

MINUTES OF THE MERCER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
MEETING HELD MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2021  
IN THE EXTENSION SERVICE BUILDING  
1440 PARKSIDE AVENUE, EWING, N.J.

***\*\*Meeting via Zoom online platform due to Covid-19\*\****

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

Mr. Jany announced that pursuant to the Sunshine Law, notice of this meeting was mailed to the Trenton Times and the Trentonian, and was posted on the County Planning Department's website, including a public zoom meeting link and instructions.

**III. ROLL CALL**

**A. Voting Members:**

Steve Jany, Chair – Present  
Frank D'Amico, Vice-Chair – Present  
Scott Ellis – Present (arrived 7:34 pm)  
Laurie Emde – Present  
Gary Mount – Present  
Kristine Walsh – Present  
Theodora Wang – Present

**B. Non-voting Members:**

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

**C. Others Present:**

Emily Blackman, CADB Administrator  
Leslie Floyd, County Planning Director  
Amy Mandelbaum, SADC

**IV. REORGANIZATION**

**A. Election of Officers – Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Attorney**

Ms. Floyd asked for nominations for the position of Board Chair. Mr. Mount nominated Mr. Jany to continue as Board Chair. Ms. Wang seconded. Mr. Jany was unanimously approved as Board Chair. Ms. Floyd asked for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. Mr. Mount nominated Mr. D'Amico to continue as Board Vice-Chair. Mr. Jany seconded. Mr. D'Amico was unanimously approved as Board Vice-Chair. Ms. Floyd asked for nominations for Board Secretary. Mr. Jany nominated Ms. Blackman to continue as Board Secretary. Mr. D'Amico seconded. Ms. Blackman was unanimously approved as Board Secretary. Ms. Floyd asked the Board to acknowledge Ms. Susan Bacso of Parker McCay as Board Attorney. Mr. D'Amico made a motion, seconded by Ms. Emde. Ms. Bacso was unanimously approved as Board Attorney.

**B. Adoption of 2021 Meeting Schedule**

Ms. Blackman asked the Board to review the proposed schedule of meeting dates for 2021. Mr. D'Amico made a motion to approve the 2021 meeting dates as presented. Ms. Walsh seconded. The 2021 meeting dates were unanimously approved.

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On a motion by Ms. Wang and seconded by Mr. Mount, the minutes of the December 7, 2020 regular meeting were unanimously approved.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**VII. CORRESPONDENCE:**

Ms. Blackman stated that the SADC's draft Soil Protection Standards will be available for review and comment soon. She will share them with the Board when available. She noted that Mr. Ellis will recuse himself from any discussion of the Standards because of his position as a SADC Board member.

**VIII. COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS**

**A. SADC:**

Ms. Mandelbaum provided an update on SADC-funded preservation projects in the County. She also confirmed that the Soil Protection Standards will be available soon for informal comment and then for formal comment at a later date. Finally, she informed the Board that there is new legislation adding to the Right to Farm (RTF) protections for year-round full-time equine farm employees. The housing of these employees will now be protected under RTF if they live in the same building or facility as horses. The Board asked Ms. Mandelbaum for clarification because they believed that farm labor housing was already protected under RTF. Ms. Mandelbaum will consult the SADC's attorney and provide an explanation.

**B. Land Development Activity:**

There are no land development applications on the upcoming County Planning Board agenda within the Agricultural Development Area (ADA). Mr. Mount asked whether any of the large warehouse projects that have recently been in the news are within the ADA. Ms. Floyd responded that they are not. They are mainly sited on commercial land - along Route 130, for example.

**C. Farmland Preservation Updates:**

Ms. Blackman provided an update on County farmland preservation projects. The Kerr Farm survey is complete and the family will be applying to Hopewell Township for the subdivision. The project is expected to be on the SADC agenda for final funding approval at their April meeting. The Wert and Chowdhury Farms should have closing dates soon; technical work is complete. Ms. Blackman, Ms. Melendez and Ms. Wang are beginning 2021 farm easement monitoring in April – it will continue through mid-June.

**IX. OLD BUSINESS:** None

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Preliminary SADC Resolution – Wert Farm, Hopewell**

Ms. Blackman presented the preliminary SADC resolution for the Wert Farm in Hopewell to the Board. She also updated the Board on the status of the exception area locations discussed at the last meeting. Ms. Blackman has consulted with the surveyor and there will be a two-acre residential exception for a house at the top of the existing driveway and a one-acre farm market exception at the bottom of the driveway along Mine Road, as discussed. The residential exception also includes the existing barn. She noted that both locations are subject to the results of perc tests, which should be performed soon. Ms. Emde made a motion to approve the preliminary SADC resolution for the Wert Farm. Mr. Mount seconded. The resolution was unanimously adopted.

**XI. DISCUSSION**

Mr. Jany asked whether the County is aware of any regulations governing public ATV use on leased farmland or open space. There is an ATV issue on land he leases from West Windsor. Ms. Floyd responded that motorized vehicles are not allowed on Green Acres-funded land. Mr. Jany will speak to West Windsor about the issue.

**XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None

**XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None was required.

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. D'Amico made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Wang. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:15 pm. The next scheduled meeting of the MCADB is May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Blackman  
*MCADB Secretary*

**Date adopted: June 7, 2021**

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 Department Office. All copies are available upon request.