



Kent County Agriculture Preservation Board  
Wednesday, September 7, 2022 from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Kent County Administration Building – Room 311  
Minutes prepared by  
Matthew Channing, [matthew.channing@kentcountymi.org](mailto:matthew.channing@kentcountymi.org)

### Draft Minutes

**Members Present:** Chair Dennis Heffron (Agricultural Representative), Vice Chair Suzie Reinbold (Real Estate Interest), Secretary Russ Slater (Agricultural Interest), Ed Robinette (Township Interest), Jessica Marks (Agricultural Interest), Carolyn Johnson (Conservation Interest), Monica Sparks (County Commissioner)

**Absent:** None.

**Staff:** Matt Channing

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Vice Chair Reinbold welcomed everyone to the meeting at 11:33 am.
- II. **Approval of the Agenda** – A motion as made by Jessica Marks to approve the September 7, 2022 Agenda. Ed Robinette supported. UNANIMOUS.
- III. **Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by Jessica Marks to approve the August 3, 2022 minutes. Ed Robinette supported. UNANIMOUS.
- IV. **Public Comment on Agenda Items** – Ruth Thornton from the Land Conservancy of West Michigan introduced herself and is looking forward to working more closely with the Agricultural Preservation Board.
- V. **Presentation from Feeding America West Michigan** – A team from Feeding America West Michigan presented on their various programs, highlighting opportunities for farmer partnership opportunities. The opportunities involve gleaning including gleaning from production fields and stores as well as direct contracts to purchase from farmers.
- VI. **ACEP Applications** – Staff informed the Agricultural Preservation Board that USDA gave preliminary notification for funding of the three outstanding ACEP applications. This includes the 2020 Kruthoff application, 2021 Momber application, and 2022 Kingsbury application. Once program agreements are sent, staff will order appraisals and surveys for the applications.

- VII. Staff Update** – Staff updated the Agricultural Preservation Board on recent activities including an interview with the Grand Rapids Business Journal, a new round of quadrant meetings, and the Great Apple Crunch coming in October.
- VIII. General Public Comment** – Ruth talked about her past experience with conservation easements and will work with Agricultural Preservation Board staff to account for the preservation land that the Land Conservancy owns.
- IX. Board Member Updates** – Commissioner Sparks expressed an interest in an Agricultural Preservation marketing campaign and requested it be on the agenda for the next meeting. Secretary Russ wanted an update on where the County was with an Agricultural Preservation millage. Carolyn advised caution when it comes to a millage as it may burden the farmers the millage would seek to protect.
- Chair Heffron provided several updates. He notified the Board of it an upcoming TDR meeting on September 21. The presentation trip will likely take place next spring. A meeting with AI on September 2<sup>nd</sup> went very well and he believes the Administrator has a good plan for agricultural preservation in Kent County. The Chair is also working with Secretary Russ to engage with the business community on commitment to agricultural preservation.
- X. Adjournment** – A motion as made by Ed Robinette to adjourn until next meeting. Jessica Marks supported. UNANIMOUS

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Next Meeting:  
Wednesday, October 5, 2022  
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Robinette's Apple Haus and Winery  
3142 4 Mile Rd NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525