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**STAFFORD COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL AND PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT
RIGHTS COMMITTEE MINUTES
FEBRUARY 9, 2015**

The meeting of the Stafford County Agricultural and Purchase of Development Rights Committee for Monday, February 9, 2015, was called to order 7:03 p.m. by Kathy Baker, Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning, in the County Administration Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center.

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

Members Absent: Craig DeBenard

Staff Present: Kathy Baker, Joe Fiorello, Sylvia Dyson

Guest Present: Vanessa Griffin

1. Call to Order

Ms. Kathy Baker, Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning, called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. Organization of Committee

➤ Election of Officers

Chair:

Mr. McClevey was nominated by Ms. Clark, seconded by Mr. Rudasill. With no other nominations from the floor, Mr. McClevey was elected as new Chair of the Committee with a 4-0 vote.

Vice Chair:

Following the election for Chair, Ms. Clark was nominated by Mr. Adams, seconded by Mr. Howe. With no other nominations from the floor, Ms. Clark was elected as Vice-Chair with a 4-0 vote.

➤ 2015 Work Plan

1. Farmers Market

a. Review application(s) for Farmers Markets

There was no discussion on this item.

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- 46 b. Review rules and regulations for Farmers Markets, modify if necessary

47 There was no discussion on this item.

- 48 c. Promote Farmers Markets on County website

49 Mr. Adams stated that according to the Board of Supervisors, the County
50 did not have an interest in operating a farmers market, and he was
51 questioning whether the Committee should promote private farmers
52 markets. Mr. Howe suggested promoting that on the Stafford County
53 website. The Committee agreed.

54
55 2. Purchase of Development Rights Program

- 56 a. Work toward purchase of Jones and Harris properties

57 There was no discussion on this item.

- 58 b. Review ranking criteria, modify if necessary

59 There was no discussion on this item.

- 60 c. Identify target PDR zones

61 Mr. McClevey felt that the Committee should definitely take a look at target
62 zones. Ms. Clark agreed. Mr. Adams pointed out that any change in the
63 criteria would not affect last round's applicants. Ms. Baker also agreed that
64 target zones could be established as part of the new application round.

- 65 d. Discuss future application rounds

66 There was no discussion on this item.

67
68 3. Chesapeake Bay/TMDL

- 69 a. Create database for agricultural uses in County and use of Best Management
70 Practices

71 Ms. Baker pointed out that this was a very slow moving project and that a
72 lot was still based on input from DCR (Department of Conservation and
73 Recreation).

- 74 b. Assist staff with assessment of new Chesapeake Bay regulations

75 There was no discussion on this item.

76 4. Education/Outreach

- 77 a. Host Conservation Plan workshop

78 Mr. Howe suggested having a regional event that was also open to other
79 Counties.

- 80 b. Pursue a Farm Day with Stafford County Public Schools:

81 The Committee agreed that reaching out to schools and planning field trips
82 for 4th graders should definitely be part of the 2015 Work Plan. Ms. Clark

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83 stated that she would contact the science coordinators to set up any type of
84 field trips and see if they were interested. The Committee agreed that due
85 to the time line the first field trip would probably not take place until fall.

86 c. Educate land owners on conservation easements and tax benefits

87 Mr. Adams suggested having a landowner to do a presentation.

88 Ms. Baker explained that Mr. Milde requested this item to be on the 2015
89 work plan. She further stated that she would caution discussions regarding
90 tax benefits, as the County should not be partaking in promoting tax
91 benefits, the Committee could however inform landowners where to get the
92 information from. Mr. McClevey and Mr. Howe both suggested that this
93 could be coupled with the conservation plan workshops. Ms. Baker stated
94 that we could do this, however, we could also take measures such as
95 handing out flyers and things of that nature to put out the word. She
96 further pointed out that Northern Virginia Conservation Trust would assist
97 Stafford County with public outreach and that they were helping with the
98 REPI (Readiness and Encroachment Partnering Initiative) program at this
99 point.

100 3. Approval of Minutes – October 27, 2014

101
102 Mr. Adams motioned to approve the minutes as written which was seconded by Ms. Clark. The
103 motion passed 5-0.

104
105 4. Staff Update

- 106
107 ➤ PDR Grant Funds
108 ➤ PDR Properties – Next Steps

109
110 Ms. Baker stated that the County had received \$50,000 in VLCF (Virginia Land Conservation
111 Foundation) grants which was specific to the Jones property. She pointed out that the process
112 was different from the VDACS (Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services)
113 process, as far as needing appraisals for the properties, very similar to the REPI program. She
114 explained that Mr. Jones was aware that the appraisal may come in lower than \$675,000, which
115 was the total cost to purchase the easement, and was willing to accept less. Ms. Baker stated
116 that she suggested to Mr. Jones to wait till the fall to see if any more funds would be available
117 through VDACS or VLCF. She further stated that the purchase would have to be made by
118 January 2017 with VLCF and February 2017 with VDACS. She further explained that the
119 assessments would have to be done by an independent assessor, but they would have to see
120 whether the County or the landowner will pay for it.

