



HENDERSON COUNTY ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Environmental Advisory Committee

Thursday, June 4, 2009

The Environmental Advisory Committee met on Thursday, June 4, 2009 at 3:30 pm at the King Street Meeting Room at 100 N. King St.

Committee members present were: Chairman David Lowles, Vice Chairman Ronald Ehlinger, Ms. Marijane Pell, Mr. Jeff Jennings, Dr. Richard DeSimone, Mr. Anthony J. Brancato, Mr. Jim Fickes, and Dr. Tom Davis

Committee member absent were: Ms. Angela Fernandini (Note: Ms. Fernandini's position will be filled by Mr. Richard Freudenberger in July).

Henderson County staff in attendance were: Ms. Alexis Baker, Environmental Programs Coordinator, Commissioner Chuck McGrady, and Mr. Will Sagar, Solid Waste Division Manager

Guests present were: Mr. Larry Rogers and Ms. Barbie Davis

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Lowles called meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION

Chairman Lowles explained the new format of the agenda. The agenda includes three columns. On the left side of the agenda is the primary segment with seven items: (1) Land Development code possible updates, (2) Small area plans, (3) Stormwater and erosion control, (4) Water quality including watershed issues, (5) Energy management, (6) Fire prevention issues, and (7) Other. These items will be discussed at each meeting. The center includes contemporary issues and resources requests related to the items in the primary segment while the right side allows for notes to be taken.

Mr. Davis suggested adding air quality as number seven in the primary segment. He further suggested that alternative fuels and North Carolina's non-attainment should be discussed. The item labeled as "other" should be moved to number eight in the primary segment section.

On stormwater and erosion control issues (item 3), Dr. DeSimone would like to have Erosion Control Chief, Ms. Natalie Berry, to talk to the committee about stormwater run-off and erosion control issues from Lake Rugby.

Staff suggested that the Committee might like to consider inviting Watershed Coordinator, Shaun Moore to speak on water quality issues (item 4). Ms. Marilyn Westphal from the Volunteer Water Information Network should also be invited to the July meeting to speak on this topic.

Discussion followed related to the next meeting date as it falls around the 4th of July holiday.

A motion was made to leave the meeting date as July 2, 2009. The motion was passed unanimously.

Chairman Lowles invited guest, Ms. Barbie Davis to speak. Ms. Davis feared that Carriage Park did not have good environmental controls as over the last five years Lake Rugby has filled with sediment. A court case was lodged against Carriage Park where \$150,000 was gained by homeowners to dredge out the dirt. However, the dirt had to be placed on the banks and could not be hauled away. Since last summer, a lot of sediment still comes down the creek. Ms. Davis said that Erosion Control Technician, Mr. Tim Fox, had commented that Carriage Park did not have proper erosion control permits. She said that one house in Carriage Park was built on a steep slope and the developer tried to flatten it out. The developer was made to hire an engineer. Someone from the state was trying to get involved. Now, Ms. Berry and Mr. Fox has taken it over.

Commissioner McGrady suggested that Chairman Lowles should ask Ms. Berry to explain if she believes the Erosion Control Ordinance is adequate to address such issues or if the developers are just being irresponsible and violating permits.

The committee moved to item six, Fire prevention issues. Mr. Fickes had spoken with Mr. Mike Burns with the State Forest Service in Mills River. A fire outside 100 feet of a residence is within their jurisdiction. A fire within 100 feet of a residence is under the jurisdiction of the fire marshal. He also said that October is fire prevention month. There are fire preventions programs aimed at school age children from the fire marshal and the state. He would like to have a speaker in September to discuss fire prevention.

Discussion about fire permits and their distances to the houses ensued. They would like to know more about the enforcement and ordinance and about good practices to reduce wild fires.

Dr. Davis returned to the issue of air quality. He would like to see Mr. Paul Moller from the Division of Air Quality to talk to the committee as North Carolina is on the edge of non-attainment in October. He would like Mr. Moller to talk about how to decrease air pollution at the local level and ways to deal with local point source polluters.

Chairman Lowles asked Dr. Davis about the air quality indicator colors in the weather reports. Dr. Davis told him that the colors are from green to purple and are used to measure good and bad air quality days. They are usually measured at about 4,000 feet. Bent Creek is where air quality is measured in this area.

Each month will have a speaker discussing the following topics: July is water quality, September is fire prevention, October is air quality, and November is energy management.

Additionally, responsibility for the primary sections of the agenda were assigned to the following people: Mr. Brancato will be responsible for the Land Development Code updates, Ms. Pell will inform the committee about the small area plan, County staff will talk to the committee about Stormwater, Dr. DeSimone will be responsible for water quality issues, Chairman Lowles will deal with energy management, Mr. Fickes will talk about fire prevention, and Dr. Davis will be responsible for air quality.

Ms. Pell made a comment that she would like more information on drilling wells as she noticed some mention of wells in the Land Development Code.

Chairman Lowles told the committee that he will no longer be chairman and would like Vice Chairman Ehlinger to take over his position.

A motion was made for Vice Chairman Ehlinger to be Chairman. The motion was passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned