



AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MARCH 21, 2013 MEETING
DRAFT

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Nelson, George Mason, Dave Wallace, Everett Stuart and Ken Ayars.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Martha Neal, Will Wright, Jim Pagliarini, and Everett Stuart.

GUESTS:

STAFF: Mike Kenyon, USDA/NRCS

The meeting was called to order at 5:10 pm at USDA, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick, RI by Chair George Mason,

The minutes from the February 21, 2013 meeting were reviewed. *Dave Wallace made a motion, seconded by Kevin Nelson, to accept the minutes of the February 21, 2013 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.*

Michelle Sheehan updated the Commission on farms currently in negotiation. The appraisal for the Bailey Farm, East Greenwich was recently completed and DEM will soon meet with the family to discuss. Lial, Warren and Bettencourt, Tiverton are being appraised. The Town of North Kingston is finalizing the deed for Rippin, North Kingstown, for which the ALPC approved some funding for development rights at the last meeting. The bounds for the development rights acquisition for Paine, Block Island are still being negotiated. Development rights applications were recently submitted for Carvalho and Cotta farms, Portsmouth.

Mike Kenyon, NRCS provided an update on the federal Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP), of which 8 applications were submitted in Rhode Island for 8 parcels of land, and Kenyon anticipates that 6 parcels will be funded with the current allocation of FRPP funds. If additional funding is provided to RI via the regional equity program then it is possible all 8 parcels will be funded for development rights acquisition.

Mike Kenyon also informed that RI NRCS has requested clarification and update from USDA headquarters in Washington as to whether the restriction still remains on using FRPP funds to protect farms that are in turf or balled and burlap nursery.

Michelle Sheehan of DEM discussed and explained the statewide assessment of unprotected farmland that DEM recently conducted to assist with helping to know and perhaps focus protection efforts on areas of the state with significant tracts of unprotected farmland.

The Commission discussed the baseline assessment status of protected farms, and *Dave Wallace made a motion, seconded by Kevin Nelson to request a legal opinion of DEM as to whether development rights bond funds can be used to pay for conducting baseline assessments. The motion passed unanimously.*

Ken Ayars handed out the existing development rights covenant for review of the Commission, in anticipation of future discussion as to whether the covenant should be updated or changed. Ayars also discussed legislation in the General Assembly which would remove the 5 acre minimum acreage requirement for using state bond funds to purchase development rights to farmland.

A motion was made by Dave Wallace to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Everett Stuart, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ken Ayars, Chief
Division of Agriculture
RIDEM