

**Meeting Minutes of the PACE Committee of the County of Isle of Wight
March 15, 2006**

The meeting of the PACE Committee of the County of Isle of Wight was called to order by Dee Dee Darden at 4:35 p.m. on March 15, 2006, at Colonial Farm Credit in Windsor, Virginia.

Members Present: Tom Alphin
Bryan Babb
Pete Carr
Dee Dee Darden
Jimmy Oliver

Ex-officio Members Present: Rachel Morris, Rural Economic Development
Manager/PACE Program Administrator
Tara Outland-Williams, Peanut Soil and Water
Conservation District

Also Present: Joseph Gidjunis, The Smithfield Times
Kari Sletten, GIS Technician, Isle of Wight County

Dee Dee Darden performed a roll call.

Rachel Morris informed the Committee that the minutes were not ready yet, but should be available by the next meeting. Ms. Morris stated that there was no further update with regard to funding from the General Assembly. It was also mentioned that the Farmers' Appreciation Day was coming up, Saturday, March 18, 2006, and all members were encouraged to attend. Ms. Morris invited the Committee to the Horse Boarding Workshop to be held at the Courthouse on Wednesday, April 19, 2006. This is an effort to help farmers diversify their businesses and utilize some of the unused barns, etc. Lastly, Ms. Morris shared that Planning and Zoning's representative on the Committee would be the new Assistant Director, Amy Ring. Ms. Ring comes to Isle of Wight from Chesapeake, where she began that City's PDR Program. With her previous experience, she will be a great asset to the Committee.

Ms. Morris asked the Committee to begin thinking about the potential items to be included in the ranking criteria. The Committee began its brainstorming session with the following to possibly be included in the ranking criteria:

- Tract Size (open land/cropland or pasture land)
 - Less than 50 acres
 - 50 – 100 acres
 - 100 – 250 acres
 - Greater than 250 acres
- Forestland percentage and cropland percentage
- Soils – Prime Farmland or soil classifications by NRCS

- Property outside the Development Service Districts (DSDs) and Village Centers (VCs)
- Focus on RAC and RR zoning classifications
- Working family farms
 - One family member works on the job as principal occupation
 - The land is farmed, but not by a family member
- Conservation Management Plan (i.e., nutrient management plan, etc)
- Road Frontage
- Properties located within an agricultural and forestal district (AFD)
- Environmental and Historical qualities
- Scenic corridors/roads (i.e., highway overlay)
- Property owner donations (i.e., land, further restrictions in easement)

After the ideas had been recorded, Ms. Darden suggested that Ms. Morris, with the help of other Committee members, particularly Tara Outland-Williams, put together a draft set of ranking criteria to be emailed to the entire Committee prior to the next meeting. Ms. Morris agreed to do so and also suggested that at the next meeting the criteria be tested on some anonymous farmland (parcels to be chosen by Ms. Morris) to ensure fairness.

Kari Sletten explained her role as GIS Technician and how she could help the Committee determine target areas. With the assistance of the GIS software, the Committee began looking at different areas of the County and examining the need for boundaries around the highly developed areas, in case those areas expanded. The Committee took a closer look at the VCs, DSDs, Towns, AFDs, and many other areas of the County. There was some question with regard to the northwest portion of the County where there is a tremendous amount of farmland, but not a single AFD. It was determined that a closer look should be taken at that area of the County due to its vast resources, including environmental and water resources/proximity to the Blackwater River and the fact that there are many viable farms.

Ms. Sletten then showed the members what a mile, 1 mile, 2 mile, and 3 mile boundary would look like around Routes 10 and 258. The Committee requested that Ms. Sletten make some maps for the next meeting showing in more detail:

- A one-half () mile southern boundary off of Route 10 from Route 10 at the Surry County line to Route 258 in Smithfield.
- A one (1) mile southern boundary off of Route 10 from where it meets Route 258 in Smithfield to the Suffolk City line.

The Committee considered the possibility of using the DSDs around the Towns of Windsor and Carrsville as the boundaries in their respective areas of the County, meaning that any property located outside the DSD was eligible for the Program. It was determined that there were many farms that abut the DSDs and by increasing the boundary around the DSDs many of those farms would be ineligible for the Program. This issue will be examined further at the next meeting at which time the maps made by Ms. Sletten will be available.

There being no further business and no closed meeting agenda items, Ms. Darden moved that the meeting be adjourned until the next meeting date to be determined and Mr. Babb seconded. The motion was adopted with members Alphin, Babb, Darden, and Oliver voting in favor, and no members voting against. It was noted that Pete Carr was absent.