

**(FINAL DRAFT)**

**Chatham County Environmental Review Advisory Committee (ERAC)**

**Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: May 8, 2014

Location: Conference Room, Dunlap Building

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Jerry Cole at 6:39 PM.

Fran DiGiano was welcomed to the Committee.

**Committee Members Present:**

Graham Swift

Robert Soots

Fran DiGiano

Joan McLean

Nanishka Albaladejo

Jerry Cole

Mary Beth Koza

**Also Present:**

Dan LaMontagne, Chatham County Director of Environmental Quality

Esta Cohen, Member of Chatham County Agriculture Advisory Committee

**Introductions:**

Introductions of all ERAC members were made, including new member Fran DiGiano, as well as Esta Cohen a member of the Chatham County Agriculture Advisory Committee.

**Selection of the recording secretary for the meeting minutes:**

Chairman Cole, appointed Robert Soots recording secretary.

**Approval of minutes from the March 19, 2014 meeting:**

The minutes were approved unanimously following motion by Graham Swift and second by

Robert Soots.

**Public Input:**

There was no public input.

**Presentation – Chatham County Agriculture Advisory Committee water quality and water supply issues:**

Esta Cohen made a presentation on the history of agriculture and water issues in Chatham County. The presentation led to a lengthy discussion of water supply in the County. Cohen expressed special concern over water conservation and ground water supply, a topic that arose during numerous meetings attended. Examples of ground water disappearing because of overdevelopment were presented. Cohen requested that the ERAC consider water supply in their deliberations. This led to an extensive discussion of water supply. Digiano pointed out there are widespread opportunities for reuse of water and it needs to be looked at on a regional level. Cohen stated there is no regional plan and also stated the Chatham Park development should not be allowed to use ground water. Cole stated Chatham Park is on the ERAC Action List and it would be put in the Annual Report to the Commissioners. Dan Montagne pointed out that the fractured rock nature of the subsurface makes it difficult to predict effect of groundwater levels in adjacent areas. The classic "cone of depression" notion has little bearing thus making it difficult to say with assurance that groundwater levels at farms were lowered by adjacent development. And as to concerns that Jordan Lake would not meet demands thus providing more pressure to rely on groundwater sources, Fran DiGiano I made the comment that Jordan Lake's safe water yield is far greater than any forecast of demand for Chatham Park and beyond. Moreover, groundwater is just not a very practical source, given low yields, for large-scale development.

**Presentation – Chatham County Water Distribution System:**

LaMontagne gave a slide presentation on the Utilities and Water Division, the water distribution system, a new station to be placed on the west side of Jordan Lake, a conservation plan and policy development. He also highlighted factors such as lack of a sewer system that affects development in some areas.

**Discussion of Annual Report to BOC:**

Few changes were recommended. The following were discussed:

- Chatham Park.

- ERAC pursuit of coordination between Pittsboro and Chatham County.
- BOC consideration of impacts of development on ground water.
- Impact of development on water in surrounding area.

Cole stated he and Dan will put something together and circulate to ERAC.

**Updates from County staff:**

There were no County staff updates other than the LaMontagne presentation.

**Announcements and updates from ERAC members:**

- Albaladejo resigned from ERAC.
- Public meeting on input to Chatham Park is soon. Koza will provide exact date.
- D'Amato will provide website to follow installation of Solar Bees.
- MEC will open for public comment in July. Meeting will be held 5:00 to 9:00 PM, August 22 at Wicker Center in Sanford.
- Rules are scheduled to go to legislature this year.

**Adjournment – (need name)** motioned to adjourn, which was seconded by (need name). The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm.