

MINUTES

Farmland Protection Program Durham Soil and Water Conservation District

Meeting Number: 2 (Farmland Protection Advisory Board) Date: March 20, 2025

Advisory Board Present:

Nicole Connelly – Chair, Little River VAD
Deborah Luecken – DOST Representative
John Cowan – Cape Fear VAD
Matthew Eagle – At large
Samantha Gasson – At Large
Mark Waller – Farm Bureau Representative
Chris young – Business Representative
Douglas Daye – Flat River VAD
Kenny Browning – Eno River VAD
Helena Cragg – At Large

Others Present:

Lisa Marochak – Soil & Water
Sherry Scully – Soil & Water
Celeste Burns – Open Space & Real Estate
Brittany Eagle
Neil Frank
Carolyn Rose-Seed
Alan Toney II – Foothills Regional Commission

The regular monthly meeting of the Farmland Protection Advisory Board was held on Thursday, May 20, 2025 at Durham Farm Bureau. This meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by the chair, Nicole Connelly.

1. Nicole Connelly opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Neil Frank was in attendance and was recognized with a showing of appreciation with food, flowers and well wishes for his years of service to the board.
2. **Approval of March Board Minutes** – Motion made by Kenny Browning to approve the March meeting minutes as submitted. Mark Waller seconded the motion. Nicole called for vote; motion passed.
3. **Farmland Protection Plan Update** – Alan Toney II, Community and Economic Development Director with Foothills Regional Commission, (contractor assisting with the Farmland Protection Plan Revision) joined the meeting to present on the status of the revision which is planned to be completed end of June. Alan apologized for the delays of his organization due to Helene. He reported that they have completed interviews but are considering additional ones. As they begin the draft, they are reviewing current land use planning and zoning regulation and will focus on creating a very usable plan. Alan reviewed the process of releasing the plan draft. Sherry will continue to keep the board informed of the status of the draft.
4. **Membership Update** – Two applications for the vacant At-Large position were read aloud by Lisa Marochak for the board's consideration. Carolyn Rose-Seed, one of the applicants, introduced herself. Nicole asked Carolyn to step outside. Samantha Gasson made a motion to approve Carolyn Rose-Seed to serve on the Farmland Protection Advisory Board. Motion seconded by Helena Cragg. Nicole Connelly asked for a vote. Motion passed.
5. **Financial Report** – Lisa reported that all funds in account have been expended. Some funds were used for VAD sign material and to support agriculture education at Riverside High School, Jordan FFA, RN Harris and Northern High School. Photos were shared of these projects on screen. The county Manager's current proposed budget includes \$3,037 in the FPAB account. This budget will be considered for approval in June.
6. **VAD Update** – Sherry Scully requested approval for a VAD application for Ali Shackelford (R W Vine LLC) for her 113.8 acres on South Lowell Rd. Mark Waller made a motion to approve the VAD application. Matthew Eagle seconded the motion. The vote in favor was unanimous.
7. **Easements/Open Space** – Celeste Burns provided update on conservation easement funding progress for Robyn Davis. The City of Durham's Source Water Protection Program has approved funding for 50% of

this project. Celeste also reported Durham County has acquired a 21-acre parcel on Meadow View Lane as permanently protected open space. This parcel is currently managed for hay and is adjacent to another County open space property along the Little River. The Open Space Division is also working on a conservation easement to protect 19.3 acres along Stagville Rd that will offset additional impervious surface needed for the new Bahama Veterinary Hospital at the corner of Snow Hill and Roxboro Roads.

8. **Soil & Water Conservation District Update** – Lisa Marochak made Board aware of the District’s upcoming events and opportunities:
 - Annual Pond Clinic scheduled for May 17th from 9am-1pm.
 - Ag Economic Development Grant Program
9. **Cooperative Extension Update** – Representative not present.
 - Staff presented Farm Campus Feasibility Study to the Board of County Commissioners in May. (Sherry will share reports on Monday with members.)
10. **Durham Open Space and Trails Report** – Deborah Luecken provided overview of the Rail to Trail project being considered by DOST that will establish a trail on a train line from Downtown to Roxboro. This trail has an opportunity to support local farm businesses.

Durham County is proposing an Open Space plan for the county. This plan is currently sectional.
11. **UDO Update** – Robin Schultze (not present) provided an update to last month’s discussion that was shared with the board: Planners are looking at coordinating AED and VAD parcels in their zoning map. Updated Use Table to be released in late summer/early fall. This will include environmental and infrastructure standards. Robin also plans to incorporate the revised Farmland Protection Plan in the new UDO.

Adjourn – With no additional business, Chair Connelly adjourned the meeting at 7:45 pm.

Nicole Connelly
Chairman

Sherry Scully
Soil and Water

Date approved