

State Agriculture Development Committee Meeting Summary January 24, 2008

Executive Director's Report

Brian Smith has been hired as the SADC's new Chief of Legal Affairs.

The SADC received 15 county comprehensive plans and 37 municipal plans by the December 15th deadline for the county and municipal planning incentive grant programs.

The SADC has identified an additional \$783,000 in funding for the soil and water conservation grant program. The funding originally was provided by the Department of Environmental Protection to the Department of Agriculture for conservation cost-share projects that for various reasons never came to fruition.

Preliminary Ranking – FY2009 County Easement Purchase Round

The SADC approved the preliminary ranking of 14 applications, all from Cumberland County, under the FY2009 traditional county easement purchase program.

Implementation Details #2 – New County Planning Incentive Grant Program

The SADC approved the second set of implementation details for its new planning incentive grant program that identify the procedures for conducting SADC final review of applications for the sale of a development easement.

www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/farmpreserve/programs/pigimplementationdetails2.pdf

Quaker Valley Farms, Franklin Township, Hunterdon County

The SADC will assemble an Assessment Team, including representatives from Rutgers University, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Department of Agriculture, as well as SADC staff and SADC members Alan Danser and Denis Germano, to visit this farm as soon as possible to evaluate complaints of extensive earth-moving in preparation for greenhouses. If it is determined based on this visit that immediate action is warranted, the SADC will hold a special meeting to take further action. Several members of the public addressed the Committee regarding their serious concerns about soil activities at the farm.