

**STAFFORD COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL AND PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT
RIGHTS COMMITTEE MINUTES
MARCH 24, 2014**

The meeting of the Stafford County Agricultural and Purchase of Development Rights Committee for Monday, March 24^h, 2014, was called to order 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Jeff Adams in the County Administration Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center.

Members Present: Jeff Adams, Gail Clark, John Howe, Marty McClevey

Members Absent: Craig DeBenard, Bob Hunt

Staff Present: Kathy Baker, Sylvia Dyson

Guests Present: none

1. Call to Order

Mr. Jeff Adams called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes – February 24, 2014

Ms. Clark asked to amend the February 24th minutes, line 196 to read: Ms. Clark explained that Extension initiated the field day for 4th graders.

She also requested to change line 202 to read: Ms. Clark stated that there was unequal Soil and Water and Agriculture Extension presence in Stafford County compared to other counties.

Mr. McClevey made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Clark seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

3. Staff Update

Ms. Baker gave an update on PDR funds. She stated that according to the report from the director of budget there was \$ 468,000 available in roll back money. She asked the Committee to keep that money in mind at the end of the fiscal year on June 30th, 2014. She reminded that the Adams property was still in queue for purchase of the easement and that the Committee would have to make a decision regarding matching funds and whether they wanted to start a new PDR round and indicate that there would be federal funding like FRPP and REPI land conservation

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program through the Department of Defense, Quantico, which would be aimed towards properties in the vicinity of the military base. Mr. Adams inquired whether any of the properties from last round were close enough to Quantico to qualify. Ms. Baker replied that she did not think so.

Ms. Clark asked where the \$ 468,000 came from. Ms. Baker stated that she would get that information from the Commissioner of Revenue's Office. She further stated that the Director of Planning asked to pull those numbers together for everybody's information.

Mr. Howe inquired whether the \$486,000 was all new money. Ms. Baker affirmed and added that there was also approximately \$125,000 remaining from last round. Ms. Clark asked if they would be able to get more matching funds prior to purchasing the Adams property. Ms. Baker stated that they had preauthorization to spend the money as long as it was after the awards were announced. She estimated that there would be another \$ 150,000 - 160,000 available in state funding. Ms. Baker explained that there would have to be at least \$160,000 on the books to be eligible for state funding.

Mr. Howe reminded that in January the Committee had discussed reviewing the PDR program and changing the criteria and asked if that was still the intent. Ms. Baker said to consider that the existing properties had been qualified under the prior ranking which meant if the criteria were changed there would have to be a new round and the property owners would have to reapply. The Committee agreed that they would still like to change the criteria and add target areas. Ms. Baker explained that that would require opening up another PDR round. She suggested having a sit down and establishing priorities before opening up another round. She further explained that any new criteria would also have to go before the Board of Supervisors.

4. New Business

➤ **Agricultural Education / Outreach**

Mr. McClevey stated that he would like to focus on property owner and getting them up to speed with farm plans and possibly have workshops for that purpose. Mr. Howe stated that there was only a small audience in Stafford County. Ms. Baker asked if there was interest in doing Webinars. Mr. Howe stated that Spotsylvania County had offered Webinars before, but they had been very poorly, however he did believe that it could be a great tool. Mr. Howe also suggested hosting a field day at the Silver farm since a lot of the practices are implemented there. He suggested having the field day in form of a twilight tour.

Mr. McClevey suggested having a work shop at Widewater Fire Hall with soil and agriculture experts who could help farmers coming up with a plan and also have samples of farm plans for people to view. He further stated that it would also be a great opportunity to get names and

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addresses and find out what their practices are. Mr. Howe pointed out that there was no central recording of agricultural practices which is why the counties did not get credit for a lot of the practices.

Ms. Clark suggested that having more best management practices could possibly save the tax payer money, since the County would have to do less Chesapeake Bay abatement.

