

***AGRICULTURAL AND PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT
RIGHTS COMMITTEE MINUTES
April 23, 2018***

The meeting of the Stafford County Agricultural and Purchase of Development Rights Committee for Monday, April 23rd, 2018, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman John Howe in the County Administration Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center.

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

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Kathy Baker, Joe Fiorello, Ben Foster and Sylvia Dyson

Guests Present: Robin Long, Lester Long, Marshall Locklear and Emily Guerrero (Youth Engaged in Stafford)

1. Call to Order

Roll was called by Ms. Dyson. A quorum was established with all members present.

2. Public Presentations

Mr. Locklear stated that there was a misconception, which he felt was caused by the advertised hours of operation of the North Stafford market which are Sundays only, that his Farmers Market was closed on Saturdays which caused loss in revenue for him and his vendors. He stated that he approached the market manager of the North Stafford, asking to clarify that the advertise hours are for the North Stafford market only.

Mr. Locklear further stated that some vendors did not agree with the \$500,000 liability insurance which had to be provided by each vendor as required by state law. Mr. Locklear was hoping that the Committee would communicate the requirement to vendors.

3. Approval of Minutes – January 22, 2018

Mr. Adams made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Young. The motion passed 5-0. Mr. Pepper and Mr. Broxton abstained from voting, as they were not on the Committee at that time.

4. Staff Update

- PDR Program Applications

Ms. Baker had provided a briefing of the applications and the associated costs which has been circling with the Board's Community and Economic Development Committee (CEDC). According to Ms. Baker, staff was asked by the CEDC to come up with alternatives to acquiring easements, based on the available funding. Staff consequently came up with different scenarios which they proposed to the CEDC. The CEDC further asked a written policy be included in the application, reiterating that the County was only responsible for 50% of the acquisition cost, and the other 50% would come from matching funds.

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According to Ms. Baker the fiscal impact of the properties was also discussed at the CEDC meeting. Staff was able to provide several reports to the Commission showing the positive fiscal impact of agriculture versus residential development.

Ms. Baker stated that the PDR applications would be going to the Board's May 15th meeting, as opposed to the May 1st meeting as initially scheduled. Ms. Baker stated she would notify the applicants of the change.

Mr. Adams, who had also been in attendance at the CEDC meeting, reiterated a comment made by one of the Board members, suggesting that there be a minimum ranking score for properties to be eligible. Mr. Howe felt it would be worth considering. Ms. Baker stated that it was at the Committee's discretion to change the requirements after each application round.

Mr. Young inquired if the PDR committee was targeting any particular area of the County. Ms. Baker replied that they did not, mainly due to the sporadic development that has been occurring. She added that it was however at the Committee's discretion to establish a target area if so desired.

Mr. Howe provided a PDR cost benefits study as well as USDA fact sheet provided by Mr. Young to his Supervisor, showing that farm land did not cost as much in services as a residence. He felt that rather than sending another letter to the Board, it would be more advantages for each Committee member, if they were so inclined, to contact their Supervisors directly regarding the importance of the program. Ms. Baker stated that at each Board of Supervisors meeting there was an opportunity for anybody to speak before the Board on any subject during the public presentation portion of the meeting.

- Cluster Ordinance Amendment

Ms. Baker stated that there was a 3-phase approach to the amendment. She stated that the Planning Commission would be holding their first public hearing on the matter on Wednesday April 25th, where they will consider reducing the area where cluster development would be permitted. Ms. Baker explained that a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to adopt the altered map. Phase 2, according to Ms. Baker, was the Ordinance amendment, and phase 3 would be a full blown re-consideration of cluster development in general, looking at different Ordinance updates and changes, particularly with regard to open space and how it should be developed. Ms. Baker stated that the Board of Supervisors was expecting to have recommendations back from the Planning Commission within one year. She added that subcommittees would be established and that the public, developers, builders and other Committees would also be included in the process.

5. New Business

- M & K Market - Farmers Market Exemption

Mr. Howe stated that M&K market was requesting an exemption to the 125 miles radius rule. After a brief discussion, the Committee unanimously decided that an exception was not necessary, as the vendors were within 125 miles.

- Farmers Market Regulations Regarding Vendors

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Ms. Baker stated that this discussion would not affect the current year, however, the Committee could start looking at potential changes for the following year. She reiterated that there had been some discussion regarding participants at the farmers markets. Mrs. Long had provided a list of potential vendors to the Committee as a basis for discussion.

Mr. McClevey was concerned that Committee might not have defined “farmers market” well enough, leaving room for grey areas. He felt that the sole purpose of a farmers market should be to give local farmers an opportunity to sell their product. He added that it was important to ensure a farmers market would not turn into a flea market type scenario.

A suggestion was made by Mr. Adams to look at other localities and their market rules as a guideline.

Looking at the current regulations, Mr. Pepper felt that the term “support the spirit of a farmers market” was part of the issue. He added that if the Committee wanted the market tied to local producers, than that should be reflected in the language.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding what was appropriate for a farmers market. Mr. Broxton felt that the line between what was allowed and was not allowed should be very clear, so market managers wouldn’t run into any issues with vendors. He also questioned the allowance of food vendors at markets.

Mr. Adams discussed the distinction between food vendors, and ingredient vendors who sold things such as pies, jams and jellies.

Ms. Baker suggested that each Committee member go through the current regulations and come up with some recommendations for the next meeting.

In other business, Mr. McClevey stated that a professor of Mary Washington University, Ranjit Singh, was currently doing research on PDR fund recipients to get a sense of what motivated participants to apply for the program.

6. Unfinished Business

- A-1, Agricultural Zoning District Uses

Mr. Howe summarized some of the information discussed at the work session. He highlighted that slaughter facilities would still be allowed, which would likely have some acreage and setback requirements tied to them. He further felt confident to have convinced the attendees that the permitted lot size should remain at 3 acres, and not be raised as considered by some.

Mr. Howe explained that commercial kennels were also discussed, as well as portable saw mills for temporary harvest versus permanent saw mills. Ms. Baker pointed out that noise was mainly the issue when dealing with saw mills and that certain setbacks would likely be required.

7. Next Meeting

- May 28, 2018

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A motion was made by Mr. McClevey to cancel the May 28th meeting, due to the Memorial Day holiday, seconded by Mr. Young. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.