacso as Board Attorney. Mr. D’Amico seconded the motion. The reelections were unanimously approved by the Board.

Ms. Emde made a motion to approve the 2020 meeting schedule. Mr. D’Amico seconded. The 2020 meeting schedule was unanimously approved.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. D’Amico, the minutes of the October 7, 2019 regular meeting were unanimously approved. Ms. Emde abstained because she was not present at the meeting.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

VII. CORRESPONDENCE: None

VIII. COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS

A. SADC: None

B. Land Development Activity: None

C. Farmland Preservation Status:

- Ms. Floyd provided an update for the Board about the County's development of the Dam Site 21 open space property as a park. She reviewed the map and park amenity highlights from the plan recently approved by the County Park Commission.
- Ms. Blackman reported that the Chowdhury Farm and Kerr Farm preservation projects are underway. The Chowdhury survey should be completed soon and the next step is the subdivision. The Kerr Agreement of Sale was recently approved by the Board of Chosen Freeholders and the County will order the survey soon.
- Ms. Blackman reported that the County will soon be soliciting bids for farm leases on two County-owned open space properties in West Windsor and Robbinsville. The bidding is scheduled to close on February 19th at 11:00 am.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

- *Monitoring:*
 - *Jingoli Easement House Replacement Request:* Ms. Blackman reported that after the CADB approved Jingoli's house replacement at the October meeting, the request was heard at two SADC meetings, with no vote taken by the SADC Board. She asked the SADC staff in attendance for clarification. Ms. Payne reported that at the first meeting, the SADC Board requested more information about the existing house's historic status. At the second meeting, after confirmation from SADC staff that the house was not on any historic registers, the Board still felt uncomfortable approving the replacement because of its historic nature. Ms. Payne added that since the meeting, the house has been demolished and she has spoken with Mr. Jingoli's attorney. He plans to reapply to the SADC for the replacement soon.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- *SADC – Special Occasion Events (SOE) Discussion, Susan Payne:* Ms. Payne provided an overview of the SADC's proposed Special Occasion Events (SOE) policy and comments received from CADBs and other stakeholders. Board members and staff asked questions about the details of the policy and made additional comments. Issues discussed included:
 - whether SOEs would be allowed by right or at the discretion of municipalities,
 - whether preserved farms should have more rights than non-preserved farms related to SOEs,
 - if wineries should have more SOEs than other types of farms,
 - clarification about infrastructure improvements,
 - challenges related to the administration and enforcement of the policy,
 - how community events fit into the policy and
 - the role of the CADB versus the municipality and potential conflicts

Due to his membership on the SADC Board, Mr. Ellis recused himself from the Soil Protection Standards discussion and left the meeting at 8:40 pm. Ms. Payne explained that SADC Board members who are also CADB members need to recuse themselves from any issue or policy that will be discussed or voted on by both Boards. They can choose to discuss the matter and vote at one Board or the other, but not both.

- *SADC- Soil Protection Standards Presentation, Jeffrey Everett:* Mr. Everett provided an overview of the SADC's proposed Soil Protection Standards. He emphasized that the

SADC's easements must balance farm viability with soil conservation. The new standards will incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) for activities that impact soil, similar to the Agricultural Management Practices (AMPs) written by the SADC for Right to Farm issues. Farm practices such as building new farm infrastructure and roads will be rated based on their degree of reversibility, with the less reversible practices more strictly regulated. Farms will be limited as to the amount of impervious surface allowed, based on the size of the farm. The SADC will provide a map for each preserved farm showing the current amount of impervious surface, so that farmers and CADB staff are clear as to what exists currently on each farm. He invited the CADB to provide comments on the standards.

XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Ms. Floyd answered Ms. Kerr's question about the timing of the preservation of her family's farm.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION: None was required.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM. The next scheduled meeting of the MCADB is March 2nd, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Blackman
MCADB Secretary

Date adopted: June 1, 2020

Attachments, if any, are made a part of the permanent record and are filed in the Minute Book, and are located in the Mercer County Planning Division Office. All copies are available upon request.