

Special Public Informational Meeting
Aug 23, 2010

TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

July 31, 2010

Re: Working Lands Initiative

Dear Land Owner:

The Wisconsin Legislature enacted the Working Lands Initiative as part of the state's 2009-2011 biennial budget process. The Working Lands Initiative changes the state's farmland preservation program. For example, under the former program, landowners could obtain a tax credit with a farmland preservation agreement. Under the new program, individual farmland preservation agreements will phase out.

The Board of Supervisors has kept informed about the Working Lands Initiative. We now want to contact owners of agricultural land in the Town of Mount Pleasant to inform you about the new program and seek your input directly. We want when possible to assist land owners who want to opt in to agricultural land preservation and land owners who want to opt out. The new program allows for flexibility but it does require active involvement by land owners and town government. Part of our job is to help everyone through the process, especially at the county level.

In order to receive a tax credit under the new program, your land must be in an area designated for farmland preservation under the Green County farmland preservation plan. The plan will be prepared by Green County and must then be certified by the state.

In order to receive a \$5.00 per acre annual tax credit, your land must be in an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA). At least five owners of adjoining land may form an AEA and obtain state approval. The Town of Mount Pleasant must also approve each AEA prior to the application's moving on to the state. The Board of Supervisors wants to encourage land owners to form AEAs and will help them with the approval process.

A second way to obtain a tax credit is to have land located in an exclusive agricultural zoning district (EAZ) established by Green County. The tax credit available for farmers in an EAZ is \$7.50 per acre. At this time Green County has no exclusive agricultural zoning district. We are seeking your input to see whether land owners in Mount Pleasant favor inclusion of some part of our town in an EAZ.

If land is located in an EAZ and in an AEA, the maximum annual tax credit is \$10.00 per acre.

The Board of Supervisors will be having a Public Informational Meeting on August 23, 2010 at 7:30pm at the American Legion Hall, Monticello, WI to explain this program, answer your questions, and obtain your views. We want to be sure that we communicate directly with farmers who may be significantly affected by the new program. Keith Foye from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection will be speaking about the program and answering your questions. We also have more detailed information about the program should you wish to receive it. The main points of the Working Lands Initiative are summarized in the enclosure to this letter.

If you are interested in this program or hearing more about it, please attend the informational meeting. The Board of Supervisors has no preconceptions about the way in which the Working Lands Initiative should be implemented in our town. Only through this outreach process will we be

able to reflect your wishes in our future actions.

Sincerely yours,

MOUNT PLEASANT BOARD
OF SUPERVISORS

Sally Roe, Chairman
Mike Gengler, Supervisor
Jerry Klassy, Supervisor