

Minutes for November 5, 2015 Farm Advisory Board Meeting 9:30-11:30 AM at Scott County Highway Facility

Attendees: Ann Houghton, Lori Pint, Gerald Williams, Mark Jensen, Tom Wolf, Joe Wagner, Wendy Wulff, Deb Barber, Brad Davis, Colleen Carlson

I. Any additions to the agenda?

II. Reports

1. Commissioner's report:

- Question – update on new Renaissance Festival location

No formal announcements, but speculation is that they are still interested in a site between 169 and the Scott County Fairgrounds. They will need to do an environmental impact statement, which takes time. The deadline to move the Renaissance Festival location may have been extended a couple of years.

- Other updates:

County is wrapping up construction projects for this year. A frontage road along 169 is in the planning phase now. There is an open house planned for Nov 17 on planned changes to the 169 and 41 intersection.

2. Report from Brad Davis

- Status of solar gardening ordinances, projects

Brad passed out a handout from a presentation on Solar Gardening. There was discussion regarding the maintenance and possible uses of the land around the solar panels. The ordinance for these structures needs to be completed because people are waiting to close the deals with developers. Question regarding placing these on buffer strips, or CRP land or planned road corridors were asked. Wendy updated the group on solar garden projects that the Metro Council has completed. There is the possibility that the acreage for the solar gardens would be assessed as commercial property, increasing the taxes from when the land was agricultural and likely Green Acres. The ordinance will go before the Planning Commission again Nov 9th, and is expected to be voted on by the County Board Nov 17. There are 2 or 3 sites being proposed for Scott County.

3. Report on SHIP (Lori Pint is the FAB representative on SHIP Committee)

SHIP has been renewed for another 3 years – we are currently planning SHIP 4. The group was curious to know what was accomplished during SHIP 1-3? And what is the timeline for SHIP 4? Proposed to be a topic for a future FAB meeting.

4. Subcommittee assignments and reports.

- Outreach/Education (Victoria & Jennifer) No report
 - Any ideas for the Recommendation from the FAB?
 - FAB viewpoint on solar gardening on farm land?
 - FAB recommendation about using GMO seed in ditches?

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- Zoning ordinance/liaison to planning and zoning dept (William & Gerald)
It has been very quiet in regards to large developments, but there has been a slow increase in the number of individual homes.
- Membership –All applicants will still go through a discussion process and vote by present FAB members. No reports
- Communications/FarmSCENE. No report
- Legislative. No report

III. Discussion with Wendy Wulff from the Metro Council

- Status of 2040 Comprehensive Plan
Wendy reported that the Met Council part of planning for the 2040 plan is completed. In September, the system statements to all communities were released containing instructions tailored to each community. These can be viewed at the link below.
- You can view or download the planning resources here:
www.metrocouncil.org/handbook.aspx
- Q & A
Changes from last time – since development has been mainly in defined areas, the Louisville sewer development project has been pushed out to a time TBD depending on what happens with development in the coming decades.
Population projections have been reduced metro wide overall by about 50,000. Projected population – 180,000 by 2030, 210,000 by 2040. More growth is happening from re-development in the inner suburbs.
Scott County is doing very well compared to other counties. The sales tax increase has helped.

IV. Reports on Scott County Fair and Autumn Fare (Lori and Norm Pint)

Scott County Fair – Fair Board elections will take place Nov 23rd at Cedar Ridge Arabians

Autumn Fare – turned out well. Feedback will result in some improvements in buildings. Date for next year – Saturday October 1, 2016

V. New Items:

- Officers
 - secretary (Victoria's resignation)
 - vice chair (not certain of Lances status)Discussion around poor attendance on the part of farmers, and lack of new members. Is this group of value to the county? Joe Wagner proposed that the FAB become a group that meets only when there is an issue that the commissioners or farmers need to convene the group for. In other words – meet only on an as-needed basis. This idea will be sent out with the minutes for consideration by all of the members.

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V. Follow-up Items from Last FAB Meeting

1. GMO seed use in ditches – issue raised last time by Mark Jensen. Mr. Jensen asked if we could get a rule against the use of GMO alfalfa OR can he get a sign like the “Do Not Spray” sign that says something like “Do Not Plant GMO alfalfa in ditch”.

Mark Jensen led a discussion about this issue. It became apparent that there are many players in the ordering and planting of seed in ditches. It is not just someone in the county. Brad volunteered to find a name in the county Public Works department for Mark to speak with and determine how to proceed and come back to this group with a recommendation. One possibility is for the FAB to create a recommendation document for the County Board to consider on how to best address the concerns.

VI. Future agenda items-open discussion

- Invite Gretchen from SHIP to report on what SHIP 1-3 accomplished, and what the timeline and plan is for SHIP 4
- Buffer strips – Q&A

VII. Next meeting dates or future meetings on an “as needed” basis?

- ?March – Patty Freeman, Scott County Parks
- No 2016 dates were identified pending approval or rejections of the new direction proposed by Commissioner Wagner

Standard FarmSCENE ideas for inclusion:

- Communicate the FAB proceedings and activities and promote agriculture. We should report on proceedings of the meetings without giving opinions.
- State something like “here’s what this group is about – preserving open land.
- Encourage more people to come to the meetings remind them that this is a forum where they can voice their concerns and questions.
- We need more members and are looking for new ideas.
- Upcoming FAB meeting dates and topics
- Link to the FAB web site with past meetings minutes