

# **THE COLTS NECK**

## **FARMLAND PRESERVATION BULLETIN**

### **WINTER/SPRING – 2010**

**PUBLISHED BY THE**  
**COLTS NECK FARMLAND PRESERVATION**  
**AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE**

**RICHARD MALINOWSKI – CHAIRPERSON – 732-834-0088**  
**JARRETT ENGEL – TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE LIAISON – 732- 817-0887**  
**JOHN JACOBY –BULLETIN EDITOR & MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVE TO THE**  
**MONMOUTH COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD – 732-462-6567**  
**THOMAS MORIN – 732-946- 2625**  
**VIRGINIA MUMFORD – 732- 409-0216**  
**TOM ORGO – 732-772-1772**  
**PATRICIA POLGAR – 732-946-4875**  
**RICHARD REHM – 732-946-2644**  
**JAMES STUART – 732-530-0662**  
**ELLEN TERRY – SECRETARY – 732-863-4909**

#### **FORWARD:**

**THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE OF COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP ISSUES A SEMI-ANNUAL BULLETIN TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN COLTS NECK LANDOWNERS AND THE COMMITTEE. IN THE INTEREST OF EFFICIENCY, THE BULLETIN WILL BE KEPT BRIEF BUT WILL COVER TOPICS THAT THE COMMITTEE BELIEVES WILL BE OF INTEREST AND USEFUL TO COLTS NECK LANDOWNERS. IN ADDITION TO KEEPING LANDOWNERS APPRISED OF LOCAL, COUNTY AND STATE ACTIONS, ISSUES AND OPTIONS RELATED TO THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM, THE BULLETIN WILL COVER FARM BUREAU APPLICATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION ON AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS AND FARMLAND USE IN GENERAL. QUESTIONS SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE ABOVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS.**

#### **WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN.....?**

##### **LOSS OF A DEDICATED AND VALUED COMMITTEE MEMBER**

**THE COMMITTEE WAS SADDENED BY THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF ITS VICE-PRESIDENT, MARIO A. SESSA ON FEBRUARY 20, 2010. MARIO WAS 67 YEARS OLD. HE HAD WORKED THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AS A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR WITH THE US CUSTOMS SERVICE AND SPECIAL AGENT FOR THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION IN NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY AND WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**IN PREPARATION FOR HIS RETIREMENT IN 1998, HE AND HIS FAMILY PURCHASED A 32 ACRE FARM IN COLTS NECK, NEW JERSEY AND LAUNCHED VICTORY STABLES. MARIO LOVED THE DAILY ROUTINE OF HORSE FARMING AND HE ESPECIALLY ENJOYED THE FARMS, OPEN-SPACE AND RURAL CHARACTER OF COLTS NECK, NEW JERSEY.**

PRIOR TO BEING APPOINTED TO THE COLTS NECK FARMLAND AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE IN JANUARY 2005, MARIO HAD VICTORY STABLES PLACED IN THE NEW JERSEY FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM. HE WAS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE AND WAS ELECTED VICE-PRESIDENT IN JANUARY 2007.

THE COMMITTEE AND COLTS NECK WILL MISS MARIO AND WE WISH TO EXPRESS OUR DEEP SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

THE FOLLOWING PHOTOGRAPH AND PASSAGE WAS EXTRACTED FROM A HAND-OUT THAT WAS OBTAINED BY THE EDITOR AT MARIO'S MEMORIAL SERVICE ON FEBRUARY 24, 2010. IT ACCURATELY DESCRIBES MARIO AND MAKES CLEAR WHY WE VALUED HIS FELLOWSHIP AND LEADERSHIP ON THE COMMITTEE.

## **PRESERVED FARMS UPDATE**

WHILE THERE HAVE BEEN NO NEW APPLICATIONS FOR FARMLAND PRESERVATION DURING THE PAST YEAR, THE COMMITTEE CONTINUES TO WORK WITH A NUMBER OF LANDOWNERS WHO ARE CONSIDERED PRIME CANDIDATES FOR PRESERVATION. THE CUMULATIVE ACREAGE OF THE CANDIDATES BEING URGED TO CONSIDER PRESERVATION APPROACHES 300.

