

Chatham County Environmental Review Board
Final Minutes for December 17, 2009
Dunlap Classroom

ERB members present: Elaine Chiosso, Catherine Bollinger, Raj Butalia, Sonny Keisler, Allison Weakley, Hal House, Lin Andrews, Martha Girolami

Staff Present: Fred Royal

1. Approval of meeting minutes with corrections, from November 19, 2009. Catherine moved to accept; Raj seconded; approved.

2. Public Input: none.

3. Baseline Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory of Chatham County - PowerPoint Presentation by Betsy McCorkle.

Cynthia Van Der Wiele introduced Betsy, a student in the Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University. This presentation on her initial emissions research was given to the Chatham BoC on 12/07/09. The study began on 9/09. Emissions data was obtained from the US Energy Office, USDA, US Census Bureau, and US EPA and the ICLEI and reported in US tons of CO2 equivalents. She is researching better data on the number of vehicle trips/day and gasoline usage in the county. She needs input from Progress Energy on electrical power consumption separated into agriculture, industry, transportation, residential categories. Other topics included the impact of farm/food animals on emissions and how grass raised beef released less GHG than corn fed. She needs more information on feed/silage sources of emissions. Future work will involve obtaining data on GHG emissions for specific types of land use, waste treatment facilities, and rural versus municipal.

4. Staff Report – Fred Royal

Fred met with Pittsboro's planner, David Monroe, to develop a joint town/county plan to comply with Stage 1 of the new Jordan Lake Adaptive Management Rules to reduce nutrient pollution from existing development stormwater runoff. This agreement was completed on 12/14/09 and must be reviewed by NC DWQ. New actions involve education on water quality, finding illegal discharges and upgrading and identifying existing BMP's. Water quality will be monitored for the next 10 years at Jordan Lake to determine if Stage 2 of the Rules must be implemented. Chatham County will also develop its plan for Stage 1 of the Rules that covers riparian buffers, and storm water management to reduce phosphorus and nitrogen. Chatham County's land area drains to all three segments of Jordan Lake, each with its own nutrient reduction targets.

5. Shambley and Heard Environmental Assessments

A new vote was necessary on these EA reviews by the ERB because the first vote was held greater than the 60 day window required before submission to the Chatham Planning Board. (See November 17, 2009 minutes).

The first motion was to accept Catherine/Allison's letter to the Planning Board reviewing the Shambley General Environmental Documentation Submittal Form (GEDS), submitted Oct. 16, 2009. Catherine moved to accept; Raj seconded; all approved.

The second motion was to accept Catherine/Allison's letter to the Planning Board reviewing the Heard GEDS, submitted Oct. 16, 2009. Catherine moved to accept; and Raj seconded; all approved.

6. Initial Discussion of possible improvements to our GEDS form:
Copies of the "General Environmental Documentation Submittal Form" for 24 lots or less were given to the ERB to review early next year. Discussion was postponed until then. Raj suggested a mock subdivision project be reviewed to determine any problems we may see in using the form.

7. Report from Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council Chapter Meeting
By Catherine Bollinger.

Catherine reports that a new invasive, Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*), is coming into NC from SC and is displacing native grasses. It was used as a landscaping grass but is now banned. Another recently declared state noxious weed is called Bushkiller (*Cayratia japonica*), a vine that grows faster than Kudzu and has five leaves resembling Virginia Creeper. She recommends that the planting of invasive species should be strongly discouraged in Chatham County. Lists of invasive exotic species known to pose a threat in NC are available from the NC Wildflower Society website (<http://www.ncwildflower.org/invasives/list.htm>) and also from the NC Botanical Garden website (<http://ncbg.unc.edu/pages/74/>). Both lists were developed with input from professional botanists throughout the state. The NCBG list is referenced in the Chatham County Watershed Protection Ordinance, Section 304, to allow removal of species on the list within riparian buffers.

8. Report from Climate Change Subcommittee:

Sonny reported that the subcommittee suggests a resolution be drafted from the ERB to the BoC to consider concerning climate change. As a model, several suggested that he consult the recent Town of Carrboro climate change resolution or the Sierra Club website. Elaine suggested this could be a joint resolution from several county advisory boards that are interested in this and related issues such as the Green Economy Taskforce, Green Building Taskforce, Planning Board, ERB, and any others who have expressed interest. Sonny will work on a draft resolution with the subcommittee before the next meeting.

9. Announcements and updates from ERB members:

Sonny asked about the status of “Chatham Park” – the 7000 + acres of land near Pittsboro purchased by Preston Development for a massive new development.

Fred explained that most of the land is within Pittsboro’s ETJ.

Elaine said that in the Southern Durham Development suit against Durham, Judge Howard Manning ruled that the Jordan Lake boundary change approved by Frank Duke (Durham Planning Director) in 2006 was binding, regardless of any subsequent county decisions, and he also dropped negligence charges against Durham Co. A protest petition lawsuit will probably continue by adjacent landowners whose boundaries were also changed. Chatham County BoC have expressed concerns about the impact of this boundary change that lessens protections on land adjacent to Jordan Lake in Durham County.