



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

## *Agriculture Advisory Board*

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### **FINAL Minutes**

Agriculture Advisory Board

March 14, 2017 7:00 PM Ag Building

**Called to order**, 7:02 pm

**Present:** Esta Cohen (Chair), Sam Groce (NCCES), Tandy Jones, Sharon Day, Bobby Tucker, Dr. J. Dykers, Terrill Ellington, Joe Wachs, Cathy Jones, Matt Stark (guest)

Members of the Ag Focus Group for the Comprehensive Plan

**Absent:** Ronnie Vaughn, Walter Petty (BOC liason)

### **Approval of Minutes**

Approved unanimously

### **Old Business**

#### **VAD Applications:**

1. Jeffrey Norvang – poultry (broilers, beef cattle, forage-hay); 70.8 acres
  - a. Approved unanimously
2. Britt and Fleming Phann – goat dairy, forestry, agritourism; 111 acres
  - a. Approved unanimously

### **New Business**

1. **Plan Chatham Presentation** – Presentation provided by Jason Sullivan, Planning Director, regarding the agriculture protections in the Comprehensive Plan. The County was soliciting feedback from the Ag Advisory Board. A 15-minute video describing the context and needs for the Plan Chatham project was presented. According to Jason, land in agriculture present use value comprises over 11,000 acres in the county (approximately a quarter of entire land base).

Jim Elsa, planning chair, discussed what the Plan has done to identify priority agriculture area, and what is proposed to help protect farmland.

- An Agriculture District is proposed that exempts ag/silviculture/horticulture from zoning restrictions, allows secondary agriculture family businesses, and allows agriculture friendly subdivisions.
- Agriculture as Economic Development includes flexible rural family businesses, addresses impaired streams, focuses on healthy food for life, and promotes food processing facilities.
- Direct growth away from agriculture areas (up to 58,000 people projected) and towards towns and compact communities. Commercial areas are directed to crossroads, village centers, community centers, and towns. Industrial areas directed to job centers and towns. Conservation areas are included along the Rocky, Deep, Haw, and Jordan Lake.

Currently, the Future Land Use map and proposed policies designate a specific Agricultural Area. The following questions/issues were solicited to the group:

- a. Is this area where we want to prioritize agriculture?
- b. More flexibility for non-residential uses and lower residential densities) Is that ok?
- c. Weigh in on utility extensions.
- d. Should the Ag Adv. Board work to clarify utility policies as they relate to the ag area?

Meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.