

MINUTES

Farmland Protection Program Durham Soil and Water Conservation District Virtual Zoom Meeting

Meeting Number: 6 (Farmland Protection Advisory Board) Date: October 21, 2021

Advisory Board Present:

Nicole Connelly – Chair – Little River VAD
Mark Waller – Vice Chair – Farm Bureau Representative
Kenny Browning – 2nd Vice Chair – Eno River VAD
Neil Frank – At Large
Matthew Eagle – At Large
Derrick Beasley – Open Space & Trails Representative
Lindsay White – At Large
Jillian Riley – Soil & Water Board
William Sparrow – Business Representative

Others Present:

Sherry Scully – Soil & Water
David Harris – SWCD Supervisor
Celeste Burns – Open Space
Jane Korest – Open Space
Donna Rewalt – Cooperative Extension

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, October 21, 2021 and called to order at 6:36 pm by the Chair. The meeting was held as a virtual Zoom meeting.

1. **Approval of Board Minutes from September 2021** – Motion made by Mark Waller to approve the minutes, seconded by Kenny Browning. All in favor; motion passes.
2. **Presentation by Durham City-County Planning Department, Senior Planner, Carl Kolosna** – Presentation and Discussion provided of the Comprehensive Plan and its planning phases. This is a long-range document that will guide the future growth and development of Durham. Planning aspects include meetings of policy working groups and engaging the public. Carl shared link for access to “Engage Durham” site that will accept registration for virtual community meetings that will begin on November 3. “Basic information will be shared at all meetings, with a portion of the meeting broadly focused on a general area of Durham.” First draft of map will be available in a few weeks. Comments will be requested per parcel. Suggestion made to submit comment as a Farmland Protection Advisory Board entity.

The Engagement Phase will end in January. Draft of revised Comprehensive Plan due next summer. Adoption of plan expected for late next year.
3. **Agriculture Economic Development update** -Sherry Scully reported on progress of the Ag Economic Development Grant program. 23 awarded applications are now contracts. The past year’s progress will be reported to the BOCC on November 1. FY 2022 Grant program dates and revisions will be determined at the next AED Committee meeting on November 16th.
4. **Easements/Open Space** – Report was provided by Celeste Burns.
 - Scottie MacFarland’s Easement (11 ac) – Phase II – in process and should close prior to 2022.
 - Len Needham’s Farm, Mike Garrett’s Farm and Douglas Day, Part II are all funded and in process.

Celeste will provide a summary at November's meeting on Farmland Protection in Durham County.

5. **Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD)** – Report by Sherry Scully. Locations of signs for 4 of the 5 applicants approved in September and October have been set. Signs should be placed by General Services soon. No new applications at this time.
6. **Cooperative Extension Report** – Donna Rewalt and Janel Ohletz were not present but provided an update prior to meeting.
 - Farm School will again be offered in the spring of 2022
 - Durham County was 4th in the state with Visit NC Ap views this month
 - December 1st Crop Protection School will be offered
 - Ag Venture Grant opportunity is now open with December 15 deadline. Three information sessions will be held soon.
(Link and flyer were attached in an email after meeting.)

7. **Committee Updates**

A. Video Committee – This committee met in October; Nicole Connelly provided the report. Some videos have been started. The Committee feels the videos should be harmonized and professional. Each video will include a set list of questions asked to each individual farmer during interview such as information about the individual farm, what their future plans are on the farm and what their needs are from Durham County. They are looking for good representation of all types of farms in Durham County.

8. **New Business** – Annual Plan of Work. Nicole reported that Janel is pulling together a Monthly Social Hour for Farmers.

Lindsay White offered to provide some innovative ideas from work with other organizations at the November meeting.

Next Meeting –November 18th, 2021 at 6:30 pm. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.

Adjourn – With no further discussion or business, Chair, Nicole Connelly adjourned the meeting at 7:30 pm.

Nicole Connelly
Chairman

Sherry Scully
Soil and Water

December 16, 2021
Date approved