

**Henderson County  
Farmland Preservation Taskforce: September 8, 2025**

The Farmland Preservation Taskforce held a meeting on September 8, 2025, at 6:00 PM in the King Street Meeting Room located at 100 N. King Street. Virtual Attendees are denoted with a “O.”

Taskforce Member	Present	Absent
Commissioner Rebecca McCall, Chair	✓	
Commissioner Sheila Franklin, Chair	✓	
Jason Davis – Henderson County Planning Board	✓	
Brent Coston – Soil & Water Conservation District		✓
Gary Steiner – NC Cooperative Extension	✓	
Jimmy Cowan – NC Farm Bureau		✓
Joffrey Merrill – AgHC	✓	
Randy Newman – Hendersonville Board of Realtors		✓
Jason Edney – At large	✓	
Justin Patwin – At large		✓
Linda Pryor – At large	✓	
Alan Ward – At large	✓	
Danielle McCall – At large	✓	

**Also present:**

Autumn Radcliff, Planning Director; Janna Bianculli, Asst. Planning Director; Paulina Jones, Environmental Planner; Jonathan Wallin, Soil and Water Director; April Holt, Soil and Water; Dr. Terry Kelley, NC Cooperative Extension, and Tom Fanslow, Conserving Carolina.

**Call to Order**

Commissioner and Taskforce Chair Shelia Franklin called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance:**

Commissioner Franklin led the invocation and pledge after the meeting was called to order.

**Adjustment and Approval of Agenda:**

There were no adjustments to the agenda. Jason Davis motioned to approve the agenda as presented, and Joffrey Merrill seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Public Comment:**

There was no public comment.

**Adjustment and Approval of August 11, 2025, Meeting Minutes:**

Jason Davis motioned to approve the August 11, 2025, meeting minutes. Joffrey Merrill seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Presentation Farms Under Threat:**

Ms. Janna Bianculli and Ms. Paulina Jones provided a presentation on the Farms Under Threat 2040 Plan, including mapped future scenarios. The report highlighted farmland loss and conversions and drivers which include development, specifically low-density residential, challenges with succession, and lack of resilience to natural disasters. The framework of the report looked at three scenarios to estimate farmland conversion; business as usual, runaway sprawl, better built cities. The County tools and programs such as agricultural easements, present use value tax assessment, VAD program, density based zoning and open space requirements

are helping to preserve farms. Future actions such as setting goals to permanently protect farms, updating the 2010 Agriculture Preservation Plan, and lobbying for additional tools in NC such as PACE and TDR programs will further assist with this threat. The Taskforce was provided with a copy of the executive summary and future scenarios from the Farms Under Threat Report. Staff will email the Taskforce a link to the full report. The Taskforce had a thoughtful discussion about the report's findings.

### **Taskforce Future:**

Ms. Autumn Radcliff asked for discussion and direction on the future of the Taskforce and/or upcoming meeting topics. Co-Chair Rebecca McCall stated that she would like to see the Taskforce continue meeting through this FY 26 for now. The Taskforce members agreed with this and decided to cancel the September and December meetings. The next meeting would be in November, if needed, and then the Taskforce would meet quarterly starting in January. Gary Steiner made a motion for the new meeting schedule. All members voted in favor.

### **Staff Updates:**

Staff stated that it was waiting on the state budget to pass, but that Henderson County's AGZ Grant was recommended for approval. Jonathan Wallin with the Soil and Water Conservation District stated that the district had been interviewing applicants and hoped to make a selection soon the Farmland Preservation Coordinator. Dr. Terry Kelley with Cooperative Extension reminded the Taskforce of Farm City Day scheduled for October 4<sup>th</sup>. He also stated that disaster program checks were being mailed in batches. He also stated that on Friday, \$221 million was announced by the US Department of Agriculture for relief to agriculture which included market loss, future loss, agritourism, immobile infrastructure, roads and culverts, and forestry.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next Taskforce meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 10, 2025, at 6:00 PM in the King Street Meeting Room.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 PM.

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Commissioner Rebecca McCall, Chair  
Commissioner Sheila Franklin, Chair  
Henderson County Farmland Preservation Taskforce