



P. O. Box 1809, Pittsboro, NC 27312-1809 • Phone: (919) 542-8200 •

Agriculture Advisory Board

Minutes Agriculture Advisory Board September 8 2015

Attendees:

Esta Cohen (Chair), Sam Groce (NCCES); Dr. J. Dykers, Terrill Ellington, Ronnie Vaughn, Joe Wachs, Tandy Jones

Absent: Thomas "Chip" Price, Larry Harris, Cathy Jones, Sharon Day, Walter Petty

Call to Order by Esta

Old Minutes:

Remove Ronnie Vaughn from present' designation in minutes from June 9 minutes

June 9 minutes approved with above correction

Old Minutes:

NCCES Secretary: send minutes to Brenda until further notice

New Business:

1. VAD applications?

a. None submitted

b. Question asked about what has been done to advertise VAD applications (Bobby)

i. VAD listings are shown on property tax listings (Sam)

ii. Question raised about perception of VAD among real-estate community (Ronnie)

iii. Request made to add VAD listings as GIS layer on county website (Tandy)

1. Sam confirmed that layer is already on database

2. Report on previous Planning Board Meetings

a. 1st Meeting (Aug):

i. Discussion on which options for zoning

ii. All planning votes tied, nothing passed – tabled to September planning board meeting

b. 2nd Meeting (of the planning board)

i. All votes tied, nothing passed

ii. Motion to define western Chatham County as west of US 421 was defeated 6-4 by the planning board.

3. Review of Issues Raised During Old Minutes

Dr. Dykers emphasized the susceptibility of farmland (pasture/cropland) for development as these ideal locations

a. Water Issues

i. Need to make water protection for agriculture part of the planning process

ii. Developments are not isolated entities with ground water boundaries equal to property boundaries (Esta)

iii. Suggestions for County Commissioners

1. Developments state how much ground water their development will use, verified by 3rd party professional (Tandy).
 - a. Require developments to offset non-potable needs with alternative measures
2. Water is vital to the livelihood of agriculture
3. Check with residents about changes in static water tables
4. Promote cluster development
 - a. Already promoted as part of EDC
5. Referendum on Chatham County Water (Sam)
 - a. Passed in SW Chatham
 - b. Failed to pass in NW Chatham (Silk Hope)
 - c. Suggested county water supply as means to protect farmers
- b. Water in public domain (WOTUS – EPA rule);
 - i. Push to charge groundwater and surface water as resource of the state
- c. Animal Carcass Removal
 - i. Not addressed for cattle
 - ii. Cannot bury dead cattle on other people’s property
- d. Farm Transition
 - i. Meeting in Feb with SWCS to plan State Farm Transition and Ownership program in Siler City
 - ii. Esta mentioned issue with many older Chatham farmers with lots of land/equipment, but lack of interested/knowledgeable offspring.
1. Sold development rights on part of the property
- iii. Bobby mentioned the idea of developing a third-party/co-operative livestock organization to link livestock producers with land owners/inheritants seeking to keep land in production for social and economic reasons
 1. Organization could also serve as the managing entity for establishing “working-lands” environmental mitigation payments (i.e., Jordan Watershed Rules are a strong driver for this) using performance-based criteria
 2. Also help develop new value-chain connections and alternative markets within the region for existing farmers
4. Briefly mentioned the connection with the Chatham Food Policy Council
 - a. Bobby recently joined and will serve as liaison
5. New 4H assistant Carolyn Johnson (UNC graduates, master’s degrees from NCSU)
6. Tiffany Hancock – support specialists starting at 32 hours/week
7. Chatham County Agriculture Hall of Fame
 - a. Sam asking if the Ag Advisory Board wants to maintain
 - b. Needs committee of three to help Sam to keep up with rules, applications, acceptance, rewards banquet
 - c. Tandy, Terrill, and Dr. Dykers agreed to help Sam

Submitted by Bobby Tucker

