

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAYOR HORNİK ANNOUNCES FARMLAND PRESERVATION

An Additional 28 Acres Protected from Development

MARLBORO TOWNSHIP, NEW JERSEY (December 7, 2022)– Mayor Jonathan Hornik announced that Marlboro Township has preserved the VanMater Farm located on Route 79 in Marlboro Township expanding the inventory of preserved lands by approximately 28 acres. The property is located at 151 South Main Street at the Freehold Township border with approximately 26 acres located in Marlboro and 2 acres in Freehold Township.

In a 2018 letter to the Mayor, the Marlboro Agricultural and Open Space Committee recommended this property to be preserved as Farmland. Heidi Rajan, Chair of the Agricultural Advisory committee wrote, “The VanMater farm is on the list of target farms for the Southeast Project Area in Marlboro Farmland Preservation Plan. The farm meets the eligibility criteria for the county and state and scored well on municipal rating criteria.”

Mayor Jonathan Hornik stated, “This agreement will allow the VanMater family to continue farming the land while ensuring that 28 acres located on the busy Route 79 corridor are protected from development forever.” He continued, “We have now preserved more than 282 acres of farmland and open space, more recently targeting parcels located near main State, County and local trafficked areas.”

In preserving open space and farmland, the Township continues to leverage grants from the New Jersey State Agricultural Development Committee (SADC) and Green Acres Preservation Planning Incentive Grant programs. The total acquisition price is \$1,018,583, with \$765,731 coming from the State of New Jersey, Monmouth County and Freehold Township. The Township’s share of \$252,852 for this acquisition was raised through its existing dedicated one cent open space tax.

Mayor Hornik stated, “This project required the cooperation of the State, Monmouth County and Freehold Township. When government agencies can work together, things get done.”

Freehold Township Mayor Maureen Fasano added, “We are thankful to partner with our neighboring Marlboro to preserve this farm on our shared border. Our collective

continued commitment to farmland and open space is not limited by borders or boundaries, and is critical to preserving the character of our Community.”

Commissioner Director Thomas Arnone stated, “We are always excited to continue our partnership with our local municipalities. This Marlboro acquisition will add preserved land continuing the great quality of life for our residents.”

Commissioner Ross Licitra added, “The Monmouth County Board of Commissioners are thrilled to be working in partnership with Marlboro Township on a joint venture preserving the Van Mater farm within the township. Anytime Open space is preserved is always a benefit for the community and of course our wildlife.”

“This obviously could not have happened without the VanMaters,” said the Mayor. “I am very thankful for the Family’s decision to keep this property as a working farming operation here in Marlboro.”

Mayor Hornik also acknowledged the efforts of the Marlboro Open Space and Agricultural Committees. “I am grateful to these committees of dedicated volunteers who help us protect precious acres from development. I want to extend my thanks and congratulations to the committee members for their role in delivering another of 28 acres of preserved land. I also want to call out the efforts of Harriet Honigfeld at the Monmouth County Division of Planning for working tirelessly to make this project a reality.”

The Agricultural Advisory committee is comprised of Chairwoman Heidi Rajan, Harry Cross and Elmer Geran. The Open Space committee is chaired by Capt. Shital Rajan, Raymond Gloede, Raj Dixit, Jillian Sherman, Francine Owitz, and James Dwyer.

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