THE RELUCTANCE TO PROCEED WITH APPLICATIONS APPEARS TO BE PRIMARILY DUE TO THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CONDITIONS WHICH DEPRESS THE VALUE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS RELATIVE TO THEIR VALUE IN EARLY 2008 AND PREVIOUSLY.

## **EXCERPTS FROM THE COLTS NECK MASTER PLAN**

THE GOALS IDENTIFIED IN THE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN INCLUDE SEVERAL STATEMENTS THAT SUPPORT AND PROMOTE AGRICULTURE IN THE MUNICIPALITY. SOME OF THE KEY EXCERPTS FROM THE STATEMENT OF POLICY ARE LISTED BELOW:

- **CHARACTER OF AREA: TO PRESERVE THE TOWNSHIP'S RURAL & SCENIC CHARACTER** – THE BASIC GOAL IS TO PRESERVE THE COMBINATION OF OPEN SPACE, AGRICULTURE, AND WELL BUFFERED LOW-DENSITY HOUSING THAT IS THE CORNERSTONE OF THE TOWNSHIP'S RURAL AND SCENIC CHARACTER. TO MAINTAIN THE RURAL, SCENIC AND OPEN-SPACE CHARACTER OF THE TOWNSHIP, STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH CURRENT ZONING IS ESSENTIAL.
- **AGRICULTURE: TO PRESERVE A VIABLE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY** – AS COLTS NECK HAS BEEN AN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY, ANOTHER GOAL IS TO PRESERVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMERCIAL FARMING. AGRICULTURE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED THROUGHOUT THE TOWNSHIP. AS PART OF THE AGRICULTURE PRESERVATION EFFORTS, THE CONTINUATION OF LIVESTOCK AND CROP PRODUCTION AND THE BREEDING AND TRAINING OF HORSES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED. APPROPRIATE "BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES" SHOULD BE USED IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE QUALITY AND SUPPLY OF WATER IN OUR WATERSHED. THE OVERALL GOAL IS TO ESTABLISH VERY LOW RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES IN THE "AG" ZONE AND TO MINIMIZE BOTH THE LOSS OF FARMLAND AND CONFLICTS BETWEEN FARMING OPERATIONS AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS.

AS STATED IN THE CURRENT MASTER PLAN, STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH ZONING IS ESSENTIAL IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE TOWNSHIP'S AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE. COLTS NECK WAS ONE OF THE FIRST COMMUNITIES IN THE STATE TO ENACT 10-ACRE RESIDENTIAL ZONING. ALTHOUGH LOCAL LAND-USE REGULATIONS AND THE ZONING ORDINANCE PROVIDES FOR AN OVERALL DENSITY OF ONE UNIT PER TEN ACRES IN AREAS THROUGHOUT THE TOWNSHIP, IT IS PREFERRED THAT NEW DEVELOPMENTS FOLLOW A LOT-SIZE-AVERAGING CONCEPT TO PRESERVE LARGE CONTIGUOUS BLOCKS OF AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS. COLTS NECK HAS BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL IN PRESERVING AND DEED RESTRICTING LAND THROUGH THIS TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT.

SOME OF THE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ENACTED BY THE TOWNSHIP, WHICH ARE INTENDED TO MAINTAIN AGRICULTURE AS A VIABLE INDUSTRY AND PRESERVE THE COMMUNITY'S RURAL CHARACTER, INCLUDE:

- ALLOWANCE OF AGRICULTURE AS A PERMITTED PRINCIPAL USE IN A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4, A-5, AND AG ZONE DISTRICTS;
- PROVISIONS FOR FARM STRUCTURES AS ACCESSORY USES;
- PROVISIONS FOR ADDITIONAL DWELLING UNITS TO SERVE AS LIVING QUARTERS WITH CONDITIONS;
- ALLOWANCE OF FARM STANDS AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT AS ACCESSORY USES;
- PERMISSION FOR RIDING/TRAINING STABLES TO HOLD EQUINE SHOWS AND EVENTS THAT ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC;
- IN THE BUSINESS ZONE, ALLOWANCE FOR COMMERCIAL SERVICES AND BUSINESS THAT ARE NEEDED TO MAINTAIN AND SUPPORT LOCAL AND REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL USES;
- RESIDENTIAL CLUSTER OPTION FOR OPEN SPACE;
- LOT-SIZE-AVERAGING WITH BONUS PROVISIONS; AND
- A RIGHT-TO-FARM ORDINANCE ADOPTED BY THE COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE ON DECEMBER 11, 2002.

