

2:76-6.15 Deed restrictions

(a) The following statement shall be attached to and recorded with the deed of the land and shall run with the land: "Grantor promises that the Premises shall be owned, used and conveyed subject to:

"1. Any development of the Premises for nonagricultural purposes is expressly prohibited.

"2. The Premises shall be retained for agricultural use and production in compliance with N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32, and all other rules promulgated by the State Agriculture Development Committee, (hereinafter Committee). Agricultural use shall mean the use of the premises for common farmsite activities including, but not limited to: production, harvesting, storage, grading, packaging, processing and the wholesale and retail marketing of crops, plants, animals and other related commodities and the use and application of techniques and methods of soil preparation and management, fertilization, weed, disease and pest control, disposal of farm waste, irrigation, drainage and water management, and grazing.

"3. Grantor certifies that at the time of the application to sell the development easement to the Grantee and at the time of the execution of this Deed of Easement the nonagricultural uses indicated on attached Schedule (B) existed on the Premises. All other nonagricultural uses are prohibited except as expressly provided in this Deed of Easement.

"4. All nonagricultural uses, if any, existing on the Premises at the time of the landowner's application to the Grantee as set forth in Section 3 above may be continued and any structure may be restored or repaired in the event of partial destruction thereof, subject to the following:

- i. No new structures or the expansion of pre-existing structures for nonagricultural use are permitted;
- ii. No change in the pre-existing nonagricultural use is permitted.
- iii. No expansion of the pre-existing nonagricultural use is permitted; and
- iv. In the event that the Grantor abandons the pre-existing nonagricultural use, the right of the Grantor to continue the use is extinguished.

"5. No sand, gravel, loam, rock, or other minerals shall be deposited on or removed from the Premises excepting only those materials required for the agricultural purpose for which the land is being used.

"6. No dumping or placing of trash or waste material shall be permitted on the Premises unless expressly recommended by the Committee as an agricultural management practice.

"7. No activity shall be permitted on the Premises which would be detrimental to drainage, flood control, water conservation, erosion control, or soil conservation, nor shall any other activity be permitted which would be detrimental to the continued agricultural use of the Premises.

i. Grantor shall obtain within one year of the date of this Deed of Easement, a farm conservation plan approved by the local soil conservation district.

ii. Grantor's long term objectives shall conform with the provisions of the farm conservation plan.

"8. Grantee and Committee and their agents shall be permitted access to, and to enter upon, the Premises at all reasonable times, but solely for the purpose of inspection in order to enforce and assure compliance with the terms and conditions of this Deed of Easement. Grantee agrees to give Grantor, at least 24 hours advance notice of its intention to enter the Premises, and further, to limit such times of entry to the daylight hours on regular business days of the week.

"9. Grantor may use the Premises to derive income from certain recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, cross country skiing and ecological tours, only if such activities do not interfere with the actual use of the land for agricultural production and that the activities only utilize the Premises in its existing condition. Other recreational activities from which income is derived and which alter the Premises, such as golf courses and athletic fields, are prohibited.

"10. Nothing shall be construed to convey a right to the public of access to or use of the Premises except as stated in this Deed of Easement or as otherwise provided by law.

"11. Nothing shall impose upon the Grantor any duty to maintain the Premises in any particular state, or condition, except as provided for in this Deed of Easement.

"12. Nothing in this Deed of Easement shall be deemed to restrict the right of Grantor to maintain all roads and trails existing upon the Premises as of the date of this Deed of Easement. Grantor shall be permitted to construct, improve or reconstruct any roadway necessary to service crops, bogs, agricultural buildings, or reservoirs as may be necessary.

"13. At the time of this conveyance, Grantor has () existing single family residential building(s) on the Premises and () residential buildings used for agricultural labor purposes. Grantor may use, maintain, and improve existing buildings on the Premises for agricultural, residential and recreational uses subject to the following conditions:

- i. Improvements to agricultural buildings shall be consistent with agricultural uses;

ii. Improvements to residential buildings shall be consistent with agricultural or single and extended family residential uses. Improvements to residential buildings for the purpose of housing agricultural labor are permitted only if the housed agricultural labor is employed on the Premises; and

iii. Improvements to recreational buildings shall be consistent with agricultural or recreational uses.

