

TOWN OF FARMINGTON PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES
Tuesday, May 18, 2010
7:30 p.m.

The Chairman, Mike Raabe, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Farmington Town Hall. Other members present were Roxie Storandt, Steve Kirchner, Paul Lash, and Joan Dolbier.

Roxie read the minutes from the April 20, 2010 meeting. Paul made a motion to accept the minutes, and Joan seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The Plan Commission then considered a resolution for the Town Board in support of Paul and Penny Lash's application for participation in the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (PACE). The PACE program provides state funding for the purchase of agricultural conservation easements. Easements are permanent and are carried over to subsequent landowners if the property is sold. The sale of development rights is recorded in an easement that is attached to the deed. The landowner can retain building sites. The easement allows for building and expansion for long-term agriculture and prohibits development that would interfere with agricultural use. Paul and Penny are planning to put 250 acres into the PACE program. If their application is accepted, then a professional will appraise the value of the land as both farmland and development. The difference between the value of the acres as farmland and development is the value of the easement. The example Roxie read from previous minutes was if you have 200 acres of land assessed at \$2500.00 an acre for farmland and \$4000.00 an acre for development the difference in value would be \$1500.00. If you take \$1500.00 x 200 acres the cost of the development rights would be \$300,000.00.

The Plan Commission felt that Paul and Penny's request meets criteria for the Town of Farmington Comprehensive Plan in that this land is already in an exclusive agriculture designation and one of the goals of the Town of Farmington's Comprehensive Plan is to limit development in exclusive agricultural areas. Roxie made a motion to recommend that the Town Board adopt a resolution supporting Paul and Penny Lash's application to the Wisconsin Agricultural Easement Purchase Program. Joan seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Mike then passed out a copy of a letter that had been sent to Mr. and Mrs. Thaldorf from La Crosse County Zoning plus a letter he had received from Mrs. Thaldorf regarding what La Crosse County Zoning feels is a zoning ordinance violation. The Thaldorfs were unable to attend our May meeting but intend on attending the Plan Commission meeting in June.

We then went on to discuss the proposed new La Crosse County Zoning Code. There was a lot of information to digest. We did have some questions about home businesses. Charlie Handy was going to be making a presentation on these zoning codes at the Towns Association Meeting at the Farmington Town Hall on Thursday, May 27, 2010. The Farmington Town Board invited members of the Farmington Plan Commission to attend this meeting for information.

Paul made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Steve seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Storandt
Secretary, Plan Commission