

State Preserves Land Where Warehouses Were Proposed

By Art Charlton

WHITE TOWNSHIP, NJ – Land in Warren County where a massive warehouse project was proposed will instead remain open for farming, after the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) closed on a purchase to buy and preserve 566 acres along Route 519.

"We are so, so excited to see this day come to fruition," Warren County Commissioner Director James R. Kern III said during an event immediately after stacks of documents were signed to officially complete the \$27 million purchase by the state. The \$48,000 per acre sale price is the most New Jersey has ever paid, but many at the closing said the price was worth it to preserve the land and prevent large-scale development at the site situated between a two-lane county road and the Delaware River.

The closing occurred in the same meeting room at White Township's Municipal Building where contentious meetings took place over the past five years after Jaindl Land Co. purchased the property and announced plans for the warehouse development, sparking public opposition by residents from the township and beyond.

The fight came to an end last November when the SADC announced it had reached an agreement with Jaindl to buy the property and preserve it for agriculture. The state will strip the development rights and re-sell the land to keep it in farming in perpetuity.

"Warren County is a farming community," Kern said, noting more than 300 farms and close to 30,000 acres in the county already have been preserved, with Warren ranking 4th in the state in farmland preservation.

Kern said he was grateful that land owner David Jaindl was willing to sell and that the state put up the money, noting the county "would not be able to do this on our own." He also thanked the state and local officials, elected and appointed, as well as county staff who "put many hours in to make this happen."



Warren County Commissioner Director James R. Kern III, Jaindl Land Co. President David Jaindl, NJ Agriculture Secretary Edward D. Wengryn, and State Agriculture Development Committee Executive Director Susan Payne stand with a newly unveiled sign marking the preservation of 566 acres in White Township where a large warehouse development had been proposed by Jaindl. The state purchased the property from Jaindl and will strip its development rights before re-selling the land for agriculture.

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