"14. Grantor may construct any new buildings for agricultural purposes. The construction of any new buildings for residential use, regardless of its purpose, shall be prohibited except as follows:

i. To provide structures for housing of agricultural labor employed on the Premises but only with the approval of the Grantee and the Committee. If Grantee and the Committee grant approval for the construction of agricultural labor housing, such housing shall not be used as a residence for Grantor, Grantor's spouse, Grantor's parents, Grantor's lineal descendants adopted or natural, Grantor's spouse's parents, Grantor's spouse's lineal descendants, adopted or natural; and

ii. To construct a single family residential building anywhere on the Premises in order to replace any single family residential building in existence at the time of conveyance of this Deed of Easement but only with the approval of the Grantee and Committee.

iii. (—) residual dwelling site opportunities have been allocated to the Premises pursuant to the provisions of N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.17, "Residual Dwelling Site Opportunity". The Grantor's request to exercise a residual dwelling site opportunity shall comply with the rules promulgated by the Committee in effect at the time the request is initiated.

In the event a division of the Premises occurs in compliance with deed restriction No. 15 below, the Grantor shall prepare or cause to be prepared a Corrective Deed of Easement reflecting the reallocation of the residual dwelling site opportunities to the respective divided lots. The Corrective Deed shall be recorded with the County Clerk. A copy of the recorded Corrective Deed shall be provided to the Grantee and Committee.

(or)

No residual dwelling site opportunities have been allocated pursuant to the provisions of N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.17. No residential buildings are permitted on the Premises except as provided in this Deed of Easement.

For purposes of this Deed of Easement:

"Residual dwelling site opportunity" means the potential to construct a residential unit and other appurtenant structures as the Premises in accordance with N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.17.

"Residual dwelling site" means the location of the residential unit and other appurtenant structures.

"Residential unit" means the residential building to be used for single family residential housing and its appurtenant uses. The construction and use of the residential unit shall be for agricultural purposes.

"Use for agricultural purposes" as related to the exercise of a residual dwelling site opportunity and the continued use of the residential unit constructed thereto, means at least one person residing in the residential unit shall be regularly engaged in common farmsite activities on the Premises including, but not limited to: production, harvesting, storage, grading, packaging, processing and the wholesale and retail marketing of crops, plants, animals and other related commodities and the use and application of techniques and methods of soil preparation and management, fertilization, weed, disease and pest control, disposal of farm waste, irrigation, drainage, water management and grazing.

"15. The land and its buildings which are affected may be sold collectively or individually for continued agricultural use as defined in Section 2 of this Deed of Easement. However, no division of the land shall be permitted without the joint approval in writing of the Grantee and the Committee. In order for the Grantor to receive approval, the Grantee and Committee must find that the division shall be for an agricultural purpose and result in agriculturally viable parcels. Division means any division of the Premises, for any purpose, subsequent to the effective date of this Deed of Easement.

i. For purposes of this Deed of Easement, "Agriculturally viable parcel" means that each parcel is capable of sustaining a variety of agricultural operations that yield a reasonable economic return under normal conditions, solely from each parcel's agricultural output.

"16. In the event of any violation of the terms and conditions of this Deed of Easement, Grantee or the Committee may institute, in the name of the State of New Jersey, any proceedings to enforce these terms and conditions including the institution of suit to enjoin such violations and to require restoration of the Premises to its prior condition. Grantee or the Committee do not waive or forfeit the right to take any other legal action necessary to insure compliance with the terms, conditions, and purpose of this Deed of Easement by a prior failure to act.

"17. This Deed of Easement imposes no obligation or restriction on the Grantor's use of the Premises except as specifically set forth in this Deed of Easement.

