

MINUTES

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

Meeting Number: 1 (Farmland Protection Advisory Board) Date: January 20, 2022

Advisory Board Present:

Nicole Connelly – Chair – Little River VAD
Mark Waller – Vice Chair – Farm Bureau Representative
Kenny Browning – 2nd Vice Chair – Eno River VAD
Heidi Carter – County Commissioner
Nancy Herndon – Cape Fear VAD
Lindsay White – At Large
Derrick Beasley – Open Space & Trails Representative
Samantha Gasson – At Large
Neil Frank – At Large

Others Present:

Sherry Scully – Soil & Water
Lisa Marochak – Soil & Water
Celeste Burns – Open Space
Janel Ohletz – Cooperative Extension
David Harris – Soil & Water

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, January 20, 2022, and called to order at 6:33 pm by the Chair. The meeting was held as a virtual Zoom meeting.

1. **Approval of December 2021 Board Minutes** – Motion made by Nancy Herndon and seconded by Neil Frank. All voted in favor; motion passed.
2. **Financial Report** - David Harris presented a follow-up report on request for FPAB to supply equipment for General Services employee to build frames for VAD signs. David has discussed the situation with the General Services Department Head, Motiryo Keambirio. Ms. Keambirio said that the employee we are working with is new and the equipment that is being requested is available for use by this employee in another maintenance shop within General Services. David plans to let Ms. Keambirio know that there are four sign installations requested in November and December by the Soil and Water staff.

FPAB budget will need to be spent by May. Nicole requested costs of VAD signs and materials be provided at the next meeting. She also requested that the Board members brainstorm about any school projects that are in line with objectives of the Board that FPAB can invest in with remaining funds. Lisa advised that projects to individual schools be limited to \$1000.

3. **Comprehensive Plan Discussion** – Period for public comment of the Comprehensive Plan closes January 31, 2022. A subcommittee met this past month to discuss and create a document for public comment that will consider the Ag interests of Durham and be presented to the City/County Planners. The Comprehensive Plan Place Type Map and the subcommittee's proposed document were shared on screen by Celeste Burns and Lindsay White. They provided explanation of both, and time was allowed for board to review. Discussion followed. Nicole recommended that Board members make a public comment individually online by parcel to provide another form of accountability along with FPAB comment.

Motion made by Neil Frank to agree as a board to submit the proposed statement as recommendation to planners. Samantha Gasson seconded. All members present voted in

favor; motion passed. This document will be shared with Carl Kolosna and his supervisor with Durham City/County Planning prior to January 31, 2022.

4. Samantha Gasson asked for someone to join the South Durham Farmers' Market Board as a FPAB representative. Nancy Herndon and Samantha are stepping down from this board. This is an important position to aid the market in ensuring the interests of Durham County farmers and vendors are represented. The FPAB started this market. (Representative may not hold a position on another market board. This board currently meets virtually the 2nd Monday of the month at 6:30.)
5. **Farm Video Subcommittee Report** – Video Committee met this past month. Nicole provided slides describing purpose and goals of the committee moving forward. A Timeline will be provided at the February meeting. Feedback and input on the thoughts provided through the slides is requested of Board before the next meeting. Considerations for next meeting: offering an honorarium to farmers who participate and offering an in-person farm tour this year.
6. **Easements and Open Space report provided by Celeste Burns.** Celeste will submit an NRCS Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) application for a conservation easement on Clara Glenn's 40-acre farm on Hampton Rd on Friday, January 24.
7. **Agriculture Economic Development update by Sherry Scully** - Farmer Breakfasts are scheduled for February 23rd and the January 20th breakfast has been postponed to March 23rd or 24th. Sherry asked for input/preference of March date. Both will be held at the Bahama Ruritan Building. Sherry requested that the February breakfast be held virtually, if not an option to hold in-person due to COVID. A hybrid option will be tested as requested by Nicole.
8. **Cooperative Extension Report provided by Janel Ohletz – Upcoming Events:**
 - Farm School will begin on February 7th and participants will graduate in June.
 - Soil Health & Regenerative Ag Series begins on February 15th – 5 monthly sessions
 - A Fencing School will be offered by Janel and Emily Bateman with Soil and Water on May 5th, more details coming soon.

Next Meeting – February 17th, 2022 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 7:55 pm.

Nicole Connelly
Chairman

Sherry Scully
Soil and Water

February 23, 2022
Date approved