

***AGRICULTURAL AND PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT  
RIGHTS COMMITTEE MINUTES  
May 23, 2022***

The meeting of the Stafford County Agricultural and Purchase of Development Rights Committee for Monday, May 23, 2022, was called to order at 7:07pm. in the Activities Room in the George L. Gordon Government Center by Carlos Bratton, Chairman.

Members Present: John Howe, Elizabeth Cameron, Chad Young, Carlos Bratton, Jeff Adams, Benjamin Rudasill

Members Absent: Alandra Simmons

Staff Present: Kathy Baker and Crissy Kendall

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Carlos Bratton called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm and confirmed there was a quorum.

**2. Public Presentations**

None

**3. Staff Update**

**Land Conservation Program Improvements**

Ms. Baker said the PDR ordinances goes before the Board of Supervisors for Public Hearing on June 7. Once they vote the AG/PDR Board can move forward with the application round.

Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT) update. The Board authorized money to be spent for a position for someone from Northern Virginia Conservation Trust to be hired dedicated to Stafford County. We are currently looking for office space within County facilities. The NVCT employee would do public outreach and work with landowners to educate them about the land conservation program. They would be working primarily on donated easements. If the county is to consider NVCT as a co-holder of our PDR easements then they would also assist with that as well. The position has been authorized for a mid-year hire (January). The MOU to consider NVCT as a partner goes to the Board's Community and Economic Development Committee on June 7.

**PDR Property Updates**

Ms. Baker stated that staff continues to work with the Jones property on Forest Lane. The appraiser is working on this and the draft deed has been reviewed by the county attorney's office. Staff should be ready to submit to the Department of Conservation Recreation in the next month. Staff is still waiting to get the final easement draft from the Moores and their attorney. The appraiser is also working on their property and should be done next month. It will then need to go to the USDA for their review. Staff anticipates to be done by the end of the year. These two properties are the last from the 2017 applications.

#### **4. New Business**

##### **New PDR Application Round**

Ms. Baker gave a review of the process to the Committee, and stated it has been almost five years since the last open application round.

Staff plan to start after the fiscal year ends on June 30. The County will send out a notification to all property owners of 20 acres or greater to let them know the application round is coming and provide information about the public information meeting. At the public information meeting, staff go through a PowerPoint and explain the program and give a deadline for application submittal. This will give a couple of months for owners to gather their information together. It also gives them time if they want to meet with their attorney or accountant or talk with us and see what if they really want to submit an application. After the deadline the staff has four-six weeks for the staff to review and rank those properties based on our PDR ranking criteria, which the board is scheduled to adopt on June 7<sup>th</sup>. Staff ranks the properties depending upon the number of applications received. The ranked applications will be presented to the AG/PDR Committee for the committee to concur, comment, discuss the applications before finalizing the scoring. The applicants will have ten days to provide input, for example, if staff missed something in the ranking, or the owner didn't have something in the application that they want to include. Then a final letter goes out to the applicants acknowledging what their scoring is. Staff would then forward all the properties to the Board of Supervisors and once they give the go ahead an appraisal will be done on the first property. Staff presents the offer to the land owner and they decide if they want to continue. If they don't, the next property on the list would be considered.

Ms. Baker has updated the letter and application to include her contact information, a checklist/explanation of the ranking criteria, a list of benefits and updates to the FAQ section based. All of this will be placed on the website.

John Howe moved to move forward with the process of advertising, receiving applications and processing applications for purchasing development rights.

Jeff Adams seconded the motion.

Approval to move forward approved (6-0).

##### **Tri-County Meeting with DEQ**

Mr. Adams and Mr. Howe met with representatives of the Tri-County Soil and Water Conservation District, DEQ and representatives from Spotsylvania County over Spotsylvania's non-compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. They will be meeting again on Wednesday, June 1 at 10 o'clock at the Tri-County offices on Carr Street. Stafford needs to come up with criteria of what needs to be inspected by Tri-County. Tri-County will then go inspect and Stafford will then need to correct the issue.

##### **Farmer's Markets**

Mr. Adams had questions concerning the North Stafford Farmer's Market being in compliance with the 80% produce/20% accessory sales which are permitted by the county at Farmer's Markets. The North

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Stafford Farmer's Market advertises the sale of jewelry, macramé, pottery, doll clothes etc. Mrs. Baker said they have looked into this before and neither the committee or Stafford employees can decide if they are within the 80/20 ration or enforce them to be compliant. It is up to the market manager to run the market in accordance with the regulations.

Planning and Zoning is also aware of a monthly Farmer's Market at Stafford Hospital that has not gotten permits. Staff has reached out to no avail. Staff will be at the next Farmer's Market to speak with the manager about what permits are needed in order to continue.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

March 28, 2022

Mr. Howe made a motion to approve the March 28 meeting minutes. Mr. Adams seconded. March 28, 2022 meeting minutes were unanimously approved and adopted (6-0).

**6. Member Comments**

Mr. Bratton asked if there was a list of upcoming community events. Ms. Baker asked if members hear of events please let her know and she will forward to all members. She would also like to have the website updated with this information. She also reminded committee members if there is any related training with fees associated that they may be interested in attending let the committee know and costs could be covered. Ms. Baker reminded members if they attend an event they are attending as an individual, not as a representative of Stafford unless pre-approved.

Mr. Adams made the committee aware of a Farmer's Market in Dumfries on Saturdays starting June 18. He also announced he is starting a summer farm camp beginning the second week in June. It's an educational program with rotating activities such as gardening, fishing, milk cows and taking care of chickens.

**7. Next Meeting**

June 27, 2022

**8. Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss Mr. Bratton adjourned the meeting at 7:55 pm.