

## Minutes

### Randolph County Commissioners

July 23, 2001 - Joint Meeting and Public Hearing with Randolph County Planning Board

The Randolph County Board of Commissioners met in a special joint session with the Randolph County Planning Board in order to hold a public hearing at 6:30 p.m. in the Learning Resources Auditorium, Randolph Community College, Asheboro, N.C. The purpose of the meeting was to review the draft Growth Management Plan (GMP) and related zoning amendments and obtain input from concerned citizens. Commissioners Kemp, Frye, Holmes, Davis and Mason were present.

Chairman Phil Kemp called the meeting to order and told the audience of about 120 citizens that the 2 boards were there tonight to receive comments from citizens regarding the new proposed Growth Management Plan. He then turned the meeting over to Hal Johnson, Planning Director, who used overheads to show maps and statistical information indicating Randolph County's rapid and sustained sprawl development. He stated that since January of 1995, there have been at least 6,825 citizens who have attended Planning Board meetings and/or Board of Commissioner rezoning public hearings. Often times many of these citizens left these meetings feeling like "losers." Mr. Johnson stated that the current zoning ordinance is not flexible and lacks land use options for property owners and developers. The proposed growth management plan is a 31-page document (plus an additional 20 pages of detailed maps and charts) that is specifically designed to accommodate new sustainable growth while attempting to preserve Randolph County's heritage and natural resources. It also will, hopefully, provide more opportunities for all parties to be heard through County sponsored neighborhood information meetings that will be held. Mr. Johnson then used maps to show how Randolph County is defined as related to growth and said that currently there are 403,000 acres zoned as residential agricultural. He then summarized the proposed zoning amendments.

Chairman Kemp told the audience that no decision would be made tonight and he then opened the public hearing.

**Robert Beane**, 4445 Hwy 42S, Asheboro, said that the GMP was too complex and asked Mr. Johnson if there were any other counties in North Carolina that have this GMP. Mr. Johnson told him that he was not aware of any other county that had this same plan. He then asked if this plan affected the large tract land owner more than anyone else and was told that the new GMP provides options to them that they currently don't have. He then asked if any large tract land owners help develop this plan. Mr. Johnson stated that all of the citizen input during Planning Board meetings and public hearings over the years was taken into consideration during the development of this plan. Mr. Beane said that he was afraid that the acreage land owner were going to get "hung" with this new plan.

**Mark Comfort, Jr.**, 3994 Bethany Church Rd., Franklinville, said that he lives in the Bull Run Creek Area and wants to see this area stay in the rural conservation area. He thinks this plan was well thought out, is flexible to land owners and developers, will help preserve the rural character of the county, protects farmers and strikes an equitable compromise between all groups of property owners in Randolph County and should be approved as written.

**Clarence Reynolds**, 2131 Providence Church Rd., Pleasant Garden, stated that the Reynolds family owns most of the land in this area. He said that they have problems with neighbors using Reynolds property to obtain water for their own residences. He would like to see the rural conservation district expanded to his area of the county.

**Robert Reynolds**, 2219 Providence Church Rd., Pleasant Garden, would also like to see this area moved from Zone 2 to the rural conservation district. He also mentioned that someone needs to be designated as the responsible party for the on-going maintenance of subdivision entrance signs that developers install.

**Hazel Kimrey**, 6844 Sandy Creek Church Rd., Staley, said that she would like to have her area designated as rural conservation instead of Zone 2. She said there were 100-plus chicken houses, 10 or 12 cattle farms, 2 large hog farms and several other small ones, and 1 or 2 horse farms. She also stated that developers need to be stopped from developing land.

**Rodney Moody**, 3139 W.O.W. Camp Rd., Randleman, and Asheboro/Randolph Board of Realtor President, said that land owners should be able to use their land as they see fit and that the 4-acre minimum lot size needs to be smaller. He suggested that the County have a USGS water survey done and he said the GMP is too restrictive. He also stated that he would like to see the Natural Heritage Assets inventory that he keeps hearing about.

**Corbin Moffitt**, 8531 Buffalo Ford Rd., Ramseur, said that the County should be careful not to impose too many restrictions on private land owners and that the County should carefully consider whether or not it's a good idea to tell citizens what they can and cannot do with their own property. He said the 4-acre minimum lot size is too large and that an elderly person may need to divide and sell his property in order to survive one day. He said he doesn't see anything wrong with subdividing land.

**Bill Boyd**, 962 S. Fayetteville St., Asheboro, stated that as a realtor and homebuilder he believes that there is too much land designated as rural conservation—people need to have places to live. He said the GMP is too ambiguous and difficult to understand. Growth should be a positive thing and Randolph County should not have the most stringent GMP in North Carolina.

