

**AGRICULTURAL AND PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT
RIGHTS COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 26, 2018**

The meeting of the Stafford County Agricultural and Purchase of Development Rights Committee for Monday, February 26, 2018, was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman John Howe in the County Administration Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center.

Members Present: John Howe, Benjamin Rudasill, Jeff Adams, Marty McClevey, Chad Young and Robert Broxton

Members Absent: None (Rock Hill District seat vacant)

Staff Present: Kathy Baker and Melannie Egan

Guests Present: Marshall Locklear and Emily Guerrero (Youth Engaged in Stafford)

1. Call to Order

Ms. Egan called the role. With all 6 current committee members present, a quorum was established.

2. Introduction of New Member – Robert Broxton, Garrisonville District

Chairman Howe asked each Commissioner to introduce themselves, as a new member joined the Committee. Mr. Broxton introduced himself as a part of a military family who moved to Stafford approximately 10 years ago. Mr. Broxton stated that he wanted to get involved in the community and did so with different sports programs, substitute teaching, as well as serving on the committee.

3. Public Presentations

Mr. Locklear introduced himself as the manager of the Garrisonville farmers market and stated that he had no further comment.

4. Approval of Minutes – January 22, 2018

Mr. Howe informed the Commission that the January meeting minutes would be provided and voted on at the March meeting.

5. Staff Update

- PDR Program Applications

Ms. Baker stated that the PDR application would be going to the Board's Community and Economic Development Committee (CEDC) on March 6th, giving the CEDC a chance to take a first look at the applications and ask questions as well as provide comments.

Ms. Baker stated that the transfer of development rights program (TDR) would also be discussed with its 8 or 9 applications, totaling about 1,100 acres, primarily in the Crow's Nest vicinity. Ms. Baker added that staff was approached by TDR applicants, who indicated

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potentially donating remaining lots to the County or State to go towards Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve once TDR rights were severed.

Regarding the PDR funding, Ms. Baker stated that currently there was \$745,000 available that has not been allocated. She added that the rollback since July 1 was \$246,000, totaling \$991,000. Ms. Baker stated that VDACS just authorized \$61,000 authorized for FY18, however in FY19 there would likely only be \$250,000 which would be divided between all applicants. Ms. Baker stated that VLCSF has had a couple of large settlements, which was why they may not put any more money into land conservation programs in the upcoming fiscal year. She reiterated that the VLCSF settlement funds were specific to certain areas, which would make it difficult for Stafford to utilize those funds. Another funding source that the PDR program had not applied for so far, Ms. Baker explained, was the federal ACEP program through NRCS, which would have another application round in summer. She added that the REPI program was also an option since two of the properties were within the eligible area. Ms. Baker reiterated that VDACS was the only grant program which was not project specific, and that all others required for a property to be identified at time of application as well as have an indication from the owners that they are willing to go through the process. There was a brief discussion on the NRCS grant program, which according to Ms. Baker was more cumbersome than the others, due to the fact that the County would have to get certified to enter into the program, requiring a lot of technical information and acceptance by the NRCS. Ms. Baker added that Board authorization would also be required.

- Cluster Ordinance Amendment

Ms. Baker stated that the Planning Commission was entertaining a repeal of the current cluster ordinance at their upcoming meeting. She added that the cluster ordinance had been readopted in 2013 due to state code changes and/or non-compliance with state code. Ms. Baker explained that state code did not have any provisions for open space, other than 50% open space for cluster developments. The intent of usable open space, such as parks, farming, etc. is not being met under the current provisions, according to Ms. Baker, which is why the Board of Supervisors felt the ordinance needed to be changed.

6. Unfinished Business

- A-1, Agricultural Zoning District Uses

Ms. Baker provided a print-out of staff's attempt of working through A-1 uses after researching other localities. The provided sheet also highlighted staff's proposed changes. Ms. Baker added that at the work session there had been a lot of discussion regarding slaughter houses and animal processing and that the Zoning Administrator was looking further into the matter. Ms. Baker encouraged the Committee to provide comments and/or suggestions they may have. The Committee was especially concerned with changing of lot size requirements, in particular raising the minimum lot size to 6 acres, as well as raising the lot size for timber operation to 21 acres. A discussion ensued.

Mr. Adams stated that Virginia State University's small farm outreach program would be a great source of information and provided Ms. Baker with the contact information.

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Ms. Baker stated that saw mills were also a point of discussion at the work session and asked in the Committee for input on the subject. She added that there was no clear distinction currently, clearly defining a saw mill and at what point it would be considered a saw mill operation versus a temporary setup.

Ms. Baker stated that feedlots were also mentioned at the work session, and inquired if the Committee had an opinion on that. Mr. Howe felt it was highly improbable that feedlots would occur in the County due to a lack of resources. The Committee agreed.

The Committee had a discussion regarding the appropriate acreage required for keeping of animals. The Committee opted to not make a recommendation on any number, but rather encourage the subcommittee to make a distinction between large animal agriculture versus smaller animals and consequently different requirements in minimum acreage per animal.

7. Next Meeting

- March 26, 2018

8. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.