

**RHODE ISLAND GOVERNMENT REGISTER
PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING**

AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Title of Rule: Rules and Regulations of the Agricultural Lands Preservation Commission

Rule Identifier: 505-RICR-00-00-1

Rulemaking Action: Proposed Amendment

Important Dates:

Date of Public Notice: 03/05/2019

End of Public Comment: 04/04/2019

Authority for this Rulemaking:

R.I. Gen. Laws Chapter 42-82

Summary of Rulemaking Action:

The Agricultural Lands Preservation Commission is charged with identifying and acquiring the development rights to land so as to maintain farming, productive open spaces, and ground water recharge areas. The purpose of these rules is to establish standard operating procedures for the Commission in fulfilling its duties. The reasons for amending the rules are:

- 1) The current rules contain provisions that would be better suited in a guidance document. Removing these provisions will make the rules easier to understand and comply with.
- 2) The Commission wishes to update its scoring system by eliminating some criteria that it no longer believes to be useful.
- 3) Allow for greater flexibility in the administration of the program so that staff resources may be used more efficiently.

A summary of non-technical changes between the previous version of the rules and the proposed amended rules follows:

1. Deleted rules on Meetings and Officers
2. Revised rule on Application Procedures
3. Deleted the requirement that soils evaluation must use "an approved soils evaluation system developed by the USDA"
4. Added point values for criterion scores
5. Deleted specific descriptions of criteria for Open Space, Cultural, and Scenic Features
6. Deleted Relative Development Pressure as a scoring criterion

7. Deleted State and Local Plans as a scoring criterion
8. Added criterion for demonstrated local and/or conservation organization support
9. Revised criteria for selecting applicants for negotiation
10. Allows the Commission to authorize staff to conduct negotiations

Additional Information and Comments:

All interested parties are invited to request additional information or submit written or oral comments concerning the proposed amendment until April 4, 2019 by contacting the appropriate party at the address listed below:

Michelle Sheehan
Agricultural Lands Preservation Commission
RIDEM Division of Planning & Development
235 Promenade Street
Providence, RI RI-02908
michelle.sheehan@dem.ri.gov

In accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-35-2.8, an oral hearing will be granted if requested by twenty-five (25) persons, by an agency or by an association having at least twenty-five (25) members. A request for an oral hearing must be made within thirty (30) days of this notice.

Regulatory Analysis Summary and Supporting Documentation:

N/A

For full regulatory analysis or supporting documentation see agency contact person above.