Mr. McClevey repeated that he would like to have a workshop at the end of the year on how to write a farm plan since it was very difficult to find any instructions and also offer a follow up meeting with experts. Ms. Clark inquired who the farm plan was done by or if they could be self-done. Mr. Howe explained that they could be self-done, however he also pointed out that there were many different components to it. Ms. Clark asked why best management practices were not being recorded centrally. Ms. Baker stated that it was to protect the farmer's privacy.

Ms. Clark suggested that going after having more farms with farm plans may help with Chesapeake Bay. Ms. Baker reminded that staff had turned in a 5 year plan regarding collection of information, but they did not get back with staff on that as of yet. Mr. Howe asked Ms. Baker to share the 5 year plan with him. Ms. Baker said she would and further explained that there had never been any official response. Ms. Baker stated that Stafford County was technically in compliance, since the goals were submitted, she however suggested starting to collect information anyway to stay ahead of the game. She suggested concentrating on inventory, rather than new farm plans.

Mr. Howe suggested having a field day in August and start targeting people using personal invitations. Ms. Clark suggested using the land use mailing list. Mr. Howe pointed out that the owners may not necessarily be the ones farming the land. Ms. Baker suggested possibly having the workshop in the Board Chambers which would enable them to also video stream the event.

Mr. McClevey clarified that his expectations for this year were to simply plan a work shop for next year.

5. Unfinished Business

➤ **Farmers Markets - Review of Process and Regulations**

Ms. Clark had a minor correction to the addendum provided by Mr. McClevey in the previous meeting, in line 3 of the non-produce paragraph; the sentence should read: ...additional locally grown...

She also asked for modification of example (2), Non-Produce Items, for clarification. The Committee agreed to change the wording to: Accessory scents, embellishments and candle decorations not crafted or fabricated by the vendor are not permitted for separate sale.

After a brief discussion Ms. Clark made a motion to accept the modified Addendum. Mr. Howe

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seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

➤ **PDR Signage**

Staff handed out a draft of the possible signage for discussion. Ms. Baker stated that the properties may have more than one sign depending on the location and layout of the property. Ms. Baker asked the Committee approved of the sign she would initiate the production and start working on a design for the plaques to be presented at the second June meeting for the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Baker stated that staff will take additional pictures of the properties to make some power point presentations to show the properties. The Committee gave the green light to proceed with the signs as drafted.

➤ **Stafford County 350th Celebration – Potential Activities**

Ms. Clark brought Mr. Howe up to speed on previous discussions regarding participation in the 350th Celebration. She explained that the Committee decided, since there hadn't been any interjection of agriculture within the whole 350th celebration, to lead the participation. She stated that after talking to Sue Henderson the Committee had decided to participate at the Celebration stage instead. Since then Ms. Clark had been communicating with Mr. Carr who was in charge of the stage and was positive about the Committee's participation. Ms. Clark reminded that they would like to showcase Stafford Agriculture past, present and future. She explained that they would like to have the 4 century farms, a retrospective of 4-H and FFA, a big map of Stafford County to show agriculture, which Ms. Henderson offered to supply, a restored and a new tractor, which they could get from Greenline, GPS tractor systems, old pictures of farming in Stafford County as well as old farm and kitchen implements. Ms. Clark stated that the Farm Bureau Board had suggested having a sand box filled with corn with toy implements for the kids to play with. She further stated they could have small farm animals. Ms. Clark stated that Farm Bureau did no longer have any 12 x 12 tents, but Mr. Howe stated that Extension had several tents that they could use. The Committee talked about also gathering some picture of 4-H from different sources. Ms. Clark and Mr. McClevey further suggested having a banner that said Celebrating Stafford County Agriculture. Mr. McClevey asked Ms. Baker to email him the Stafford County seal to add to the banner. Ms. Clark explained that according to Mr. Carr there were no papers to fill out to make the participation at Celebration stage official.

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6. Next Meeting

- April 28, 2014 Regular Meeting

7. Adjournment

Mr. McClevey made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Mr. Howe. The motion passed 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.