"18. This Deed of Easement is binding upon the Grantor, the Grantor's heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns and the Grantee; it shall be construed as a restriction running with the land and shall be binding upon any person to whom title to the Premises is transferred as well as upon the heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors, and assigns of all such persons.

"19. Throughout this Deed of Easement, the singular shall include the plural, and the masculine shall include the feminine, unless the text indicates otherwise.

"20. The word 'Grantor' shall mean any and all persons who lawfully succeed to the rights and responsibilities of the Grantor, including but not limited to the Grantor's heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns.

"21. Wherever in this Deed of Easement any party shall be designated or referred to by name or general reference, such designation shall have the same effect as if the words, 'heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns' have been inserted after each and every designation.

"22. Grantor, Grantor's heirs, executors, administrators, personal or legal representatives, successors and assigns further transfers and conveys to Grantee all of the non-agricultural development rights and development credits appurtenant to the lands and Premises described herein. Nothing contained herein shall preclude the conveyance or retention of said rights by the Grantee as may be permitted by the laws of the State of New Jersey in the future. In the event that the law permits the conveyance of said development rights, Grantee agrees to reimburse the Committee () percent of the value of the development rights as determined at the time of the subsequent conveyance.

"23. That portion of the net proceeds, representing the value of the land only (and not the value of the improvements), of a condemnation award or other disposition of the Premises following termination of this Deed of Easement, as permitted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32, shall be distributed among the Grantor and the Grantee in shares in proportion to the fair market value of their interests in the Premises on the date of execution of this Deed of Easement. For this purpose, the Grantee's allocable share of the proceeds shall be the net proceeds multiplied by a fraction, the numerator of which is the fair market value of the development easement as certified by the Committee at the time of the initial acquisition and the denominator of which is the full fair market value of the unrestricted Premises as certified by the Committee at the time of the initial acquisition, which is identified as (—/—). Furthermore, the Grantee's proceeds shall be distributed among the Grantee and the Committee in shares in proportion to their respective cost share grants on the date of execution

of this Deed of Easement. The Grantee shall use its share of the proceeds in a manner consistent with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32."

(b) The Committee or landowner may require more stringent deed restrictions consistent with the Agriculture Retention and Development Act, N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32.

(c) The deed restrictions contained in (a) above shall be liberally construed to effectuate the purpose and intent of the Farmland Preservation Bond Act, P.L. 1981, c.276, and the Agriculture Retention and Development Act, N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32.

Amended by R.1984 d.595, effective January 7, 1985.
See: 16 N.J.R. 2871(a), 17 N.J.R. 65(a).

Section substantially amended.

Amended by R.1986 d.386, effective September 22, 1986.
See: 18 N.J.R. 1328(a), 18 N.J.R. 1930(a).

Substantially amended.

Amended by R.1989 d.49, effective January 17, 1989.
See: 20 N.J.R. 1761(a), 21 N.J.R. 158(a).

Added (d).

Amended by R.1990 d.529, effective November 5, 1990.
See: 22 N.J.R. 1244(a), 22 N.J.R. 3359(a).

Modified deed restrictions at (a)11, 12, 13, 16 and 20.
Amended by R.1992 d.324, effective August 17, 1992.
See: 24 N.J.R. 896(a), 24 N.J.R. 2833(a).

Revised (a).

Amended by R.1993 d.182, effective May 3, 1993.
See: 25 N.J.R. 223(a), 25 N.J.R. 1867(a).

Revised (a)14i.

Amended by R.1994 d.393, effective August 1, 1994.
See: 26 N.J.R. 1419(a), 26 N.J.R. 3159(b).

Amended by R.1995 d.613, effective December 4, 1995.
See: 27 N.J.R. 13(a), 27 N.J.R. 4875(a).

Law Review Commentaries

Farmlands—Municipal Land Use. Judith Nallin, 137 N.J.L.J. No. 14, 52 (1994).

