

Chatham County Environmental Review Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: April 19, 2012

Location: Dunlap Classroom

Committee Members Present:

Jerry Cole Delonda Alexander

Steve Meads Vic D'Amato

Bob Soots Joanie McLean

Also Present: Dan LaMontagne, County Director of Environmental Quality

Vice-Chairman Cole, in Chairman D'Amato's absence, called the meeting to order at 6:37pm. Mr. Meads agreed to keep the minutes. At approximately 6:55pm, Chairman, D'Amato arrived and assumed chairmanship of the meeting.

1. ERC Member Introductions

The first item of business was the introduction of new members Bob Soots and Joanie McLean. Each gave a brief bio of themselves after which Mr. LaMontagne requested the remaining attendees reintroduce themselves.

2. Approval of meeting minutes from January 19, 2012

Next a request was made for the approval of the last meeting's minutes. Mr. Soots asked if even small errors in the minutes, such as grammatical issues, were important. Mr. LaMontagne said yes and Mr. Soots indicated he believed there were a few minor issues he had noticed and that he would email them to Mr. LaMontagne. Ms. Alexander moved to accept the minutes with any changes of minor grammatical errors that may be found. Ms. McLean seconded the motion.

3. Public Input

There was no public input

4. Recap of BOC decision on revisions to the Watershed Protection Ordinance from February 20, 2012

Mr. LaMontagne updated the committee as to the outcome of its split recommendation to the BOC that the criteria for ephemeral stream determination be either 5 points or 10 points but not more than 10. Mr. LaMontagne explained that the BOC's initial decision was to raise the criteria

to 15 points but after a break the BOC came back and decided on 10. Mr. Soots asked what the points represented. Ms. Alexander explained the numbers were part of a point system which gave a certain number of points to an established check list of ecological situations to determine whether an ephemeral stream existed. Mr. LaMontagne indicated he had a pictorial slideshow that explained the criteria better and he would send it to anyone who would like to see it.

5. Introduction and overview of the Watershed Protection Ordinance

Mr. LaMontagne told the committee he felt it was important for each member to be familiar with the four ordinances the committee will be primarily dealing with; the Watershed Ordinance, the Stormwater Ordinance, the Erosion Control Ordinance and the Flood Prevention Ordinance. Each member received a three-ring binder with the first ordinance, the Watershed Ordinance, which Mr. LaMontagne indicated would be added to as we review the other ordinances in later meetings. As Mr. LaMontagne explained the Watershed Ordinance through a slideshow series, the last slide referred to Sec. 304 I in the ordinance that indicated there were certain instances that written approval from the ERC was required. Mr. LaMontagne indicated because these particular circumstances were rare and relatively insignificant and due to the time involved to obtain ERC written approval he asked that the committee consider delegating his office to approve these. Ms. McLean and Mr. D'Amato asked that this decision be put on hold until everyone had more time to review his request. It was decided the ERC would possibly take it up at the next meeting.

6. Updates from County Staff

None

7. Announcements and updates from ERC members.

After the review of the Watershed Ordinance was complete, Mr. Cole indicated he wanted to know what, if any, level of action Chatham County had officially taken in regards to letting the State know Chatham County's concerns with fracking. Mr. LaMontagne said at this time he knew of no official statement or action being taken by Chatham County. He said, however; private individuals are sending in statements of concern to the State and taking the opportunity to attend any public information meetings concerning fracking. Mr. Cole indicated he would like to see a statement from the ERC that encouraged the State to consider the input of Chatham County while finalizing any regulations on fracking. Mr. Cole indicated he would draft a statement to be given to Chairman D'Amato for consideration.

Next, Mr. D'Amato, asked Mr. LaMontagne to update us on the 15-501 Wal-Mart project. Mr. LaMontagne expressed satisfaction for the direction and status Wal-Mart engineers were taking in regards to environmental requirements of the County. He reported Wal-Mart, up to this point, had gone above and beyond most of the environment ordinance requirements.

Finally, it was decided the next ERC meeting would be held on May 24th.

8. Adjournment

At 8:45 pm, Ms Mclean made the motion to adjourn. Ms. Alexander seconded the motion. It was agreed unanimously.