**Kaffy Kivett**, 1948 Routh Cox Rd., Franklinville, spoke on behalf of her elderly grandmother who owns a large tract of land. She is concerned that she may not be able to divide her land and sell it if she needs to in the future. She thinks that there should be more education provided to the public about the proposed GMP.

**Glenda Moffitt**, 6573 Buffalo Ford Rd., Ramseur, is concerned that this GMP does not recognize the rights of private property owners. She telephoned 41 families in her area and no one knew about the proposed GMP. She believes the County is not doing enough to get more industry here. She thinks that private land owners should be the ones to write the GMP. She asked for a show of hands of people willing to participate on a committee to write the GMP and 12 people raised their hands. About one-half the people in attendance stood when she asked how many opposed the GMP or didn't understand it.

**Terry Moffitt**, 6573 Buffalo Ford Rd., Ramseur, paraphrased Bible scripture that says God does not allow government to meddle in the property rights of families. He stated that he feels the GMP

has an alarmist tone and lacks balance. He said the GMP implies that the County is under intense economic development pressure but he believes that's not true. The citizens of Randolph County, he said, are under intense tax pressure and that this GMP will drive taxes up. He stated that land is an investment to many of the elderly and the 4-acre minimum is too large. He believes the tone of the GMP should represent citizens who are large tract owners.

**Bonnie Renfro**, 180 Westbury Dr., Asheboro, stated that she supports the industrial overlay districts in the secondary growth districts and thanked Mr. Johnson for including them.

**Linda Hill**, 2275 Hoover Hill Rd., Trinity, said that she thinks the GMP is a good start but that it should not be approved as written. She asked if citizens could write letters giving their input.

**Ray Voncannon**, 1131 Sheridan Dr., Asheboro, said that he thinks the GMP needs more consideration, particularly the 4-acre minimum—it's too large. He's a large tract owner and he should be able to do what he wants with his land.

**Marlene Sanford**, 207 Kensington Rd., Guilford County, stated that she has family who own land in Randolph County and that she has helped write 6 comprehensive growth management plans which were all done through citizens committees. She said the document is heavy laden with anti-growth language. For instance, she said, there are numerous references to the public's claims on farmland. All development, she said, would be required to submit a detailed "Development Impact Analysis" that will be extremely costly and time-consuming to prepare and that this would drive housing costs up. She believes that cluster development is very important but is not sure there is enough market demand for it. She suggested having a USGS soils test done.

**George Bain**, 3966 Bachelor Creek Rd., Asheboro, and retired geologist, said that he owns 230 acres that he may have to sell one day. He believes that his land should be worth just as much in tact as divided up. He said that it's getting to the point where the elderly can't afford to pay taxes on their large tracts of land. He said that the 4-acre minimum won't necessarily devalue property and that a scientific study of watersheds should be done to determine acreage minimum.

**Leslie Thompson**, 2050 Soapstone Mtn. Rd., Staley, read a letter written by Judith Hahn who could not attend. The letter indicates her support for the GMP and that she wants her area to be designated as rural conservation.

**Phyllis East**, 8352 Hillsville Rd., Trinity, said that she and her neighbors have problems with groundwater run-off and that the GMP needs to have strict guidelines that pertain to this problem.

**Roger King**, 5225 Jackson Creek Rd., Denton, said that the County is in great need of a comprehensive growth management plan and is happy that one is finally being developed. He is concerned about the rural character of the county and urged the Board to adopt the GMP.

**Aweilda Williams**, 607 Back Creek Rd., Asheboro, said that we cannot stop growth in Randolph County but that we need to be careful how we regulate land use. Land owners should be able to use their land the way they want to.

**Connie Pittman**, 7064 Tree Hollow Rd., Thomasville, said that she lives in a subdivision and that property owners should have a say-so over their own land. She's afraid this plan would make home ownership too expensive for their children.

**John Whitt**, 1722 Whitmont Rd., Pleasant Garden, said that he objects to the 4-acre minimum—it should be ½ to 1 acre. He just heard about the GMP today and has not read the proposal.

Chairman Kemp stated that the 4-acre minimum does apply to all land in the GMP. He further explained that he was sorry that there were folks that had not heard about the GMP, but that the only medium to spread the word is essentially the local newspapers and that he felt that they had done a good job with their articles.

Maxton McDowell asked that citizens please get a copy of the plan and read it before they passed judgment on it—don't use hearsay to form opinions.

Darrell Frye stated that he was the only current commissioner who was also seated when countywide zoning was enacted in 1987. He feels that there is a great need for a comprehensive growth management plan.

Chairman Kemp thanked everyone for their attendance and input and closed the public hearing.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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Phil Kemp, Chairman

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Darrell Frye

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Harold Holmes

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Robert Davis

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Robert Mason

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Cheryl A. Ivey, Deputy Clerk