

TOW Conservation Commission

Meeting Notes

Meeting of 09/26/05

Begin

7:30 pm

Attending

- Salvatore LaBruna
- Claude Braithwaite – Not attending
- Patricia Owen
- Jon Paul Heurich
- Kevin Sumner
- Mike Leary
- Kate Fox – Not attending

Review of Previous Meeting Notes

- Minutes were handed out and read individually. Nominated for approval by Sal. Seconded by Kevin.

Official Business

PDR / Farmland Preservation Program

- What should be the minimum size of the farm?
 - Most towns require a minimum of 20 acres.
 - Walkkill should be smaller as there are many specialty farmers working less than 10 acre lots.
 - We are recommending 10 acres.
- Reviewed a draft of a letter to farmers and filing documents created by Kevin.
- We have been granted time at the next Planning Board work session to discuss the program.
- The town will probably only have enough money for a single large easement.
- The farmer will be given 75-80% of value of the easement.
 - The value of the easement is the difference between the development value and the agricultural value.
- How will the PDR be funded?
 - We will recommend that the town put up the money for the initial PDR.
 - We will apply for state and county funding for future PDR.
 - But, this is a slow process.
 - The next state funding application period is next spring.
 - It will probably be late next year before the state makes the decision to award the money.

- The actual receipt of the money will be even later than that.
- Can the farmer ever renege on the easement?
 - No. Maybe by an act of the legislature, but otherwise no.
- Can the property ever be subdivided?
 - Issues like this are negotiated in the easement.
 - It is possible to subdivide the property, but it must still remain agriculture.
- We are just getting the information together for the town.
 - The town will need to act. They will need to form a committee.
 - We will recommend that we have a person on the committee.

Elgreen Orchid Farm (Section 6, Block 1, Lot 71)

- Existing greenhouses on Prosperous Valley Road.
- The landowner wants to build two much larger greenhouses and a shipping building downhill from the existing greenhouses.
- There is a new plan since last meeting.
 - The greenhouses have been moved back further from the wetland.
- There was a stop work order on the site.
 - The developer was starting work without the proper permissions.
- Sal sent a note to Mr. McGoey recommending a SWPPP.

New Plans for Golden Triangle Phase 1 (called Covered Bridge)

- New site plans were briefly reviewed.
 - They appear to be pretty much the same as the originals, just with more details.
- The wetland mitigation is a narrow strip adjacent to Silverlake-Scotchtown Road.
 - A slope will be dug out creating a very steep bank from the road to the wetlands mitigation.
- The FEIS is still not approved.
 - There were some numbers and formulas used in the initial plan that were deemed invalid by the town attorneys.

Future Project

- Tree cover – Mike will investigate / spearhead.
- Sidewalks – Sal will investigate / spearhead.

Adjourned

Motion to adjourn by Pat. Seconded by Jon. 8:45.

Copies:

- Mike – 7 copies of 2 page meeting notes and 1 page Globe Contracting site.
- Sal – 36 sheets (6 copies of 6 pages of Agenda notes).
- Kevin – 40 sheets (5 copies of an 8 page document) of a draft of documents concerning a PDR / Farmland Preservation Program.