

**WASHINGTON COUNTY  
FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Public Agency Center – Room 1113 A & B  
West Bend, WI

December 1, 2010  
7:00 p.m.

Members present: Mark Piotrowicz, Maury Strupp, Shawn Graff, Ray Heidtke, Don Heesen, Dennis Kay, Ricky Kratz, Jim Hovland, Mike Shea, Bob Retko, Mike Samann, Richard Beine, Al Schulteis, Dan Mueller, Helmut Wagner, and Sue Yogerst

Absent: Ellis Kahn, Paul A. Little, Scott Mathie, Terri Kaminski

Excused: Justin Drew

Staff present: Deb Sielski-Deputy Administrator, Joshua Glass-Planner, Paul Sebo-Senior Technician, Rochelle Brien-Planning Intern, Kevin Struck-UW Extension, Nancy Anderson-SEWRPC Chief Planner, and Lynda Christl-Program Assistant

Also present: Alan Linnebur (UW-Extension)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Supervisor Heidtke called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**REVIEW MINUTES OF OCTOBER 27, 2010 MEETING**

Beine asked for clarification on the contiguity requirement for Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs) as mentioned in the third paragraph on page 3. Sebo indicated that there could be a larger block of farms designated as an AEA than just the five farms that petitioned for the AEA. Yogerst asked about the deadlines indicated in the first paragraph on page 2 regarding local government deadlines for establishing or continuing farmland preservation zoning. Sielski explained that the Farmland Preservation Plan will indeed expire in December 31, 2011 but existing zoning ordinance certification does not expire until December 31, 2012.

**Motion by Graff, seconded by Retko, to approve the minutes of October 27 with no additions or corrections. Motion carried.**

**CONSIDERATION OF REVISIONS TO DRAFT CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND – JOSHUA GLASS**

Glass mentioned that all deletions are struck through and additions are underlined, but the final draft will look clean. Glass highlighted the only change made per the request of the Committee (on page 2). Schulteis asked about the cost to towns. Sielski reiterated that there will be no costs to towns except any per diems it may have established. **Motion by Retko, seconded by Schulteis, to preliminarily approve draft Chapter 1 with no additions or corrections. Motion carried.**

**CONSIDERATION OF REVISIONS TO DRAFT CHAPTER 2 – POPULATION, HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS – JOSHUA GLASS**

Glass indicated that the majority of changes have to do with updating information with 2009 data that Piotrowicz notified staff about at the last meeting. **Motion by Hovland, seconded by Yogerst, to preliminarily approve draft Chapter 2 with no additions or corrections. Motion carried.**

**REVIEW DRAFT CHAPTER 3 – EXISTING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FARMLAND PRESERVATION IN WASHINGTON COUNTY – JOSHUA GLASS**

Glass reviewed law requirements that are addressed in Chapter 3. Glass stated that, in putting this chapter together, staff went through the local government comprehensive plans adopted in Washington County in recent years element by element and identified the goals, objectives, policies and programs related to Farmland Preservation. A lot of common ground was found among plans of various communities. Sielski added that everything on pages 4-34 was taken directly from either the adopted County Comprehensive Plan or adopted local government comprehensive plans. Sielski requested Committee members to especially concentrate on the pages discussing the common ground among various plans. Heidtke asked Committee members to also pay close attention to what is listed for the community they represent. Preliminary approval of Chapter 3 will be considered at the next meeting.

**DISCUSSION OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREAS IN CURRENT FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN – DEB SIELSKI**

Sielski reviewed how farmland preservation areas (FPAs) were determined in the 1981 Farmland Preservation Plan and highlighted differences in how they will be determined in the new plan under the Working Lands Initiative (WLI). Sielski stated that, at the January meeting, staff will provide the Committee with a few sets of criteria to use to develop FPAs for the County. Staff will then provide the Committee with a countywide map showing FPAs at the February meeting. In March, April and May, staff will be meeting with all towns and the Villages of Germantown and Richfield to review FPA maps and the criteria used to develop the maps. Each town or village will have the opportunity to review the FPAs for their community. If a town or village decides to designate FPAs, they would have to add them to their comprehensive plan by amendment. If a town or village decides not to designate FPAs, the countywide map would be blank for that community.

If a town or village does designate FPAs, it must then decide whether or not to utilize farmland preservation zoning. If it chooses to do so, it will have until December 31, 2012 to develop/amend and adopt a farmland preservation zoning ordinance and have it certified by DATCP.

After all meetings with local governments are complete, an updated map will be brought back to this Committee. Schulteis asked if farmers can participate if their local government decides not to. Sielski replied that if collecting tax credits through zoning ordinances, no, not after December 31, 2012. If they have an agreement with DATCP, they will be able to continue to claim a credit until the current agreement expires.

