Meeting Minutes

Subcommittee Members Present
Chairman Newman, Commissioner Wells, Commissioner Sloan, Maggie Ullman, Meg Williams, Lena Hansen, Jamie Ager

Staff Members Present
Sybil Tate, Jeremiah LeRoy, Jennifer Harrison, Jessica Hughes, Michael Frue, Gillian Phillips, Nate Pennington, Ashley Featherstone

Commissioner Sloan called the meeting to order at 10:04am.

Approval of Agenda & Minutes
• Terri Wells made a motion to approve the February 18, 2022, agenda and January 21, 2022 minutes, seconded by Maggie Ullman, and the motion passed with the vote.

Public Comment
• There was no public comment.

Priority Regions for Farmland Preservation
• Buncombe County is 420,480 acres total, and 76,637 acres are currently conserved.
• Projects are ranked and only the highest quality projects are funded.
• There are 34 properties on the Ag Advisory Board (AAB) waitlist which totals 3,207 acres.
• There are currently 16 projects totaling 1.055.6 acres and the Land Conservation Advisory Board (LCAB) has 6 projects totaling 367.6 acres.
• AAB has 29 projects on the prioritized waitlist which total 2,928 acres and would cost $14,765,000. The full list is 34 projects totaling 3,207 acres and would cost $15,480,750. The easement purchase price is an estimate, but actual cost is based on market value.
• LCAB has a total of 35 projects on the waitlist totaling 3,301 acres and would cost a total of $13,953,750. The easement purchase price is an estimate, but actual cost is based on market value.
• The total estimate for both AAB and LCAB easements is $29,434,500 and would total 6,508. Zijp mentioned there is a financial and time constraint as easements take time. Donation easements take around 1 to 2 years while easement purchase or grants take around 2 to 3 years to close. At the current wait time it would take 10 years to close all easements.
• The Subcommittee agreed to create a goal of 7,459 acres conserved by 2030 which would be at the 20% mark to total acres conserved.
• Please see presentation attached for full presentation.

Phase 2 Solar Discussion
• Jeremiah Leroy facilitated a discussion regarding the second phase of solar on schools now that it has been approved.
• At the staff level the $12,000,000 has been broken up between three years because it will not be feasible to spend the full amount in one year.
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Future Meeting Topics

- Dane Peterson will present about the convivence centers and Jennifer Harrison will continue the discussion on conservation goals at the March meeting.
- Ashley Featherstone will be speaking at the April meeting regarding air quality initiatives.
- Greenhouse gas emissions will be shared at the May meeting.

Announcements

- The next meeting will be in-person at 200 College Street

Adjourn

- Terri Wells made a motion to adjourn at 12:01 pm, and the motion passed with all in favor.

Documents

- Conservation Easement Goal Presentation
- January 21, 2022 minutes