

## Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm.

Attendance: Present: Chester Urbanski, Bill Kiriluk, Greg Sappington, Heidi Tomenchok

Members excused: Betty Jane Hunt.

Approval of minutes from January 9, 2014 – approved as written.

Secretarial Duties through May:

- March – Betty Jane
- April – Greg
- May – Heidi

**Lambert Farm** – Chester read the following from the January 9, 2014 minutes: Note that members referenced a provided copy of the map of the Lambert property.

“The area delineated by yellow is a highway commercial zone area which is approximately 20 acres in size; there is an existing residence which is currently in use by a member of the Lambert family; it is expected to remain as such. The area delineated in blue is an R-4 zone and is approximately 38 acres. The Lambert Farm property is adjacent to Ziegenfuss property and Toll Brothers property, both undeveloped parcels at present. The Lambert property is also bordered by The Estates at West Amwell, a developed housing area, zoned R-1A.

The Lambert family is currently looking to keep the 5 acre parcel, with residence intact; they are also considering adding an additional 1 acre and possibly establishing a business on the parcel; this parcel would remain in the Highway Commercial Zone.

The Ag Advisory Committee has been requested by the West Amwell Township Open Space Committee to review the property for possible inclusion in the Open Space PIG (Planning Incentive Grant). Money may be available from the State (60%), Hunterdon County (20%) and Township (20%) for Open Space at the current time.”

“The Ag Advisory committee’s initial thoughts are as follows:

- Ziegenfuss and Toll Brothers properties are in the Farmland Preservation process; the committee would like to know the status of the applications
- The Lambert Farm property as is does not appear to be developable due to the 18’ access easement to the Ziegenfuss property, the close proximity to the NJ Power and Light Co and PSE&G lines and the Alexauken Creek Category 1 stream 300’ buffer. See attached map, below. As such it would most likely remain as farmland.
- The best scenario would be to preserve the Lambert Farm property in conjunction with Ziegenfuss and/or Toll Brothers and if not able to do so, it is probably best for a recommendation to be to leave the Lambert Farm as is and use Open Space money in another part of the Township.”

“Prior to making a formal recommendation, members of the Ag Advisory Committee will join Hal Shute, Open Space member, and Porter Little representing the Lambert family, on a walk of the

property; this is set for Friday, Jan 10, 2014 at 4 pm; as many members as can attend are encouraged to do so. Based on the walk, additional information will be provided at the February 6 Ag Advisory meeting and at that time we will decide if a formal recommendation should be provided to the Open Space Committee.”

Chester then asked the committee members how they felt about preservation of the Lambert property. One member was in favor of preservation, since he felt that the property was good farmland.

Other members felt that the property was not easily developable, had environmental constraints with the Category One Alexauken Creek and was constrained further by JCP&L power line right of way .

It was felt by some members that if the Ziegenfuss and Toll properties were to be preserved, then this would make the Lambert property more likely to be considered for preservation.

Members wanted to know what other properties were under consideration for preservation which might have a higher ranking. Members were also concerned as to how much money would be spent preserving this property.

Another question brought up was the possible preservation of the Ziegenfuss property. If the Lambert property is not preserved, the question was could this open up a possible joint development of both properties?

The five acre exception area was also questioned, since larger properties such as Toll South (130 acres) have a 2 acre exception area.

There was also the question as to the approximate 20 acre portion of the property that is in the HC (Highway Commercial) zone. How would this affect the request for preservation, and if this property is preserved, what would be the status of this HC zone?

There were some questions as to how the 18’ wide easement that runs from Route 179 through the Lambert property and onto the Ziegenfuss property affects the prospects of development of the Lambert property.

**Chapter 170: Pigs and Swine** – The Planning Board has requested a review of this ordinance from the Planning Board Planner. The AAC has agreed to review the revised draft ordinance.

### **Additional Business**

None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Thursday, March 6, 2014 at 7 pm at the Municipal Building.

Acting secretary for the March meeting will be Betty Jane Hunt.

Minutes prepared by Chester Urbanski