Shea asked about farmers being subject to conversion fees. Sielski explained how conversion fees can be avoided through conditional use permit. Shea also asked the question of what happens to a property if it is enrolled in the WLI, the farmer goes bankrupt, and taxes are not paid. Sebo explained how the situation would be handled depending on the program the land is involved in. Shea was concerned because of a situation that occurred in Dundee (in the Town of Osceola in Fond du Lac County) where land was condemned and acquired by the State. Graff suggested that staff research the situation regarding land acquisition in Dundee. Sielski concurred and staff will report back at the next meeting.

Mueller questioned the term voluntary and how it relates to zoning and conversion fees. Sielski indicated that zoning is voluntary for the municipality. Struck clarified that if the municipality takes land out of farmland preservation zoning, the landowner would not be subject to a conversion fee.

Discussion ensued regarding participation, current zoning, and the certification process. Piotrowicz asked if DATCP would certify a farmland preservation zoning map and ordinance if, for example, a town designates two different farmland preservation areas on the map but only wishes to zone one as farmland preservation. Sielski will contact DATCP and report back to the Committee with an answer at a future meeting.

**PRESENTATION OF LAND EVALUATION AND SITE ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS (LESA) COMPLETED DURING COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING – NANCY ANDERSON**

Anderson referred to the LESA handout and explained how the LESA analysis was conducted during the comprehensive planning process. Piotrowicz asked why uplands were not excluded like wetlands were in the first step of the analysis. Anderson explained that parcels that were 100 percent woodland were excluded and parcels had to be at least 2 percent agriculture to be included. Piotrowicz was concerned that upland woodlands and parcels with natural areas and possibly steep slopes were being given too much weight with the LESA analysis being used for agricultural preservation.

**REVIEW DRAFT CHAPTER 4 – INVENTORY OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES – JOSHUA GLASS**

Glass stated that agricultural inventory information from the County’s comprehensive plan was used as a starting point and was updated in this chapter mainly using 2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture data and information from a Megatrends report recently released by the Center for Land Use Education at UW-Stevens Point. Glass highlighted some recent trends and how the agricultural industry is shifting in various sectors.

Kay asked about using more updated information. Glass explained that the most recent data available was used and we are on the tail end of both the most recent U.S. Census and U.S. Census of Agriculture. Unfortunately, our timeline will not allow updated data to be added when new censuses are released.

Linnebur noted that dairy is still the main agricultural sector in Washington County and even though there are fewer dairy cows, overall dairy production has remained the same. Graff suggested adding something to the chapter that demonstrates this fact.

Wagner expressed support for preserving smaller parcels being used for various types of agriculture in different ways. Wagner stated that smaller agricultural parcels also deserve benefits and should receive some protection. Shea concurred and suggested adding a discussion regarding the preservation of smaller agricultural parcels to a future agenda.

Heidtke asked the committee to review chapter, and preliminary approval of the chapter will be considered at the next meeting.

**REVIEW OF SWOT ANALYSIS COMPLETED DURING COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING – DEB SIELSKI AND KEVIN STRUCK**

Sielski explained the various strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analyses related to Farmland Preservation that were done during the comprehensive planning process. Struck reviewed the results of a SWOT analysis that was conducted with the ANCR (Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources

Element) Workgroup during the comprehensive planning process. Struck requested that the Committee members review the results and bring questions and comments to the next meeting.

**DEVELOPMENT OF VISION OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION IN WASHINGTON COUNTY – KEVIN STRUCK**

Struck provided a few examples of draft vision statements to work from. Discussion ensued and the Committee expressed ideas that should be included in the vision statement for farmland preservation in Washington County. Struck will work with the draft statement and discuss it again at the next meeting.

**DISCUSSION OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION FOCUS GROUP – KEVIN STRUCK**

Struck explained what focus groups are and how they work. At least one will be done for development of this plan. Linnebur, Sebo and Struck will work together and identify who will be invited to participate in the focus group(s). After the focus sessions are conducted, a report with opinions/perceptions will be created and presented to the Committee, possibly at the February meeting.

**SURVEY OF FARMLAND OWNERS IN WASHINGTON COUNTY – DEB SIELSKI**

Sielski reviewed a farmland preservation survey that was mailed in November to all land owners in Washington County with 20 acres or more, which totaled 1,952 addresses. Results will be analyzed on a countywide basis and broken down by community. These will be presented at the next meeting, and sent out to local governments.

**DETERMINE FUTURE MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS**

Heidke suggested moving the meeting start times to 6:00 p.m. The Committee concurred. The next three meetings will be as follows:

- January 19, 2011 – Government Center, Room #1020
- February 23, 2011 – PAC, Room #1113 A & B
- March 9 or 16, 2011 – PAC, Room #1113 A & B

Future agenda items include:

- Consider preliminary approval of draft Chapters 3 and 4
- Consideration of small agricultural parcels for preservation
- SWOT analysis discussion
- Vision statement development

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Wagner, seconded by Shea, to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 p.m. Motion carried.**

Debora Sielski  
Deputy Planning and Parks Administrator

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_  
Raymond Heidtke, Chairperson

Date \_\_\_\_\_