

**Chatham County Environmental Review Board (ERB)  
Minutes for September 24, 2009 Meeting: 6:30 pm  
Dunlap Classroom**

*ERB members present:* Elaine Chiosso, Tara Allden, Martha Girolami, Sonny Keisler, Lin Andrews, Hal House

*Staff:* Fred Royal, Jim Willis

1. Approval of meeting minutes from July 16, 2009. Martha moved to accept; second by Sonny; all approved.

Approval of meeting minutes from August 20, 2009. Sonny moved to accept; second by Martha ; all approved.

2. Public input: none

3. Report from Chair:

a. ERB/Chatham Recreation Advisory Board (RAB) meeting:

George Lucier convened a meeting of the chairs and co-chairs and staff of the ERB and the Recreation Advisory Board to help the two boards work together on common issues.

Since EAs are required on Chatham parkland and the ERB is interested in conservation on parklands, the ERB would like to give input on the land selection process. County land for parks is selected by a county Land Acquisition committee with members from the RAB, school board, etc. Elaine will ask that the ERB have a seat on this committee.

Sonny mentioned that there is a farm for sale on the Rocky River that is (a) a 13+/- acre tract (b) known as Woods Mill Bend, (c) on the north side of the river (d) near the TLC "Woods Mill Bend" property across the river and that (e) the tract would make an excellent conference center & retreat.

b. Timetable for sludge and landfill issues:

Elaine explained that we are waiting for Steve and George to report on their meeting on sludge application with the county Board of Health. Fred says that at the BOC work session on September 9<sup>th</sup>, DENR reported on the five year process to implement a landfill.

4. Discussion of Cary-Chatham Joint Plan – Map #5 as presented on 9/17/09; ERB recommendations to the BOC. Nine recommendations were summarized and sent to the BOC. Tara moved to accept; second by Hal; all approved.

5. Staff Report, (Fred Royal)

Fred will keep us posted on a forthcoming arborist report on the County Law Enforcement Building oak tree on West Street. Also he will send ERB recommendations to the EDC and the BOC (item #7 August minutes).

NE Park Schematic Plan up-date:

Fred discussed the first phase design of the NE Park (Big Woods). A partial list of phase 1 impacts are one baseball field, one multi-use field, one septic field on a slope (50 ft from the pond) and two parking lots. A 319 grant will test level spreaders. ERB members urged that the project protect the large oaks around the multi-use field and along the old road. Hal suggested reorienting the first parking lot on contour. He asked what type of septic system was planned and noted that a subsurface disposal system would require significant land disturbance, tree removal and increase the potential for pollution of the pond down hill. This is in contrast to a surface irrigation system with a minimal land disturbance and a high level of treatment provided. In addition, since it is known that level spreaders have not worked well in the past, and even though the nature of Dr. Hunt's research is to improve on their function, it will be good to have backup BMPs or plan in place such as bioretention.

Elaine and others asked that porous pavers be used on the future paved path.

6. Report from Climate Change Subcommittee (Sonny)

including discussion of "350" (carbon target and Chatham local participation in global Oct. 24 event.

Sonny gave us several new articles on climate change and a recommended reading list including Lester Brown's "Plan B 4.0" and other resources. He emphasized the gravity of global warming to all life on earth. The earth's atmosphere is today nearly 390 ppm CO<sub>2</sub>, well past a "safe" level of 350 ppm.

There was no decision on whether to have an ERB booth at the Pittsboro Street Fair as a way to participate on the October 24<sup>th</sup> 350 awareness day. Elaine agreed to call George Lucier to ask his opinion on participation as a board or whether interested ERB members should participate on their own. If the ERB goes ahead with a booth for the 350 day, ideas for handout included a simple survey to find out what people are thinking about climate change, a handout on what a family can do to reduce their carbon footprint, a handout on what 350 means (see Elaine's handout from 350.org) etc.. Tara suggested a banner that children can draw on to express their thoughts Sonny mentioned that other county groups plan to have a booth at the street fair, such as SACE and 1 Sky. John Bonitz was mentioned as a contact.

Lin remarked that the general population knows the climate is warming up Also, Duke Power announced its decision to buy only hybrid vehicles and to close old power plants...more examples of growing awareness of the impact of

carbon on climate. The impact of China on the world's carbon emissions and USA financial decisions was mentioned. Lin gave us a handout that challenged the UN's assertion that livestock operations were responsible for 18% of greenhouse gases. The percentage is lower than 6%.

Martha asserted that climate change is the story of our time and we can't fail to act. This is the meteor of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and it is coming at us.

At the very least, we need to educate the BOC and the public whenever we can. Hopefully the Climate Change seminar at the Friday Center starting on 10/8 will be useful and informative and give us more direction. Elaine mentioned that we need to have links to climate change articles on our website. Sonny and others have given us many resources that need to go on the site (unless we need approval by the BOC first?)

7. Discussion of possible water quality improvements to Chatham wastewater systems in Bynum (per our recommendation of BOC on this larger issue last meeting) This was tabled for now, but Fred said he would gather some preliminary information.

8. Election of co-chair.

Tara Alden has graciously volunteered to have her name put forward for election as co-chair of the ERB. Elaine moved that Tara become the co-chair; second by Hal; all approved.

9. Announcements/update

Jim says that Cynthia has an intern starting soon who will inventory Chatham's greenhouse gas emissions.

Elaine says that the next public hearing on the Lake Jordan Boundary issue in Durham County will be on 10/12.