

The Environmental Advisory Committee met on Thursday, April 7, 2011 at 3:00 pm at the King Street Meeting room at 100 N. King Street.

Committee members Present: Chairman Ron Ehlinger, Vice-Chairman Dr. Richard DeSimone, Ms. Marijane Pell, Dr. Robert Sweeney, Mr. Jeff Jennings, Mr. Jim Fickes, Mr. Richard Freudenberger, Mr. Richard Naylor.

Guests: Mr. Larry Rogers, Dr. Barbara Barnett

# **CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME**

Chairman Ehlinger called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

The minutes of the March 3, 2011 meeting were approved as issued.

The question of appointing a permanent secretary for meeting when staff was not represented was discussed. The alternative of a rotating secretary was submitted as a possibility. Bob Sweeney moved that we have a rotating secretary; Rich DeSimone seconded the motion. The motion was ruled approved by the Chairman on a voice vote.

Chairman Ehlinger stated that he would like to offer his resignation as chairman effective at the April meeting of the Committee. He will complete the remainder of his term which ends July 1, 2011. He nominates Vice-Chairman to assume the Chairman's duties until the Board of Commissioners (BOC) appoints his successor. The chairman moved that the above arrangement be adopted. The motion was unanimously approved with the Vice-Chairman abstaining.

The Chairman stated that he has heard nothing of a replacement for Charlotte Wolf who resigned two months ago.

## Land Development

Marijane Pell reported that:

- The Dana Small Area Plan (SAP) was approved by the Commissioners at their March 16 meeting. By late summer the BOC will refer the plan to the appropriate staff departments and/or committees for implementation.
- The Edneyville SAP will be considered for approval by the BOC at a May meeting.
- Nothing new on the Etowah-Horseshoe SAP

#### Stormwater and Erosion Control

As requested at last month's meeting, Richard DeSimone reported on his discussion with Mr. Mark Pruett of the Haywood County Stormwater and Erosion Control Department. Haywood

County has a provision in their Land Usage Code, Section 154.73, which requires a surety bond to "cover costs of installation of sufficient erosion and sediment control measures and devices on the site' for which a permit has been issued authorizing land disturbing activities.

The points mentioned by Mr. Pruett are:

- The provision has been in place for over 10 years; he has been personally involved for about 7 of those years.
- The policy is working well. There has been good compliance, no lawsuits have been filed challenging the requirements, and the county currently is holding some "sizeable" bonds.
- The requirements have helped citizens comply with the code requirements and made administration more efficient.
- Mr. Pruett recommended that if we were to adopt such an ordinance, that we require that the bond be redeemable at a local institution (rather than in North Dakota, as an example).
- He was not clear on whether the Haywood County ordinance would apply to remediation of damage to streams, since the NC Stormwater Control Act requires all eroded soil to be contained on the disturbed property.
- Mr. Pruett offered to provide us with any other information which we feel would be helpful should we go forward with this recommendation.

The Chairman asked Rich to contact the Planning Director to see where our previous recommendation on this issue stands.

### Water Quality

Bob Sweeney reported that discussions are still continuing among the participants in the Mills River Partnership. The city of Asheville is considering adding a small charge to their water bills to cover the costs of Ashville financial support of the Partnership. Hendersonville support will probably be contingent on what Asheville does.

Bob has had discussions with the US Geological Survey (USGS) regarding flooding in the area. Their observations are:

- We are experiencing more flooding now than with equivalent rainfall in the past.
- The carrying capacity of local steams has decreased.
- We can expect more flooding in the future.

The committee feels that this is an issue which ought to be of concern to Henderson County.

## **Energy Management**

Richard Naylor reported nothing new on the energy front. As far as he knows the county is still upgrading lighting and the CNG station is operational, but not yet open to the public.

#### Fire Prevention

Jim Fickes reported nothing new. It was noted that several weeks ago warnings against burning were issued for a time. It is not clear if the current rainfall amounts are sufficient to predict a safe fire season.

## Air Quality

Richard Freudenberger reported that once again the EPA has postponed (until probably fall) issuing ozone standards. This is an issue with many implications and they are being careful.

### **DISCUSSION**

Jeff Jennings, who serves as chairman of the DuPont Forest Advisory Committee, reported that the state legislature is considering a proposal to transfer jurisdiction over all state forests from DENR to the Department of Agriculture. While previous proposals have suggested that some state forests with significant recreational use be put under State Parks management, this seems to be a far less sensible proposal considering the enormous tourism value, and minimal agricultural or timber value of these properties. The committee asked Jeff to keep them informed of developments.

Richard Naylor volunteered to be Secretary for our next meeting on May 5, 2011.

While the committee strongly feels that we should meet regularly, the possibility exists that there may be nothing of substance to discuss. To deal with this possibility, it was decided that the Chairman will poll the members via e-mail, as to whether they have something of significance to report, and decide whether to call a meeting. This does not apply to the quarterly meetings when county staff will be present.

The Committee was asked by the Interim Chairman to look over the by-laws governing the Committee. Any questions or concerns can be discussed at the next meeting.

The Chairman moved to adjourn the meeting, Jeff seconded; the meeting adjourned at 4:04 pm.

Minutes Submitted by Richard DeSimone, Vice-Chairman