



# Township of Pittsgrove

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Agriculture Advisory Committee

Facsimile:  
(856) 358-  
3055

Regular Meeting  
Teleconference Minutes  
March 17, 2021

1. Meeting called to order by Chair, Deb Wegner, at 7:38p.m.
2. Flag Salute
3. Open Public Meeting Statement: in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the date of this meeting was duly advertised by a notice published in The Daily Journal, South Jersey or Elmer Times. Change of format notice transmitted to the Elmer Times and posted on the Township website.
4. Attendance: Deb and Herb Wegner, Millard Paulus, Norm Lenchitz, Katie Mazzella, Sally Birdsall and Steve Bruder.
5. Approval of the minutes of the January 20, 2021 re-organization and regular meeting. Members reviewed. *Motion to approve by Norm, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Millard, all in favor.*

New Business:

a) Steve Bruder, SADC, went over the updated regulations for preservation and Pittsgrove meets all requirements. He also discussed the new 10-year plan, what should be in it, the data behind it including owners, funding and policies. Policies should include those of the Ag Advisory Committee. The plan should have a coordinated strategy which includes input from the county, housing etc.

Sally Birdsall, Planning Consultant, presented her ideas beginning with removal of areas in Norma. She'll send a map of her suggestions but the board thought it was not a good time for this change because of the Giordano issue and the possibility that the Levin farms may opt for preservation. Sally stated it's not just farms we should be thinking about but everything that supports them. Residents need more education on the benefits of farming

and maybe something could be worked into the school curriculum. Board still wants small farms included in the targeted list. Sally will start gathering data, meet with the county on policy and get back to the board sometime in the summer with a preliminary outline.

Steve talked about a “county code” which would require new homeowners to sign an acknowledgment that they’re moving to an agricultural area and that services, work hours, smells, dirt levels may be different from what they’re used to. This is in addition to the “Right to Farm”. Sally will look into whether this would require a township ordinance.

Katie mentioned that the GIS system is a little messy and needs to be cleaned up.

b) New application Burt. This is approximately a 19-acre farm on Porchtown Road. Norm visited the property and thought it was a good parcel to preserve. There is some debris but it would be easy to remove. It’s surrounded by wetlands. Board discussed and accepted the application. *Motion to approve by Norm, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Deb, all in favor.*

7. Old Business:

Status of current preservation efforts: Katie

Anne Bauman, Eric Mihalecz – close to closing. T. Mihalecz/Crisanti – accepted offers

JWP – at the title stage, survey complete

Dobson – Committee discussed his applications again. It was decided that 1 application would be better, the farm would be larger and the costs cut in half. Deb proposed the committee approve his application tonight if he’s willing to do that. With that caveat, there was a *motion to approve by Deb, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Herb, all in favor.* Eileen will contact Mr. Dobson with the proposal tomorrow. If he agrees the application will be processed, if he doesn’t his application will be denied and the discussion continued at the May meeting.

8. Correspondence: none

9. Member Comments: Deb, Herb, Katie and Eileen have all talked to Mr. Shulman. He’s an attorney whose client is interested in buying, and preserving, farmland in Pittsgrove. Nothing has happened at this point. Deb mentioned that the Helig farm is up for sale. Mr. Helig wanted to preserve it before selling the property.

10. Public Comments: none

11. Adjournment: 8:40 p.m. – *Motion to adjourn by Millard, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Norm, all in favor.*

**NEXT MEETING IS MAY 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021**