121
122 Ms. Baker broke down the current money situation for clarification, explaining that out of the

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123 available county funds of \$588,148 they would only be using \$337,500 and try to match the other
124 half with funds to best leverage the available county funds, which meant with a current
125 potential match of \$198,479 there was still a need for an additional \$139,021 in additional
126 matching funds.

127

128 Ms. Baker stated that she had been working with Mr. Harris on applying for the ACEP
129 program. She stated that they would be meeting with NRCS to discuss further. She added that
130 there was no deadline and that NRCS hadn't officially allocated the \$1.6 million for Virginia yet.
131 Ms. Baker stated that she would keep the Committee updated, but pointed out that the deed of
132 easement was a massive document with all sorts of attachments, exhibits, and references to
133 federal law and she did not know if the Harrises would go through with this.

134

135 Ms. Baker asked the committee whether they wanted to go ahead and start working with the
136 applicants on getting the deed as well as taking the recommendations to the Board. Mr. Howe
137 made a motion to petition the Board of Supervisors to allow the Committee to pursuit the
138 purchase of development rights on the Jones property and the Harris property. The motion was
139 seconded by Ms. Clark. The motion passed 5-0.

140

141 5. New Business

142

143 ➤ North Stafford Farmers Market

144

145 The Committee decided to move the item up on the agenda since Ms. Griffin was at the meeting
146 to give an update on the Farmers Market.

147

148 Ms. Griffin stated that no rules had been changed from last year, except for the increase in fees.
149 She stated that the market will continue with the same hours and will run from April through
150 October. She further stated that it had been a good year for the Farmer's Market with more
151 customers and consequently more profit for the vendors. Ms. Griffin explained that she will
152 continue to manage the market, but will be represented on site by a vendor, Robin Long from
153 Lovely Sweets and Treats, next season. Ms. Griffin ensured that she would not sell the market
154 this year. She further explained that the market would no longer participate in the SNAP
155 program since it caused out of pocket cost for Ms. Griffin. She further added that it would not
156 affect the market since there were hardly any customers that were taking advantage of the
157 program.

158

159 Ms. Clark inquired if there was any intent on selling the market in the future. Ms. Griffin stated
160 that there was a possibility and that it would depend on this year's outcome. She did, however,
161 ensure that the market would stay open. Ms. Clark mentioned that she felt that the amount that
162 had been negotiated with the potential buyer was unreasonable.

163

164 Mr. Adams asked Ms. Griffin which assurance there was that the market would be open all
165 season. Ms. Griffin stated that there was a large amount of ratifications already as well as new

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166 vendors that were trying to get in, besides it was her reputation was on the line as well.

167

168 Mr. Adams further inquired how the committee would know whether or not the market was
169 sold. Ms. Griffin stated that if the market was sold she would come in with the new owner to
170 go over the existing rules and regulations with the committee.

171

172 Mr. Adams asked if Ms. Griffin had been inspecting vendors to ensure that the producer only
173 rules are being followed. Ms. Griffin stated that she did not. Ms. Clark asked whether Ms.
174 Griffin felt that the vendors were on board. Ms. Griffin felt that they were.

175

176 Mr. Adams brought up the dog issue at the market and requested that the Health Department
177 make an official statement whether or not dogs were allowed on the premises. Ms. Griffin
178 stated that she this could be verified. She further stated that initially the plan had been to not
179 allow dogs which the hospital administrator was entirely against. The Committee did agree
180 that dogs should not be allowed on the market for health reasons. Ms. Griffin stated that she
181 was fine with that. Mr. McClevey stated that he would contact the Health Department to get a
182 definite answer.

183

184 Mr. Howe made a motion to approve the North Stafford Farmer's Market application subject to
185 clarification from the Stafford County Health Department regarding allowing dogs in the
186 market. Ms. Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 - 0, with 1 abstention by Jeff
187 Adams.

188

189 ➤ Stafford Farmers Market Cooperative

190

191 Mr. Adams stated that he would like to have everything in place for a farmers market so current
192 vendors could continue to sell their product in case the North Stafford Farmers Market was
193 cancelled. Ms. Baker pointed out that a new farmers market would have to go through the
194 approval process and also meet all the established rules and regulations, but the Committee did
195 not have to take any action on this item tonight. Mr. Howe asked if any one application could
196 be approved for various locations. Ms. Baker affirmed, but specific regulations would need to
197 be met for each location.

198

199 ➤ Farmers Market Ordinance Amendment

200

201 Ms. Baker stated that because of Woodstream's application the Board's committee discussed an
202 amendment and referred to the Planning Commission to include R-1, R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning
203 districts where Farmers Markets would be permitted by-right. She further explained that
204 initially the residential districts had been included, but the Planning Commission struck the
205 residential districts out of concern for individual lot owners. She added that in the residential
206 districts, a farmers market would have to be on community property or open space area.

207

208 Ms. Baker stated that she would follow up with Woodstream applicant to see if they wanted to

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209 have their market this year and start the application process pending the Board's decision in
210 May. There were no concerns from the Committee regarding the proposed amendment.

211

212 5. Next Meeting

213

214 March 23, 2015 Regular Meeting

215

216 6. Adjournment

217

218 Mr. Rudasill made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Mr. Adams. The motion passed
219 5-0.

220

221 The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.