

**Minutes of the August 22, 2022**  
**Somerset County Agriculture Development Board**  
**Virtual Meeting**

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the July 25, 2022 Somerset County Agriculture Development Board (SCADB) Meeting began at 8:00 A.M. This meeting was held virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Open Public Meetings Statement**

Chairman Mark Kirby reported the meeting had been duly advertised in accordance with Open Public Meetings Act as follows:

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 *et seq.*, and the Emergency Remote Meeting Protocol for Local Public Bodies N.J.A.C. 5:39-1.1 through 1.7, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided. The date, time and virtual meeting information for this meeting were published in The Star~Ledger and the Courier News. The agenda and the virtual meeting information were also posted on the County Planning Board website.

**Roll Call**

Roll call was taken. There was a quorum.

**Members in Attendance:**

Mark W. Kirby, Chairman  
W. Peter Staats, Vice Chairman  
Sandra D. Rhue, Secretary/Treasurer  
Kenneth Osterman  
Robert Shultz  
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  
Angela Knowles, Deputy Director, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development  
Patrice Brown, Administrative Assistant, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development  
Larisa Paxton, Preservation Intern, Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development  
Greg Pasquale Esq., Deputy County Counsel

**Public Members Present:**

Dave Clapp, SADC Staff  
Steve Bruder, SADC Staff  
Debbie Norz, Hillsborough Township Resident  
Linda Pederson

**Approval of Minutes:**

Peter Staats made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2022 Somerset County Agriculture Development Board minutes. Kenneth Osterman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, Kenneth Osterman abstained and the motion passed.

Note: Board Secretary Sandra Rhue entered the meeting at 8:04 a.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT & PRESENTATIONS:**

**1. Bridge Replacement E1002 – Bedminster/Bridgewater Townships**

Principal Planner Kate Katzer updated the Board on the Section 19 process through the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) which reviews any projects occurring within an Agriculture Development Area (ADA) to ensure there are minimal impacts to that ADA and preserved farms. Staff most recently met with SADC to submit final documentation from Somerset County Engineering Department (Bridge Division) Ms. Katzer read the Resolution that is to be submitted to the SADC for final review and approval to the Board. Staff did meet with the landowner to ensure there were no impacts on the preserved farm, and to answer any questions the owner may have about the process. Kenneth Osterman made a motion to approve the resolution for Bridge Replacement E1002 in Bedminster/Bridgewater as read; the motion was seconded by Sandra Rhue.

Note: Vice Chairman Peter Staats did not take any action or participate in any discussion on this agenda item.

**2. Drenchko and Sullivan Farms Update – Hillsborough Township**

Debbie Norz, Hillsborough Township resident, asked for an update on progress for both Drenchko and Sullivan Properties. Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development Director Walter Lane reported that the County has had ongoing discussions on both projects with the SADC and Hillsborough Township. The County has raised their concerns about encumbering the entire property to the SADC regarding the Sullivan Farm. As part of the newly adopted Open Space Preservation Plan, the County reenforced their vision to create a cross-county connection trail; and for both the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Programs to work in a collaborative manner.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

**SADC Meeting –Update**

Dave Clapp, of the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) reported that the SADC will not hold its August meeting. The next meeting will be on September 22, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the State Offices in Trenton. Mr. Clapp reported that the SADC has convened a Farmland Preservation Policy subcommittee to examine

factors that are affecting land protection efforts, how they have changed over the years and possible changes for the future. A partner survey has gone out to various stakeholders and should be completed by September 9, 2022. Dave Clapp provided an update on the draft rule proposal for Soil Protection Standards and stated the rule proposal is being reviewed by the Office of the Attorney General (Governors Authority Unit) after which it will come back to the SADC for action.

Dave Clapp mentioned that SADC Legal Specialist, Allison Reynolds, resigned and her position as SADC Attorney with a background in Farmland Preservation is being posted to be filled.

### **County /State Boards of Agriculture – Update**

No Update at this time.

### **Staff Comments**

Principal Planner Kate Katzer recapped this year's 4-H Fair event. The 4H Fair took place August 10<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and was a successful event. Ms. Katzer thanked all who helped in the Ag Day prep for last year- the activity books developed for the day were reprinted for the fair and were a big hit. The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Somerset County's first Preserved Farm, The Baron Farm will soon take place during 2023. Staff has been working to come up with several activities to celebrate the Anniversary. There are various kid friendly activities being put together for the next Ag Day by intern, Larisa Paxton. The focus is on the History of Somerset for this year's Ag Day.

Chairman Kirby expressed his delight in the success of this year's 4H Fair.

Note: Director of Planning, Policy and Economic Development, Walter Lane asked the Board to add the Sullivan Farm matter to the Closed Session agenda for discussion with no action.

### **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:**

#### **1. Bluebird Farm Alpacas (Peapack/Gladstone)**

Kate Katzer reminded the Board that a couple of meetings ago, the Board received the Site Specific Agricultural Management Practices (SSAMP) submission from Nick Villa owner of Bluebird Farm Alpacas. Ms. Katzer read the Site Specific Agricultural Management Practice resolution in its entirety to the Board. The resolution will be reviewed during closed session.

### **CLOSED SESSION:**

At 8:35 a.m., a motion was made by Peter Staats and seconded by Sandra Rhue to go into closed session. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed.

At 9:13 a.m., the Board came out of closed session.

**RESULTS AND ACTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION:**

**Blue Bird Farm Alpacas (Peapack Township)**

A motion was made by Sandra Rhue and seconded by Peter Staats to for approve a Site Specific Agricultural Management Resolution as read, with the meeting date correction to August 22, 2022. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed.

**Nahkla Property (Hillsborough)**

A site visit will be complete on August 22, 2022.

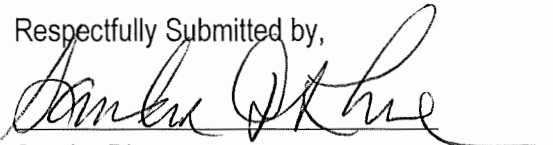
**Additional Items for Discussion**

The September meeting of the Somerset County Agriculture Development Board will be held in person in the Commissioners Meeting Room on level 3 of the Somerset County Administration Building - 20 Grove Street Somerville, NJ

At 9:11 a.m., a motion was made by Peter Staats and seconded by Bob Shultz to adjourn. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

***The next meeting will be held in person on September 26, 2022, at 8:00 a.m.***

Respectfully Submitted by,



Sandra Rhue  
Secretary/Treasurer