### MONMOUTH COUNTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

THE FOLLOWING TABLE PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF THE PRESERVATION PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS IN MONMOUTH COUNTY. AS CAN BE SEEN, THERE HAS BEEN A QUITE SIGNIFICANT DECREASE IN THE PRESERVED ACREAGE DURING THE YEAR 2009 RELATIVE TO YEARS 2008 AND 2007. THIS IS PRIMARILY DUE TO THE CURRENT ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT WHICH DEPRESSES THE VALUE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS AND TO SOME EXTENT THE TIGHTENING OF REQUIREMENTS AND REDUCED AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AT THE STATE AND COUNTY LEVELS.

<b>PRESERVATION PROGRAM</b>	<b>MUNICIPALITIES</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>ACREAGE</b>
COUNTY EASEMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM	UPPER FREEHOLD	2007	102.3
MUNICIPAL PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM	MILLSTONE, MANALAPAN, HOWELL, UPPER FREEHOLD,	2007	908.7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2007</b>	<b>1011</b>
COUNTY EASEMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM	UPPER FREEHOLD, MILLSTONE, FREEHOLD, MARLBORO, MIDDLETOWN,	2008	838

MUNICIPAL PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM	HOWELL, UPPER FREEHOLD, MILLSTONE, COLTS NECK, MANALAPAN	2008	529
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	UPPER FREEHOLD, MIDDLETOWN	2008	74
TOTAL		2008	1441
COUNTY EASEMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM	UPPER FREEHOLD	2009	109
COUNTY PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM	UPPER FREEHOLD	2009	137
TOTAL		2009	246

HOWEVER, WITH THE PROGRESS MADE DURING 2009, THE COUNTY'S TOTAL FARMLAND ACREAGE THAT HAS BEEN PRESERVED HAS REACHED 12,708 INVOLVING 171 FARMS.

UPPER FREEHOLD TOWNSHIP CONTINUES TO BE THE LEADING TOWNSHIP REGARDING THE NUMBER OF PRESERVED FARMS AND TOTAL PRESERVED ACREAGE BY A WIDE MARGIN. DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS, THEY HAVE PRESERVED 1,081 ACRES INVOLVING 23 FARMS. THIS REPRESENTS APPROXIMATELY 40% OF THE ACREAGE PRESERVED BY THE COUNTY DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS. WITH THE 2009 PRESERVATIONS, THE COUNTY HAS PRESERVED THE LAST OF THE TARGETED PARCELS IN THE FARMLAND PROGRAM'S HILL ROAD, UPPER FREEHOLD PROJECT AREA INVOLVING 16 CONTIGUOUS, PRESERVED FARMS.

ALSO, AS NOTED IN THE ABOVE TABLE, THE COUNTY HAS ACQUIRED PRESERVATION EASEMENTS ON TWO FARMS AND 137 ACRES THROUGH THE NEW COUNTY PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM.

### STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ISSUES

#### PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROCESS STATUS

SEVENTEEN COUNTIES HAVE DEVELOPED THE COMPREHENSIVE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLANS REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SADC'S NEW COUNTY PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM (PIG). FIFTEEN COUNTIES TOOK PART IN THE FY09 COUNTY PIG FUNDING ROUND AND TWO ADDITIONAL COUNTIES – BERGEN AND CUMBERLAND PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FY10 ROUND.

