

AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 12, 2006 MEETING

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: George Mason, Everett Stuart, Kevin Nelson, Bob Sutton, Judy Bailey, Jason Pezzullo

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim Opaluch, Dave Wallace

STAFF PRESENT: Ken Ayars, DEM/Agriculture
Lis Peterman, DEM/Agriculture
Vicky Drew, USDA/NRCS

GUESTS: Freddie Bettinger, South County Conservancy
Jim Auckerman, Esq., South County Conservancy
Jennie Perreira, Mathewson Farm
Ann Marie Ignasher, RI Land Trust Council
Rupert Friday, RI Land Trust Council

The meeting began at 5:10 pm at the USDA, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick.

Freddie Bettinger, South County Conservancy, updated the Commission regarding the Fenner/Ricci project. The Commission previously scored and accepted the farms as one project, and voted to allocate \$128,750 toward the Fenner Farm at the request of the Conservancy. Agreement has been reached between the Ricci's and Conservancy which allows the Ricci acreage to be donated in parcels over several years, without a specified completion date. This is a change from the original discussions with the Commission, who understood the farms were to be protected and closed on in entirety at the same time. After discussion, the Commission conveyed to the Conservancy that a specified and approved completion date for the donation of the Ricci parcel(s) is necessary, in concert with the right of the Commission to approve the original and any amendments to the management plan(s) for the property.

Kevin Nelson made a motion, seconded by Everett Stuart, to appraise the Sinkler Farm (Belvidere Stables), Charlestown. The motion passed unanimously. The Sinkler Farm was previously scored and accepted by the Commission.

Jennie Perreria, Mathewson Farm, Johnston, discussed a proposal to donate to the Commission the development rights to the farm, minus acreage immediately around the house and barn. Mathewson farm is a 16 acre former dairy farm, and the family has been in discussion with Ken Ayars about donation of the property at no cost, except for funding assistance with the appraisal and survey of the property. The donation agreement will not allow subdivision of the acreage around the house from the rest of the farm property. The Land Acquisition Committee of DEM will also review the proposal at an upcoming meeting, and request will be made to assist with the appraisal and survey. Bob Sutton made a motion,

seconded by Jason Pezzullo, to support the DEM Land Acquisition Committee relative to absorbing the cost of survey and appraisal. The motion passed unanimously.

Bob Sutton made a motion, seconded by Jason Pezzullo, to accept the donation of the development rights to the Mathewson farm. The motion passed unanimously.

Bob Sutton made a motion, seconded by Kevin Nelson, to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2005, and December 8, 2005 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Staff proved an update on the status of farms in negotiation, and reported in particular that the Keah (Wallace) properties closed the first week of January. The Commission also discussed the status of the budget.

Bob Sutton made a motion, seconded by Kevin Nelson, to approve the 2006 meeting schedule. The motion passed unanimously. The Commission will continue to meet the second Thursday of each month, unless otherwise posted at the USDA, 2nd floor conference room, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick.

The Commission discussed proposed rule amendments, in specific a declined request by the Department of Administration (DOA) to assist with adoption of rules by conducting the filings and hearings. This request was made to DOA by the Commission and DEM, and DOA does not feel this is within their realm of responsibility.

Jason Pezzullo made a motion, seconded by Everett Stuart, to adjourn at 7:40 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kenneth D. Ayars, Chief
Division of Agriculture, RIDEM