

Minutes of the November 22, 2021
Somerset County Agriculture Development Board
Virtual Meeting

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the November 22, 2021 Somerset County Agriculture Development Board (SCADB) Meeting began at 8:01 A.M. This meeting was held virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Members in Attendance:

Mark W. Kirby, Chairman
W. Peter Staats, Vice Chairman
Richard Norz
Sandra D. Rhue, Secretary/Treasurer
Christopher Carnevale
Robert Schultz
Matt D'Alessandro, Soil Conservation District
County Commissioner Paul Drake, Liaison

Members Not in Attendance:

Laura DePrado

Somerset County Staff:

Walter C. Lane, Director, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development
Kate Katzer, Principal Planner, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development
Thomas Boccino, Supervising Planner – Preservation, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development
Patrice Brown, Administrative Assistant, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development
Greg Pasquale, Deputy County Counsel

Public in Attendance:

Lauren Guastella- Somerset County Business Partnership/Somerset County Film Commission
David Clapp – State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC)
Rachel DeFlumeri - State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC)

Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the **October 27, 2021 SCADB Meeting minutes** was made by Peter Staats and was seconded by Richard Norz. Roll call was taken, and the motion was passed and carried.

1.) Public Comment & Presentations:

Lauren Guastella of the Somerset County Business Partnership/Somerset County Film Commission introduced a proposed program where movie and television production companies would be encouraged to utilize county farms with permission for shooting movie and television productions. Ms. Guastella touched on the various benefits in participating in this program including supporting economic growth in the County

and a broader public exposure of/atraction to these properties. The Board was very supportive of the Film Commission's efforts.

Informational Items:

I-2) Somerset County Preservation Plan Update

Principal Planner Kate Katzer reported that staff has received feedback from the SADC for the mapping components. Staff is currently working on addressing the SADC comments and concerns and making necessary changes. Once the changes are made, they will be discussed with the Steering Committee. Director Walter Lane added that the public comments are being examined as well and the revised draft plan will be released in early next year.

I-3) SADC Meeting-Update

David Clapp from the SADC reminded the Board that the SADC meeting for the month of December will be held December 2nd which is earlier than usual. Mr. Clapp also touched on the public comment that was examined regarding soil disturbance percentage amounts. He explained how eligibility was determined for farms to be given flexibility in the threshold of disturbance.

Presentations that were given are on the SADC website.

I-4) County /State Boards of Agriculture – Update

Director Walter Lane reported that he, Kate Katzer and Commissioner Marano attended the Board of Ag Dinner. He stated there was a very good turnout and staff was able to speaker to many of the Board of Agriculture members about potential opportunities to work together in the future.

I-5) Staff Comments

Principal Planner Kate Katzer informed the Board that due to ongoing COVID pandemic the 2022 “Ag Day” event would be a hybrid event with components online as well as in person on March 18, 2022. The AG story map will be available for people who cannot attend in person. There will be more interactive portions to the Story Map. Photos and videos will be available on the website. Ms. Katzer welcomes any suggestions or ideas. Director Walter Lane informed the Board that he had submitted Kate Katzer's name as well as his own name for consideration to fill the position that Tony McCracken held on Bernards Township Agricultural Advisory Committee. Director Lane attended their last meeting and found it informative and welcoming. He also thanked Matt D'Alessandro for setting up a meeting with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to discuss potential partnership opportunities.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:

D-1) Monitoring 2021

Principal Planner Kate Katzer reported that she was accompanied by Commissioners Marano and Drake for monitoring many of the properties. She elaborated on how each property was addressed based on

individual need. The Board was shown photos of each property that highlighted positive interaction and progress made by the various property owners as well as properties affected by Hurricane Ida.

D-2) December 2021 Meeting

Principal Planner Kate Katzer asked the Board if they wanted a December meeting and if they would like to have a Holiday gathering. After much discussion, the Board decided to cancel the December meeting and forgo the Holiday gathering. Peter Staats approved the motion and Sandra Rhue seconded the motion. Roll call was done and the motion was passed and carried.

D-3) Reorganization Meeting, January 2022

Principal Planner Kate Katzer reminded the Board that the January reorganization meeting will be when she distributes the updated list of meeting dates and committees. If there need be any changes, please contact Chair or Vice Chair. Ms. Katzer also asked for the Board's permission to advertise for January 24, 2022 meeting after which the remaining 2022 meetings dates would also advertised. The Board discussed changing the meeting time to be sometime in the evening. After a brief discussion, the Board did not take any action to change the meeting time.

Commissioner Drake reminded the Board to submit their resumes if they would like to be reappointed to the Board if their terms were expiring at the end of 2021.

D-5) Closed Session

A motion to go into closed session was made Peter Staats and seconded by Sandra Rhue. Roll call was taken, and the motion was approved. Closed session began at 9:27 a.m.

D-6) Results and actions from Closed Session (ended at 9:38 a.m.)

A motion to send a letter to Snyder's Farm was moved by Peter Staats and seconded by Sandra Rhue. A roll call was done and the motion was passed and carried.

D-7) Adjournment

A 9:41 a.m. motion to adjourn was made by Rich Norz and seconded by Christopher Carnevale. The motion was passed unanimously. Next meeting to be held on Monday, January 24, 2022 via Zoom at 8:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sandra Rhue
Secretary/Treasurer