

**Orange County Unified Development Ordinance
Public Information Meeting
October 22, 2009 7:00pm – 8:30pm
Planning & Agriculture Center, Hillsborough, NC**

Summary Report

Staff Note: This summary report has been posted on-line on the Unified Development Ordinance website (<http://www.co.orange.nc.us/planning/UDO.asp>) and will be forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners.

Five (5) people attended the Public Information Meeting, including members of the public and staff. Listed below are those who signed-in or who stated their name while speaking.

Meeting Attendees: Bob Schmitt and Bobby Nichols

Orange County Staff Present: Tom Altieri, Michael Harvey, and Perdita Holtz

MEETING NOTES

Welcome and Introductions: Michael welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Staff Presentation:

- Michael Harvey, Zoning Administrator/Enforcement Officer, made a presentation and in general conveyed: What is a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO); Project purpose, scope, process, and timetable; and Opportunities for public input during the process.

Public Comments/Questions:

“Public”: Where can we find the Small Area Plans?

Mr. Harvey: They are posted on Planning’s website under the Special Projects heading.

“Public”: Who are the people on the advisory boards? Are there any farmers?

Mr. Harvey: Yes, there are farmers. For instance, Jeff Schmitt on the Planning Board is a farmer.

“Public”: Are these advisory boards active now?

Mr. Harvey: Yes, they are appointed by the BOCC to advise the BOCC on various topics.

“Public”: There are very few farmers on these boards.

“Public”: Will there be a time limit on subdivisions such as 10 acre lots or minor subdivisions?

Mr. Harvey: 10 acre lots are exempt from subdivision regulations by State law. There will still be a minor subdivision process.

“Public”: It takes a long time to do anything. This is supposed to be a free country.

Mr. Harvey: Yes, this was brought up at the meeting earlier this week.

“Public”: It needs to be pinned down which staff can make decisions and how long it'll take. Gave example of having to pave an entire road if he was going to do a minor subdivision at the beginning of the road. You can go to any other surrounding county and it takes 2-3 weeks for something that takes months here.

“Public”: Has the consultant been selected?

Mr. Harvey: Not yet, we're actually sending out the Request for Proposals tomorrow. We hope to have the consultant on-board in mid-December.

“Public”: At town of Hillsborough's UDO meeting a couple of weeks ago, the staff did not seem to be giving the presentation; it was the consultant.

Mr. Harvey. We hope to have a consultant in December.

“Public”: The size of a farm should be considered. Organic farmers, which seem to be the trend, 10 acres in order to be called a farm is a bit large for an organic farm. Considering farm income as a requirement to be a farm is difficult because prices can vary so much from year to year that one year a farmer can produce 300 bushels of corn and hardly break even because prices are low and the next year the same farmer can produce 120 bushels and make a lot because prices have gone up substantially.

Mr. Harvey: A lot of what we do with farming is dictated by State standards since farms are exempt from zoning. The concept of an “Agricultural Services” zone - a way for farmers to perhaps augment their income – could be implemented through the UDO.

“Public”: Are you going to be going out to the Ruritan Clubs or Grange to tell them about this?

Mr. Harvey: We could discuss this with the BOCC.

Ms. Holtz: It would be great if all these folks could come to one central meeting so we're not using staff time to go to 8 separate meetings in one month.

"Public": Yes, that's a good point.

"Public": So you're not going to be changing existing regulations?

Mr. Harvey: We will be changing only the ones that were mentioned earlier – parking standards, landscaping, etc. – but others will not be changed during this phase of the UDO.