

MINUTES

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

Meeting Number: 3 (Farmland Advisory Board) Date: March 18, 2010

Advisory Board Present:

Kathryn Spann- Soil & Water Representative/Chair
Neil Frank- At Large
Douglas Daye- Flat River VAD
Bo Gleñn- Open Space & Trails Representative
Becky Heron- County Commissioner
John Monroe- At Large
Will Wilson- At Large
Melissa English- At Large
Talmage Layton- Falls/Lick Creek VAD
Demetrius Thompson- At Large
Samantha Gasson- At Large

Others Present:

Eddie Culberson- Soil & Water
Lisa Marochak- Soil & Water
Lynwood Faison- Soil & Water
Jane Korest- Open Space Manager
Wendy Seddon- Open Space & Real-estate
Santos Flores –SEEDS

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday March 18, 2010, and called to order at 8:08 am by the chair. The meeting was held at the Soil and Water office, the chairman and vice chairman being present.

- 1. Minutes** – A draft copy of February 2010 minutes was sent to members prior to this meeting. A motion was made by Neil Frank to approve the minutes. Will Wilson seconded the motion. Motion passed without dissent.
- 2. Financial Report-** Lisa Marochak reported that since the last board meeting \$424.78 was paid to CEI out of the Soil & Water/Farmland line item for copies of the Farmland Plan. Samantha Gasson, Wendy Seddon & Neil Frank volunteered to meet and come up with some designs for easement signage, signage for “Durham County” Farmers at the farmers market and hat designs for a giveaway item. Eddie Culberson reported that the farmland board line item was not reduced in the 2011 fiscal year budget that was presented to the County Manager on March 16th.

Jane Korest reported that on March 1st at the BOCC work session they supported two more options on farmland projects. The BOCC voted to support 84 acres of the Thacker Farm and 71 acres of the Blalock Farm which allocated the remaining CIP funds for this fiscal year. Korest reported that the BOCC indicated that they know that they need to fund next year at a minimum of \$100,000. Jane Korest explained CIP and how it works to the newer board members.

- 3. Membership Update**–Kathryn Spann reported that Will Wilson should be on the agenda with the BOCC March 22nd for the open Eno VAD set. Lisa Marochak reported that the Little River and Business positions have been advertised since November 09.
- 4. Farmland Plan update-** Kathryn Spann reported that she will be presenting the Farmland Plan to the City Council today at 1pm.

5. **Voluntary Agricultural Districts overview-** Eddie Culberson gave an overview of the VAD program.
5. **Easement Projects Status Update** – Jane Korest reported on the following
 - On February 22nd the Federal Farmland Protection called her and said they would give Durham County until the close of business March 1st to get all application in to them. On February 24th at Farmland ranking meeting took place and they review the ones that were the most ready to go. Jane Korest and her staff met with the Blalock's and the Thacker's to get them to sign options. Jane Korest drove over three grants to Raleigh on March 1st for the Carrington's, Thacker's & Blalock's.
6. **Agricultural Economic Development Officer Position** – Eddie Culberson reported that originally we that planned to combine the Ag Economic position with the Soil Conservationist position but after some conversations it was decided to combine the Ag Economic position with the Watershed Conservationist position. The Environmental Education job duties (currently under the Watershed Conservationist position) will be combined with the Soil Conservationist position. Jennifer Brooks is going to be moving over to the Soil Conservationist/Environmental Education Coordinator position. The Agricultural Development and Watershed Conservationist position will be opened up externally.
7. **Farm Business Plan Workshop-** Kathryn Spann reported that there are 15 people attending the workshop. There are several others that are interested in taken the workshop that couldn't get in this time.
8. **Farm Issue Continuing Legal Education Workshop-** Kathryn Spann reported that a Duke Law student is going to help with logistics of the workshop.
9. **County Commissioner/Legislative event planning-** Kathryn Spann reported that invitations have been sent out to local legislators asking them if they would be interested in attending a ½ day or whole day tour of Durham. Durham County State Legislator, Mickey Michaux responded back to the invitation with potential dates that would work for him. Kathryn Spann reported that she is waiting to hear back from a couple more Legislators and then she will set a date for the tour. Kathryn Spann reported that she is in need a committee to help her plan the Legislative tour. Talmage Layton, Samantha Gasson, Wendy Seddon, Eddie Culberson & Jane Korest volunteered to help plan the tour. The planning committee date will be held on March 25th at 6pm. Kathryn reported that there was a full house at the County Commissioners town hall meeting that took place on March 16th at the Little River Community Complex in the northern part of the county.
10. **Durham County farmer marketing (second)-** Kathryn Spann reported that Southern Durham is interested in having a farmers market in that area. Spann reported that she has a contact that has extensive ties in the area and she sent out a survey to citizens and received back over 80 responses. There was a lot of interest from citizens in having a Southern Durham market with a lot of vendors. The first steps would be locating a site for the Southern Durham farmers market and coming up a list of vendors that would be willing to sell at the market. Samantha Gasson, John Monroe, Becky Heron & Jane Korest have volunteered to start work on finding potential vendors and a location site.

New Business:

- 1. After school farm camp for kids** – Melissa English reported that last month Will Wilson brought up the idea of having an after school farm camp. Melissa reported that she spoke with a lady in Orange County that owns Genesis Farm who is starting her 1st summer camp. The camp at Genesis Farm will all be hands on by the kids that attend. Melissa English reported that this could be possible in Durham County with the right location.
- 2. Urban Food Coalition** - Santos Flores reported that he works at SEEDS and works with the group at SEEDS that is focusing on the Urban Food Coalition. Flores reported that he has a large interest in Urban agricultural. In August a group of interested citizens started meeting to brain storm some idea of how we could possibly influence our environment and our community. Some of the people at the August meeting were: Green Space Initiative, SEEDS, Good Works, Bountiful Backyards, David Harper from Land & Common, Helen Youngblood with City/County Planning as well as Rosetta from Durham Parks and Recreation. More recently Gerry Cohn came to the meeting and reviewed the Farmland Plan with them. The group has decided that they want to start working on an Urban Food Summit. This will bring people from different parts of the county together to talk about how we can improve our food system. They want to work on promoting legislation on better food access, better food policy reform, wants to help evaluate fill some aspects of the Durham Farmland Preservation Plan, wants to help develop Urban mini farm enterprises working off of Bountiful Backyard ideas, work with Polten School to develop a gardening and food education program, planning 12 urban garden workshops over the next year.
- 3. Karen McAdams replacement-** Kathryn Spann reported that the recently retired position of Karen McAdams is going to be an Orange/Alamance County Ag position housed in Alamance.

Set Next Meeting Date – April 15, 2010 at 8am

Adjourn – With no further discussion or business, Chairman Kathryn Spann adjourned the meeting at 10:35 am.

Kathryn Spann
Chairman

Neil Frank
Vice Chairman