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3 MINUTES OF THE MERCER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD
4 REORGANIZATION AND REGULAR MEETING HELD MONDAY FEBRUARY 6, 2017
5 IN THE EXTENSION SERVICE BUILDING
6 930 SPRUCE STREET, TRENTON, N.J.
7 1ST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM



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9 I. CALL TO ORDER

10 Chairman Steve Jany called the re-organization meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

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12 II. COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

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

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16 III. ROLL CALL

17 **Voting Members:**

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

18 **Non-Voting Members:**

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

21
22 **Others Present:**

Leslie Floyd, County Planning Director	Dan Knox, SADC
Dan Pace, MCADB Secretary	John and Nick Bonacorda

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26 IV. REORGANIZATION

27 Mr. Ellis moved a ballot slate of: Steve Jany, Chairman; Frank D’Amico, Vice-Chairman; Dan Pace,
28 Secretary; and Susan Bacso, legal counsel. The motion was seconded by Ms. Walsh. There being no
29 other nominations the slate was unanimously approved. In addition, Mr. Mount will continue in the
30 position of CADB representative to the County Open Space Preservation Board and Mr. William
31 Agress is continuing as the County Planning Board representative to the CADB.

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33 The Chairman asked the Board to review the draft schedule for CADB meetings. Mr. Ellis moved
34 for acceptance of the schedule. Ms. Emde seconded and the schedule was unanimously approved.

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36 The re-org. meeting was closed at 7:35PM and the regular meeting was called to order by Mr. Jany.

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38 V. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

39 On a motion by Mr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. D’Amico, the minutes of the December 5, 2016
40 meeting were unanimously approved with Ms. Emde abstaining.

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42 VI. PUBLIC COMMENT: The Chairman recognized John Bonacorda and his son Nick who were
43 present to discuss their business plan to open a distillery on John’s preserved farm in Hamilton.

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45 The two sons of the preserved farm owner are constructing a distillery on the Premises and wrote to the
46 Board asking for a letter that identifies the use as being permitted on a preserved farm. The letter is to
47 satisfy Hamilton Township concerns regarding such a use on a preserved farm. Mr. Pace drafted a
48 letter for the Board Chairman saying that it was. Just as wineries are permitted on preserved farms, so
49 are breweries or distilleries provided the ingredients are primarily from the farm. The Bonacorda’s

1 briefly described the proposed operation and responded to several questions from the Board that
2 included: what was being made (clear liquor), how much was being made (far less, for now, than the
3 20K gallons permitted by license), how was it being sold (bottles), and where were the ingredients
4 coming from (corn from the farm). Board members then agreed that a letter Mr. Pace drafted stating
5 the permissibility of this business was appropriate. It was signed by the Chairman and given to the
6 Bonacorda's.
7

8 VII. CORRESPONDENCE

- 9 A. Mr. Pace received an email from Mr. Vincent Bonacorda regarding his and his brother's plans
10 for a distillery on the Bonacorda preserved farm in Hamilton.
11 B. Mr. Pace was copied with a letter from Hopewell Twp. to the SADC for their 2018Rd PIG
12 transmittal that identified seven targeted farms: Mary Joe Herbert, Hoch, Hoffman, Kerr, Leeper,
13 Hoge, and Lutz.
14

15 VIII. COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS

16 A. SADC: Mr. Knox reported:

- 17 1. That the Hom preservation still has one issue to overcome but should occur before spring.
18 2. That Mary Jo Herbert's application for preservation through the Hopewell Township PIG is
19 now in the appraisal stage.
20 3. That although funds are not yet available, the SADC is now accepting applications pursuant
21 to their adopted Deer Fence Policy that will make available a total of \$500,000 as matching
22 grants. Because the application vetting process is stringent, the SADC believes accepting
23 and reviewing applications now will enable the money to flow faster once it is appropriated.
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25 B. Land Development Activity within the ADA: None.

26 C. Status of Farmland Preservation Applications:

27 1. 2016 PIG –

- 28 a. Application for Gaskill et al on Sawmill Road: One of the parties in the Gaskill
29 preservation and ultimate owner of the preserved farm, Nathan Smith, is not responding to
30 queries from Mr. Pace regarding what he needs to do and is doing so the application is
31 moving forward slowly. Mr. Pace asked members to address an issue in the Board's
32 adopted house size policy, pertinent to this application, which restricts structures ancillary
33 to residential use to 1500 sq. ft. While the policy has a statement addressing existing homes
34 larger than the minimum 4,000 sq. ft., it does not address existing ancillary structures
35 greater than 1,500 sq. ft. At the time of adoption, it is likely the Board did not foresee a
36 structure such as the 5,000 sq. ft. former poultry barn within the proposed Gaskill
37 exception area that is currently used for storage but may become an allowable business. Mr.
38 Pace recommended that the language within the policy that addresses existing non-
39 conforming residential structures be copied for structures ancillary to residential use. After
40 a discussion, and on a motion by Mr. Mount, seconded by Mr. D'Amico, the Board agreed
41 to amend the policy as Mr. Pace suggested. The motion was unanimously agreed to with
42 Mr. Ellis and Ms. Emde abstaining.
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- 44 b. County owned former 30-acre McNulty Estate: The farm survey is complete. Final cost-
45 share application requirements should be submitted this month to the SADC and the cost-
46 share closing should occur in early spring.
47

- 48 2. 2018 PIG – An offer has been made and accepted by the Chowdhury's for the fee purchase of
49 their targeted 30-acre farm on Sawmill Road in Hamilton. Next step will be sending them an
50 agreement to execute with the County. Mr. Pace circulated a Board resolution supporting
51 Freeholder approval of that agreement. Ms. Emde made a motion to adopt the resolution; it
52 was seconded by Mr. Mount and unanimously approved. Ms. Walsh asked about the ultimate
53 disposition of this farm. Mr. Pace and Ms. Floyd said that it will be auctioned together with a
54 number of other County owned preserved farms. This would be similar to the group auction
the County undertook in 2011.

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3 IX. OLD BUSINESS

- 4 A. PennEast Pipeline Update: There have been no further revisions to the proposed route in
5 Hopewell Township. PennEast formally filed with FERC in October 2015 but FERC has thrice
6 delayed action on accepting the Environmental Impact Statement. The current date is April 7th.
7 B. Monitoring – Radvany non-ag use: A civil action complaint was filed by County Counsel and a
8 court hearing is scheduled for February 22nd. There is still an opportunity for Mr. Radvany to
9 negotiate with County Counsel. Mr. Pace circulated two aerial photos taken by Paul Pogorzelski.

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11 X. NEW BUSINESS

- 12 A. Duncraven Solar Application: Tim Fedor, farm owner, submitted an application to the SADC for
13 permission to install solar panels on the roof of an equine barn. The SADC asked for CADB
14 comment and with the approval of the Chairman, due to time sensitivity in order to be heard at
15 the January SADC meeting, Mr. Pace reviewed the application for the CADB and found no
16 issues. The SADC approved the application.
17 B. Bonacorda Distillery: Discussed in Public Comment portion of the meeting.

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19 XI. OTHER BUSINESS: None

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21 XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

22 None.

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24 XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

25 None was required.

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27 XIV. ADJOURNMENT

28 The meeting was adjourned at 8:25PM. The next meeting of the MCADB will be on March 6, 2017.

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30 Respectfully submitted,

31 

32 Daniel Pace
33 MCADB, Secretary

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38 Date adopted: March 6, 2017

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