

**BUNCOMBE COUNTY
LAND CONSERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 18, 2022**

Members present: Greg Hutchins Joel Mazelis Kimberley DeChant Jacob Wiseman Nancy Nehls Nelson Bob Gale Slater Solomon Sarah Fraser (quorum = 6/11)	Non-members present: Ariel Zijp – BCSWCD Michelle Pugliese - SAHC Jess Laggis - SAHC Jack Henderson - RiverLink
--	---

There was a quorum, as there were 6 members present. The following discussion occurred between members present:

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 am

- Chairperson Hutchins

Approval of Agenda

- Mr. Wiseman made a motion to approve the May 18, 2022, meeting agenda, seconded by Mr. Turner, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

- Mr. Tuner made a motion to approve the April 20, 2022, meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Mazelis, and the motion passed unanimously.

Updates from Land Conservation Agencies:

- Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy
Michelle Pugliese
 - Ms. Pugliese reported having four open grants through LCAB: Jess Laggis is working on other grant funds for two of her projects; Ms. Pugliese has submitted for reimbursements on one of her projects. SAHC also recently closed on a 29-acre project in Weaverville (Snowball Mountain), but it was not a project funded through LCAB. The property has a public access trail towards the Craggy area.
- Conserving Carolina
 - Land trust representative not present at meeting.
- RiverLink
Jack Henderson

- Mr. Henderson stated they have a variety of ongoing projects that they are continuing work on, but no new project updates.

Ag Advisory Board (AAB) Update- Ariel Zijp

- Ms. Zijp reported a BOC meeting the following day where Commissioners would hopefully vote on a land conservation goal that may increase funding for projects.
- Staff has been working with County Management to discuss parameters and logistics for the potential bond. Funding would be utilized through both the Ag Advisory Board and the Land Conservation Advisory Board. The bond has been proposed for affordable housing and conservation, and within the conservation bond, funding will be distributed among greenways, open space, and land conservation (specifically, easements). There has been a lot of discussion surrounding logistics of open space funding and processes to ensure that access to open space is present throughout the County and not just concentrated in one part. There has also been discussion around how funding might be distributed (ex. through LCAB, an open space committee, parks and rec, etc.). Ms. Zijp wanted to introduce the idea of LCAB potentially being a board that reviewed open space projects.
- Mr. Mazelis inquired how open space is being defined, and Ms. Zijp stated that her understanding is that one of the most important things is that the area is open for public access and has the potential for passive recreation.
- Mr. Henderson asked Ms. Zijp if she was aware when a decision would be made on the legalities around land ownership in the county for open space (i.e., county-owned vs. non-profit owned). Ms. Zijp stated her estimate was that there'd be a decision within 1-2 weeks as County Legal has been working on this question. Mr. Henderson also asked if ideal projects for open space funding have already been identified or if that was something that will occur over the bond process. Ms. Zijp was not aware of anything identified at this stage, but there has been discussion around the creation of a Master Plan that would identify priority regions.
- Mr. Gale stated he would be interested in LCAB reviewing open space projects, some of which would be focused on conservation values that have always been a part of LCAB, but others could be centered around equity and access to nature in underserved areas.

Michelle Pugliese – SAHC – Sandy Mush Creek/Covington

- The property is +/- 140 acres and adjacent to existing SAHC easements. It contains 1.3 miles of stream and headwater tributaries, and is also visible from the Farm Heritage Trail
- The property is a bargain purchase easement, and the request to LCAB for transaction costs is \$43,000
- Mr. Hutchins asked if Ms. Pugliese was aware of any timber cuts in the past 5-10 years, she stated she's unsure about any commercial cuts but there may have been some by neighbors.

Board Discussion/Questions

With no further announcements and discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 am.