COORDINATED WITH THE COUNTY PLANS ARE 42 MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLANS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE MUNICIPAL PLANNING INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM. THIRTY-SEVEN MUNICIPALITIES TOOK PART IN THE FY09 FUNDING ROUND AND ANOTHER FIVE PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FY10 ROUND. ALTOGETHER, THE 59 COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL PLANS TARGET THE PROTECTION OF AN ADDITIONAL 219,000 ACRES OF FARMLAND OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS AT A PROJECTED TOTAL COST OF APPROXIMATELY \$3 BILLION, WITH AN EXPECTED STATE COST-SHARE OF \$1.8 BILLION.

#### STATEWIDE FARMLAND PRESERVATION NUMBERS CONTINUE TO CLIMB BUT AT A SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED RATE

DURING 2009, A TOTAL OF 63 FARMS COVERING 4,734 ACRES WERE PRESERVED. WHEN COMPARED TO THE 142 FARMS COVERING 12,405 ACRES THAT WERE PRESERVED DURING 2008, THIS REPRESENTS A DECREASE RELATIVE TO 2008 OF APPROXIMATELY 62%.

## **PRESERVED FARMLAND SUMMARY AS OF FEBRUARY 2, 2010**

**AS OF FEBRUARY 2, 2010, THE STATE HAS PRESERVED A TOTAL OF 1,913 FARMS TOTALING 184,076 ACRES. THE TOTAL COST OF PRESERVING THIS LAND HAS BEEN \$1,340,606,918.00 OF WHICH \$872,569,794.00 OR 65.09% HAS BEEN BORNE BY THE STATE. THE BALANCE OF \$468,037,124.00 HAS ESSENTIALLY ALL BEEN BORNE BY THE COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES. IN GENERAL, THE COUNTIES COVER APPROXIMATELY 2/3<sup>RD</sup> OF THE COST OF THIS BALANCE AND THE MUNICIPALITIES COVER 1/3<sup>RD</sup>. STATEWIDE, THE COST PER PRESERVED ACRE AVERAGES \$7,283.00.**

**IN THE STATE'S SUMMARY REGARDING MONMOUTH COUNTY, A TOTAL OF 10 MUNICIPALITIES HAVE PRESERVED 166 FARMS TOTALING 12,696 ACRES. THE TOTAL COST FOR PRESERVING THESE FARMS IS REPORTED AT \$192,787,048.00 OF WHICH THE STATE COVERED \$121,067,771.00. THE BALANCE, \$71,719,277.00 HAS BEEN BORNE BY THE COUNTY AND THE MUNICIPALITIES. COUNTYWIDE, THE COST PER PRESERVED ACRE HAS BEEN AVERAGING \$15,184.00 OR MORE THAN TWICE THE STATE AVERAGE.**

**IN THE STATE'S SUMMARY REGARDING COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP, A TOTAL OF 17 FARM PARCELS INVOLVING 877 ACRES HAVE BEEN PRESERVED AT A TOTAL COST OF \$21,785,257.00 OF WHICH THE STATE COVERED \$14,991,443.00. THE BALANCE OF \$6,793,814.00 HAS BEEN BORNE BY THE COUNTY AND COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP. TOWNSHIP-WIDE, THE COST PER PRESERVED ACRE HAS BEEN AVERAGING \$24,843.00 OR MORE THAN THREE TIMES THE STATE AVERAGE. THIS OBVIOUSLY REFLECTS THE RELATIVELY HIGH VALUE OF REAL ESTATE AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS IN COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP.**

### **USEFUL INTERNET LINKS**

**THE FOLLOWING ARE SELECTED INTERNET LINKS THAT ARE PROVIDED HERE TO ASSIST COLTS NECK LANDOWNERS DESIRING ACCESS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELATING TO FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL ISSUES:**

**STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (SADC) – <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/sadc/sadc.htm>**

**MONMOUTH COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (MCADB)  
[http://co.monmouth.nj.us/ Departments/Planning Board/Environmental Planning/ Farmland Preservation](http://co.monmouth.nj.us/Departments/Planning%20Board/Environmental%20Planning/Farmland%20Preservation)**

**NJ FARM BUREAU – <http://www.njfb.org/>**

**THE AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST'S WEB SITE ([www.farmlandinfo.org](http://www.farmlandinfo.org)), AND**

**THE NATURE CONSERVANCY'S WEB SITE ([www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org))**