

Solebury Township Farm Committee  
October 27, 2020  
Virtual Meeting

**MINUTES**

Attendance: Kaitlin Farbotnik, Graham Phillips, Josh Perlsweig, Craig Haney, Gary Manoff, Tim Luccaro, Lars Crooks, Thomas Mancini, Buz Teacher, Kevin Morrissey (Supervisor Liaison) and Nicole Slack (Township Administration) Mark Freed (Township Solicitor)

**I. Call to Order**

Kaitlin Farbotnik called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

**II. Approval of Minutes**

On a motion by Mr. Josh Perlsweig seconded by Mr. Tim Luccaro, the minutes of the September 29, 2020 Farm Committee meeting unanimously approved.

**III. Announcements**

**IV. New Business**

**V. Discussion Items**

Sign Ordinance

Solicitor, Mark Freed, updated the Farm Committee on the proposed sign ordinance and its provisions relating to farming and farming sales which is in draft form.

The United States Supreme Court issued a decision in a sign case known as the Reed decision that essentially said municipalities cannot regulate signs based on content. You cannot have a set of rules for church signs, political signs, commercial signs, etc. The ordinance has to be content neutral. Content neutral, means, if you have to read the sign to figure out which rules apply, your rules are not content neutral. Content neutral means its based on where it located, what type of sign (freestanding, wall) which district it ISs in.

There are challenges in adapting the ordinance to content neutral as there was a lot of history that went into former sign ordinance and unique Solebury. The second challenge was over the years there have been several complaints, mainly with temporary signs. Complaints involved should they be up, how long have they been up, they are in disrepair. One of the goals of the sign ordinance is to address temporary signs.

One of the larger issues in relation to farms is the sale of agricultural products. Under the existing sign ordinance there is a provision that says a farm selling cider or raising turkeys, states during the agricultural selling season you can have on-site signs and offsite directional signs. The challenge was getting that into a content neutral ordinance. Provision for temporary signs states regardless what the sign is you can have a temporary sign for twice a year for forty-five days.

This captures a large number a sign but does not address the agricultural signs and the seasons that last longer than 45 days. Long term temporary signs propose that these signs allow you to have one on site and six offsite signs, at least six feet apart, providing directions to the farm. Temporary signs are going to require permits, although the fee will be minimal. This allows the Township to track the length of time a temporary permit has displayed. Temporary signs will be per product, for example, you can have a temporary sign for turkeys, apples, etc. for 120 days. The Township is trying to avoid one property having multiple different temporary signs at one time.

There are other provisions for changing content signs, which are permanent. This would allow you to have a standing sign with changing content. This provision is for temporary signs only. You are allowed one 3 square foot directional sign, off premises and you need written permission from the property owner.

#### New Committee Members

Lars Crooks is a new committee member and owns Tuckamony Farm. Buz Teacher is an associate member with Burgess Lea Farm. Thomas Mancini is also an associate member.

#### Farmer Land Owner Match Program

Ms. Farbotnik reached out to the executive director of NOFA. NOFA has a program called New Jersey Land Link. NOFA was willing to add Bucks County to their program. If Bucks County was not willing to be added, they were willing to talk to have a discussion whether they could copy the program over for Bucks County. New Jersey provides a great platform, which provides maps and land available.

Committee members provided various updates in reference to contacts they had reached out to since the last meeting regarding the Farmer Land Match Program.

#### Biosecurity

Kaitlin spoke to Dan Ives regarding inspections on preserved farms. Aerial imagery is not collected via drones. If they were to use drones they would notify property owners and need land owner consent. He requested information regarding biosecurity and he was willing to adapt to the necessary protocols.

#### Agricultural Properties

The committee reviewed ideas on how to expand the list of properties that are currently being farmed. Kevin Morrissey mentioned that the Township has an Agricultural Security Area list. Kaitlin Farbotnik stated that NASS could possibly do a report at the Township level, currently only publicly available at the county level. Farm service agency has records of what is grown on what fields in what areas. This route would require a request for the information.

### **VI. Public Comment**

### **VII. Adjournment**

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 pm.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Slack  
Farm Committee Administrator