



MINUTES
ROCK COUNTY PDR/PACE AD HOC COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2009, 8:00 A.M.
COUNTY COURTHOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM, ROOM 250
COURTHOUSE, JANESVILLE WI

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Sweeney called the meeting of the PDR/PACE Ad Hoc Committee to order at 8:05 a.m.

Committee Members Present: Chair Alan Sweeney, Julie Backenkeller, Robert Fizzell, Julie Christenson, Ronald Combs, Neil Deupree, Scott Farrington, Phil Hamilton, Don Jones, Mark Gunn, Raymond Henschler, Fred Hookham, Brad Cantrell, John Lader, Doug Marklein, Archie Morton, Dave Rebut, Bill Barlass, Charley Rusch, and Wade Sweger.

Staff Present: Tom Sweeney, LCD; Randy Thompson, UWEX; Steve Schraufnagel, Planning; Carrie Houston, Planning; Mary Robb, Planning; and Wade Thompson, Planning.

Others Present: Mary Mawhinney, Board of Supervisors; Paul Benjamin, Harold Hanauska.

2. **Adoption of Agenda:** Chair Sweeney entertained a motion to adopt the agenda. Lader motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Barlass. **Motion Carried.**
3. **Adoption of Minutes:** Chair Sweeney entertained a motion to adopt the minutes from the September 22, 2009 meeting. Combs motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Lader. **Motion Carried.**
4. **Citizen Participation, Communications, and Announcements.** John Lader announced a Working Lands Meeting at the Holiday Inn Express in Janesville on Thursday, November 5, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. Wisconsin Towns Association will be co-sponsoring the meeting.
5. **Survey Analysis.**
Carrie Houston, Planning Department reviewed the survey from the last meeting and the results. The survey showed that 75% of the committee agreed the following land categories should be protected through PACE;
Land with soils best suited for agriculture,
Land currently enrolled in the state's Farmland Preservation Program,
Land with large enough acreage in agricultural use,
Land with large percentage of acreage in agricultural use,
Land surrounded by or used in infrastructure compatible with ag,
Land outside of municipal/ETZ areas,
Land with large ag investment,
Land near other protected lands,
Land far from planned development,
Land in areas without much scattered residential development,
Land near livestock farms,
Land far from transportation corridors,
Land designated as transition,
Land that is far from public water and sewer.

The survey also showed that 60% of the Committee agreed not to protect the following lands through PACE;
Lands with soils not suitable for septic systems,

Lands or soils not suitable for protection,
Land that is near public water and sewer,
Land in areas with much scattered residential development,
Land near planned development,
Land on hilltops and scenic vistas.

The following categories didn't have a clear consensus, and need further discussion:
Land that has been owned and farmed by a greater number of generations in the same family – five of you felt that should not be a priority with this program, and eight of you thought that it should,
Land with pre-settlement vegetation,
Land with endangered plants and animals,
Land with environmentally significant features,
Land near major transportation corridors,
Land within municipal ETJ areas.

Alan Sweeney, Committee Chairman, then opened the floor to any questions. Committee members asked various questions regarding the extra-territorial jurisdiction areas, pre-settlement vegetation, and endangered and threatened species. Carrie Houston, Planning, and Tom Sweeney, Land Conservation answered these questions.

6. **State PACE Criteria.**

Carrie Houston, The state Working Lands Initiative and the Federal Farm and Ranch Land Protection Programs provides funding if the land is being preserved meets their eligibility criteria. The County program needs to be constructed in a way that uses components their criteria.

Al Sweeney asked if there were other questions or comments on the analysis or criteria? Criteria probably will be very complicated so with the analysis we will be dealing with it in every term.

7. **Eligibility Criteria.**

Carrie Houston –based on the survey results and what is required for potential eligibility criteria items: a composite land evaluation soil score of 75% or higher meaning it is good farming land; there is a commitment to enroll in the specified DATCP Program; that it be 40 acres or more; a minimum of half the property in active agricultural use; not currently within any town, village, or city planned development areas; located within a township that does contain a city or village or within two miles of a village or three miles of a city; not already protected through another agreement designed to maintain agricultural use for perpetuity; and at least ten percent coverage of environmental sensitive areas. The last one specifically even though it wasn't something important in the survey is a criterion that may lead to additional funding sources.

8. **LESA Factor Weighting & Breakout Session.**

Wade Thompson, Planner, introduced the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Program factor-weighting concept. Wade stated that the committee would be tasked with developing the County's LESA Program factor scoring scales and factor weights.

Wade reviewed a scenario on how LESA factor weighting would be used and help us determine which lands would be eligible for the program.

Wade noted the criteria used in the Rock County Program needs to tie into the federal and state criteria to assure Rock County Program Applicants are eligible for those funding pools. Wade stated it's the idea that we first figure out what is eligible to apply for our program, and once we do that we need to determine how these eligible lands can be prioritized for inclusion in our program.

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Committee members asked various questions about the LESA Program concept and factor weights including how the system would be developed, how the program will be utilized, potential factors, and how the weighting system works. Wade answered the various questions.

At this point the committee completed a LESA factor weighting survey.

After the meeting convened Chair Sweeney entertained numerous questions on the survey about LESA and potential factors.

Chair Sweeney thanked staff and stated the next committee meeting will be December 1, 2009 at 8:00 a.m. and asked for a motion to adjourn.

9. **Adjournment.**

Don Jones motioned to adjourn the Ad Hoc Committee meeting, seconded by Ron Combs. The Committee adjourned at 9:35 a.m. **Adjournment.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas Sweeney
County Conservationist

Minutes are not official until adopted by the PDR/PACE Ad Hoc Committee.

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