

MINUTES

Farmland Protection Program Durham Soil and Water Conservation District 721 Foster Street Durham, NC 27701

Meeting Number: 03 (Farmland Advisory Board) Date: March 19, 2009

Advisory Board Present:

Kathryn Spann- Soil & Water Representative/Chair
Neil Frank- At Large
Talmage Layton- Falls/Lick Creek VAD
Bo Glenn, Open Space Representative
Douglas Daye- Flat River VAD
Allen Powell- At Large
Billy Cooley, Farm Bureau Representative
Becky Heron, County Commissioner
John Jones, Little River VAD
Gus Gray, Cape Fear VAD

Others Present:

Eddie Culberson, Director Soil & Water
Lisa Marochak, Soil & Water
Jennifer Brooks, Soil & Water
Lynwood Faison, Soil & Water
Jane Korest, Open Space Manager
Wendy Seddon, Open Space & Real-estate
Alston Glenn, landowner

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday March 19, 2009, and called to order at 8:02 am by the chairman. The meeting was held at the Soil and Water office, the chairman and vice chairman being present.

- 1. Minutes** –A draft copy of last month’s minutes were sent to members prior to this meeting. A motion was made by Billy Cooley to approve the minutes. John Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed without dissent.
- 2. Financial Report-** A Farmland Protection Advisory Board financial report was given by Lisa Marochak. Jane Korest gave an update on the Capital Improvement Plan.
- 3. Farmland Funds** –Kathryn Spann reported that at the last board meeting the board asked for some of the board members and she the Chair to attend the County Commissioners meeting and ask for the Farmland funds to be reinstated. Bo Glenn and Kathryn Spann both attended the BOCC Meeting and asked for the funds to be reinstated.
- 4. Cost of Community Study** – Kathryn Spann report that Wake and Orange County have commissioned something called a “Cost of Community Study,” which examines the cost in tax payer dollars to fund the infrastructure and operations needed to support land that is devoted to residential housing as opposed to farmland. Durham County currently does not have one. Kathryn Spann reported that she does not know how much they cost but she does know the organization that can put them together. Jennifer Brooks committed to inquire as to whether such a study can be incorporated into the Farm Plan. Jane Korest committed to explore the cost of commissioning a COCS study.
- 5. Farm Tour:** Kathryn Spann reported that a farm tour for the County Commissioners and County Manager is planned for April 16th from 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. A committee of volunteers needs to get together to start planning the itinerary and logistics for the tour. A committee meeting date was set for March 25th at 8:00am in the Soil & Water conference room. Kathryn Spann reported that Farm Bureau has generously agreed to pay for a meal if the schedule permits.

6. **American Tobacco Trail** – Bo Glenn reported that there is a vote coming up soon in the City Council about what to do with the American Tobacco Trail in the Southern part of the county. Bo Glenn reported that there are horse farms in the Southern part of the county that are going to thrive if horses are allowed on the ATT and probably suffer if they are not. Bo Glenn reported that the decision is being made to not allow horse access to the ATT. A motion was made by Bo Glenn for the Farmland Protection Board to adopt a resolution that the American Tobacco Trail be constructed with natural surface from Chatham County, North Carolina to Massey Chapel Rd in Durham County with access allowed by horses. Allen Powell seconded the motion. Motion passed without dissent.

7. **VAD Update**- Eddie Culberson reported that they do not have any new applicants since the last board meeting but they have talked with 3 potential applicants. Alston Glenn reported that he is interested in signing up for the VAD Program. A motion was made by Gus Gray to approve the VAD Application for Austin Glenn contingent upon approval by the tax department. Bo Glenn seconded the motion. Motion passed without dissent.

Eddie Culberson reported that Kathryn Spann, Jennifer Brooks and he attended a VAD Workshop on February 24th in Smithfield. Culberson reported that the consultant that did the Alamance County Farmland Plan presented a PowerPoint about the Alamance Plan.

8. **Easement Projects Status Update** –Jane Korest reported that since the last meeting everything for the Little Mountain Farm Project has been sent into the Federal government, and that they are just waiting for the Federal approval to close on the easement.

Korest reported that on the Roger Tilley Farm the draft survey has been returned by the surveyor but that minor corrections are necessary. Korest reported that the appraisal is under way and will be completed by the end of the month. Korest reported that they are starting to draft the easement language.

Jane Korest reported that appraisals are under way for the Carrington Farm and Ellis Farm.

Jane Korest reported that they are planning to meet with Ann Ross tomorrow to go over her easement some more on the Ross Farm located in East Durham.

Jane Korest reported that they are planning to meet with Neil Frank in the next week or so to finalize the 300 acre easement that will be divided into two 150 acre lots.

Jane Korest reported that Mr. Coates is working with Eddie Culberson to get into the VAD Program and also to get a Conservation Plan on his farm.

9. **Farmland Plan Update** – Jennifer Brooks reported that on March 10th a meeting was held with Gerry Cohn, Kathryn Spann, representatives from the county and city along with herself to discuss the Countywide Farmland Plan. Brooks reported that Cohn has already started compiling a list of farmers and staff that he would like to interview; she asked those members who know of anyone that should be added to the list contact Cohn or herself. Cohn has already started doing some of the interviews. Brooks reported that they discussed having some open forum meetings with the public to voice their views about farming. The Board set two dates for the meetings, April 28th for a night meeting in Northern Durham and April 30th for a day meeting to be held in the downtown library or East Regional Library.

10. **Farmland Ordinance Review**: The Chairman passed out a summary of the provisions of the current Farmland Board Ordinance. Kathryn Spann did a quick overview of the Ordinance and pointed out some changes that need to be made to meet state requirements, and proposed to submit a draft revision of the Ordinance for consideration by the Board.

11. Farm Breakfasts: Kathryn Spann reported that while attending the VAD workshop on February 24th she learned that other county's hold informational breakfasts, and proposed the Board instituting such breakfasts rotating around the county at Ruritan clubs and other organizations, to do outreach on the VAD Program, Present Use Program, etc.

12. Set Next Meeting Date – The board set the next meeting date for Thursday, April 9th at 8:00am

13. Adjourn – With no further discussion or business, Chairman Kathryn Spann adjourned the meeting at 10:02am.

Kathryn Spann

Chairman

Neil Frank

Vice Chairman

Bo Glenn

2nd Vice Chairman

