

MINUTES

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF HENDERSON

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
NOVEMBER 23, 1993

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners met for a Special Called Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the County Office Building. The purpose of the meeting was a LAND USE PLAN WORK SESSION.

Those present were: Chairman Vollie G. Good, Vice-Chairman J. Michael Edney, Commissioner Hugh D. Randall, Commissioner William McKay, Commissioner Renee Kumor, County Manager David F. Thompson, Director of Planning Matt Matteson, and Clerk to the Board Elizabeth W. Corn.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Good called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

LAND USE PLAN WORK SESSION

Chairman Good recognized the following agriculture representatives from throughout the county:

- Dwight Bennett
- Grover Westmoreland
- Drew Brannon
- Alan Henderson
- Don Ward
- Frank FitzSimons, Jr.
- Bert Lemke
- Bob Carter

Matt Matteson recognized the members of the Land Use Plan Steering Committee who were in attendance:

- Dutch Burdette
- Polly Kremer
- Carolyn Johnson
- Dick Shuffstall
- Ken Weitzen

Vice-Chairman's Statement

Before beginning with the comments from the invited agriculture representatives, Vice-Chairman Edney stated that all the Commissioners realize the absolute importance of agriculture in our community. He asked how can we increase agriculture?

Bob Carter

Mr. Carter spoke of the progress of the Volunteer Agriculture Districts in the county. There are ten districts currently with 101 farmers participating, approximately 7,000 acres and 250-260 tracts of land. He stated that agriculture districting was begun to try to keep farmers in farming. We have 21,000 acres **prime** agriculture land in Henderson County.

Grover Westmoreland

Mr. Westmoreland stated that Henderson County is losing farmland at a rate of 1,000 acres per year. Henderson County has good production. Because of advanced technology we can produce more on less land. The farmers are using less pesticides today than ever before.

Dwight Bennett

Mr. Bennett stated that he was the second conservationist in Henderson County. His first job here was to try to help farmers keep their land from washing away (conservation). Mr. Bennett stated that we need to conserve the **fertile** land in our county for agriculture.

Don Ward

Mr. Ward presented many facts. His fact sheet is attached to these minutes.

He spoke of 600 acres of apple orchard that are presently on the market for sale. He stated that last year 45,000,000 bushels of apples were sold to Mexico, 5,000,000 bushels the year before. If, because of NAFTA, the tariffs are lifted, we could probably sell 100,000,000 bushels apples to Mexico per year. The climate is too hot in Mexico to produce apples.

Harley Blackwell

Mr. Blackwell stated that the public cannot assume that we will automatically have an adequate food supply. He stated that there are biological limits on what you can produce on an acre of land. He said the farmer is producing food because there are mouths to feed. Farmers equal 2% of our population but 100% of the population **must** eat or die.

Alan Henderson

Mr. Henderson presently farms 850 acres in Henderson County. He owns some of the acreage and rents some. He also farms 300 acres outside of Henderson County.

He stated that the farmer's goal is to produce the highest quality food product for the least amount of money. 108 individual growers bring their commodities to him for storage/distribution.

Drew Brannon

Mr. Brannon stated that farming and farmers help make our county a better place to live, work, and play.

Frank Fitzsimmons, Jr.

Mr. Fitzsimmons stated that if farmland is to be preserved the farmer must be compensated for farming.

Bert Lemke

Mr. Lemke attended as a representative for VanWingerden. They have 35 acres of greenhouses and employ 250 people in our county.

There was some discussion of county wide zoning and the pros and cons of county wide zoning to the farmers. Mr. Blackwell stated that zoning is a fence.

There was some discussion of annexation by the City of Hendersonville and how it will affect some farmers in our county.

Danny McConnell

Mr. McConnell spoke from the audience. He stated that he was one of four agriculture representatives on the Land Use Plan Steering Committee. In preparation of the Land Use Plan there was much discussion of agriculture and farming.

Mr. McConnell said that we must increase public awareness of agriculture.

Ken Weitzen

Mr Weitzen also spoke from the audience. He was a member of the Land Use Plan Steering Committee. He firmly stated that viable farmland conservation programs cost money.

Dick Shuffstall

Dr. Shuffstall also spoke from the audience. He too was a member of the Land Use Plan Steering Committee. He said the Comprehensive Land Use Plan is incomplete. Each item mentioned in the plan was dealt with in a general fashion. He suggested that the Commissioners now appoint appropriate study commissions to review and study different aspects of the Land Use Plan.

John McClain

Mr. McClain spoke from the audience. He was a dairy farmer in the county with over 500 acres but does not farm anymore.

**ADJOURN**

Chairman Good again thanked everyone for attending the meeting and sharing their ideas. This was a learning meeting for everyone in attendance. He stated that the Comprehensive Land Use Plan is only a guide or a map. Much work remains to be done.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

ATTEST:

Elizabeth W. Corn  
Elizabeth W. Corn, Clerk

Vollie G. Good  
Vollie G. Good, Chairman