

Chatham County Environmental Review Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: May 24, 2012

Location: Dunlap Classroom

Committee Members Present:

Jerry Cole David Mattison

Steve Meads Vic D’Amato

Bob Soots Joanie McLean

Also Present: Dan LaMontagne, County Director of Environmental Quality

Chairman D’Amato called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

1. ERC Member Introductions

The members introduced themselves and welcomed Mr. Mattison as a new member of the ERC.

2. Selection of the recording secretary for the meeting minutes

Mr. Cole agreed to keep the minutes.

3. Approval of meeting minutes from January 19, 2012

Ms. McLean pointed out the redundant use of the word “final” in the penultimate sentence of Section 7 of the draft minutes and asked that the sentence be corrected. After agreement, it was moved by Mr. Cole and seconded by Mr. Meads that the minutes be accepted. The motion was passed unanimously.

4. Public Input

There was no public input

5. Introduction and overview of the Storm Water Ordinance

Mr. LaMontagne continued his series of overviews on Chatham County ordinances relevant to the work of the ERC. He presented a slide lecture on the provisions of the Stormwater Ordinance.

6. Discussion on approval process for “Allowable” activities in Buffers

The ERC discussed Mr. LaMontagne’s suggestion that the ERC delegate to DEQ staff the authority to agree to “allowable” uses under the Chatham County Watershed Ordinance. It was thought that such an action would be more efficient than requiring formal approval of the

Watershed Review Board for these routine requests. After discussion, it was suggested that Mr. LaMontagne work up a proposed motion to delegate this authority from the Watershed Review Board to the DEQ. Mr. D'Amato agreed to contact former members to determine how such matters were handled in the past.

7. Updates from County Staff

None

8. Announcements and updates from ERC members.

At the request of Mr. Cole, Mr. LaMontagne reviewed the current status of state legislation aimed at approving the practice of hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") for natural gas in North Carolina. He noted that House Bill 1054 Senate Bill 1064 would both establish an "Oil and Gas Board", which would regulate all aspects of fracking. It was noted that, while the current proposed bills do call for representation from the "Sanford subbasin of the Triassic basin of North Carolina", which includes sections of Chatham, Lee, and Moore Counties, no specific representation for Chatham County is contemplated. Mr. LaMontagne verified this matter with a senior representative of NCDNER. Mr. Cole expressed the opinion that Chatham County should not rely on others to express its views on the specific impacts that fracking may have on Chatham County. In other words, Chatham County needs a "seat at the table" because the actions of such an "Oil and Gas Board" will have a direct impact on the environment of Chatham County. After discussion, it was agreed by consensus to recommend that the Board of Commissioners attempt to obtain representation of Chatham County on any board or other body charged with developing, setting, or enforcing any regulations pertaining to fracking in Chatham County. Mr. LaMontagne agreed to prepare a draft recommendation which could be considered by the ERC and, if approved, be sent on the Board of Commissioners for consideration. It was recommended that this be handled by e-mail, if possible, because the legislation is moving forward and consideration should not wait until the next regular meeting of the ERC.

9. Adjournment

After agreement to hold the next meeting at 6:30 pm on Thursday, July 19 and upon a motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Meads, which was seconded by Mr. D'Amato, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 pm.