



AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES OF THE JULY 22, 2008 MEETING

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Nelson, Will Wright, George Mason, Ken Ayars, Dave Wallace

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Everett Stuart

STAFF: Mike Moorman, USDA

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 pm at the Little Compton Town Hall, Council Chambers, 40 Commons, Little Compton.

Will Wright made a motion, seconded by George Mason to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2008 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Ken Ayars provided an update of the status of negotiation regarding the following farms:

Schartner Farm (Bald Hill Nursery), Exeter/North Kingstown - Negotiations have continued among parties to the agreement and Schartner. All parties signed a letter of intent for the acquisition of development rights dated June 16, 2008 and will therefore proceed toward a purchase and sale agreement. The state's contribution is \$1,000,000, the Commission has currently authorized a commitment of \$500,000.

Peckham, Tiverton - The project has been slowed due to an issue with Town of Tiverton affordable housing requirements, which pertain when there is subdivision that creates more than five separate lots. Peckham original intent was to create 6 farm related lots but will decrease the number to five to minimize the affordable housing requirements and allow the project to proceed at a faster pace. The five lots created will all be largely protected by development rights, but the subdivision allows them to be sold separately as smaller farm parcels.

Freeborn, North Kingstown – still in negotiation regarding placement of the excluded house lot. North Kingstown is leading the negotiations and upon resolution of the house lot issue the project will close.

The Commission discussed the 2008 Open Space Bond referendum approved on the last day of the 2008 General Assembly session for 2.5 million. The referendum question will

therefore be on the ballot in November. The legislation was intensely debated but previously defeated in the 2008 session of the Assembly, despite intense support among land protection advocates, DEM etc. It reemerged and was approved on the last day of the session with much effort towards its support by DEM Director Sullivan and several key members of the Assembly.

The Commission scored the Luchka/Coulter farm, Charlestown (Stone Hill Cattle Company), which achieved an average score of 38.2 and was therefore accepted into the program.

The Commission participated in a brief farm tour of Sakonnet Vineyards, Little Compton, which was recently protected in concert with the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust and USDA Farmland Protection Program.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kenneth D. Ayars, Chief
Division of Agriculture, DEM