

**ORANGE COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION BOARD**

**MEETING SUMMARY--APPROVED
January 15th, 2014**

Environment & Agricultural Center – Conference Room
306 Revere Road, Hillsborough, NC
7:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Allan Green, Howard McAdams, Noah Ranells, Joe Thompson, Elizabeth Walters, Kim Woods

MEMBERS ABSENT/EXCUSED: Lynnette Batt; Ashley Parker, McPherson

GUESTS: Commissioner Pelissier

STAFF: Gail Hughes, Soil Conservationist, DEAPR - Orange Soil & Water Conservation District; Peter Sandbeck, Cultural Resources Coordinator, DEAPR - Natural & Cultural Resources Division

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1. **Call to Order:** Co-Chair McAdams called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.
 2. **Co-Chair Comments:** None
 3. **Consideration of Additions to Agenda:** None.
 4. **Meeting Summary / Minutes – November 20th, 2013 (Attachment 1):** Woods noted that she was not present due to an excused absence. Green moved to accept the minutes/summary with this correction. Thompson seconded. Motion carried.

5. **Items for Decision:**

(a): New EVAD application: (Attachment 2): Hughes introduced one pending application for an Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD). This has been reviewed by staff and meets all the criteria and requirements for APB consideration for the EVAD program. Hughes opened the floor for discussion and approval.

Cecilia Redding: 151.06 acres: Farm located on New Sharon Church Road, NC 57, and McKee Road (Caldwell Agricultural District). Land is in hay, vegetables, fruit and small grains. All parcels are in present use. Motion to approve application for EVAD made by Woods, seconded by Green; motion carried.

6. **Items for Discussion**

- a. Ag Support Enterprises: Perdita Holtz with Planning presented an update on the status of the proposed ASE revisions to the UDO. The approval process will be separate for the Rural Buffer zones, as those rules also require approvals from the towns. Discussion followed. Ms. Holtz noted the upcoming public meeting to be held by Planning at the Food Lab on Feb. 13th. The new ASE for the rural areas outside of the Rural Buffer will be included in the BOCC's Quarterly Public Hearing on Feb. 24th, then go to the Planning Board on March 5th. Final consideration by the BOCC is anticipated for April. ASE provisions for the Rural Buffer will be heard at the Joint Public Hearing held on March 27th with the BOCC, Chapel Hill and Carrboro, allowing for potential adoption by the BOCC in June. Members discussed the impact of the ASE on a range of activities, including rural heritage museums, meat processing, composting, farm equipment sales, metal fabricating/blacksmithing, and country store. Costs for site plans and groundwater studies are an issue. Could some of the ¼ cent sales tax for Ag Economic Development be used as mini grants to defray those costs? Commissioner Pelissier noted that she petitioned the BOCC to get this moving again back in 2006-7. She urged members to attend the upcoming ASE public meetings and to encourage others to attend. She reminded members that this can be amended in the future to make needed adjustments.
- b. Proposed new language for Animal Services ordinance: The new timeline calls for presenting a revised ordinance to the BOCC on March 7th; staff will share any new text with members as it is released.
- c. Update on Annual Report and Work Plan for the BOCC: Staff handed out copies of the report and work plan submitted in December. (**Attachment 3**)
- d. 2014 Ag Summit Report : Green reported on the current planning efforts for this year's summit, scheduled for Feb. 25th at the Mapleview Ag Education Center.
- e. Prospective New Members: Walter Durham is interested in serving on the board but worries about his involvement in a land-use dispute. Those present did not view this as obstacle to service. Members suggested deleting the farm descriptions now in the roster (**Attachment 4**). Ranells noted that membership requirements are already in our ordinance. He moved to delete this type of designation from our rosters; seconded by Woods; motion carried.

7. Informational Items / Future Agenda Items

- a. Membership/Vacancies: Walters explained that she wishes to resign due to health concerns. She noted there are other potential members for her district, including Roland Walters. She will serve until we identify her replacement.
- b. Present Use Valuation: Hughes raised the question about our current requirement that a property owner must be approved for present use value before they can be eligible to participate in the VAD program. The state legislation as revised in 2011 no longer requires farmers to participate in present use valuation programs

to be eligible to be in VAD/EVAD. Our policy still requires present use status to be eligible. The board may wish to consider this. Green asked that the board discuss the larger issue of present use at the next meeting. He noted that his new property would not qualify for present use even though it is now part of a larger farm that is in present use valuation. He thinks the board could seek help from our legislative delegation. Commissioner Pelissier mentioned that this topic has been raised before, but the response then was that such changes to present use might work for Orange but not for other more rural or poor counties. McAdams agreed to add this topic to the agenda for the upcoming meeting.

8. **Adjournment:** McAdams expressed thanks to Commissioner Pelissier for her attendance and input. Woods moved to adjourn, seconded by Ranells. Co-chair McAdams adjourned the meeting at 9:26 pm.

Next Meeting – March 19th, 2014