Case Notes

Denial for failing to demonstrate agricultural viability of newly created parcel exceeded authority of township planning board. *Dilts v. Franklin Tp. Planning Bd.*, 272 N.J.Super. 234, 639 A.2d 743 (A.D. 1994).

Landowners seeking to divide agricultural land subject to deed restrictions under farmland preservation programs; demonstration to municipal governing body of agricultural viability. *Dilts v. Franklin Tp. Planning Bd.*, 272 N.J.Super. 234, 639 A.2d 743 (A.D.1994).

2:76-6.16 Criteria for evaluating development easement applications

(a) The evaluation shall be based on the merits of the individual application and the application's contribution to its respective project area. The weight factor assigned to each criterion identifies the relative importance of the specific criterion in relation to the other criteria.

(b) The criteria listed in (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), and (h) below shall be combined to demonstrate the degree to which the purchase would encourage the survivability of the municipally approved program in productive agriculture.

(c) The soil quality criterion (weight 15) is as follows:

1. Priority will be given to soils which exhibit superior quality, require minimal maintenance and have a greater potential for long term viability for a variety of agricultural purposes.

2. Factors to be considered are as follows:

i. Prime soils identified by the U.S.D.A., Soil Conservation Service;

ii. Soils of Statewide importance as identified by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, State Soil Conservation Committee; and

iii. Other soils which are specifically suited for the production of specialty crops and are being used or intended to be used for that purpose.

(d) The tillable acres criterion (weight 15) is as follows:

1. Priority will be given to the proportion of the land that is deemed tillable.

2. Factors to be considered and deemed to be tillable will be lands devoted to cropland harvested, cropland pastured and permanent pasture. For purposes of evaluating these factors, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

i. "Cropland harvested" means land from which a crop was harvested in the current year. Cropland harvested shall include the land under structures utilized for agricultural or horticultural production.

ii. "Cropland pastured" means land which can be and often is used to produce crops, but its maximum income may not be realized in a particular year. This includes land that is fallow or in cover crops as part of a rotational program.

iii. "Permanent pasture" means land that is not cultivated because its maximum economic potential is realized from grazing or as part of erosion control programs. Animals may or may not be part of the farm operation.

(e) The boundaries and buffers criterion (weight 20) is as follows:

1. Priority will be given to the greatest proportion of boundaries with buffers which help protect the integrity of the individual application and/or project area from conflicting nonagricultural uses.

2. Factors to be considered are as follows:

i. The type and quality of buffers, including:

(1) Compatible uses as follows:

(A) Deed restricted farmland (permanent);

(B) Deed restricted wildlife areas;

(C) Eight year programs;

(D) Farmland (unrestricted);

(E) Streams (perennial) and wetlands;

(F) Parks (limited public access);

(G) Parks (high use);

(H) Military installations;

(I) Highways (limited access);

(J) Golf course (public); and

(K) Other compatible buffers.

(2) Conflicting uses as follows:

(A) Residential; and

(B) Other;

(3) Negative consideration:

(A) Exceptions which adversely affect the applicant's agricultural operation (weight 10); and

ii. Percentage of boundaries buffering the individual application.

(f) The local commitment criterion (weight 20) is as follows:

1. Priority will be given where municipal and county land use regulations and policies support the long term viability of the agricultural industry.

2. Factors to be considered are as follows:

i. Zoning ordinances and densities which discourage conflicting nonagricultural development;

ii. Absence of sewer or other growth leading infrastructure;

iii. Consistency with municipal, county, state and regional plans;

iv. Municipal commitment to actively participate in the Agriculture Retention and Development Program;

v. Right to farm and other ordinances supporting agriculture; and

vi. Community financial support for the project area.

(g) The size and density criterion (weight 20) is as follows:

1. Priority will be given to larger masses with higher density of the lands dedicated to farmland preservation.

2. Factors to be considered are as follows:

i. The size of the individual application;

ii. The size of the individual application in relation to the average farm size in the respective county; and