



CONSERVATION EASEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

JANUARY 15, 2025 - 1:00 P.M.

OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Members Present

Stephanie Ferrell, Chair
Ron Simpson, Secretary
Aleksandra Gill

Staff Present

Sandra Smith, Assistant Town Mgr./Town
Clerk
Sean Taylor, Planning & Zoning Director

Ann Schneider (Council Liaison)

Members Absent

Miles Foy

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Conservation Easements Committee of the Town of Oak Ridge was held in the conference room of the Town Hall at 1:00 pm on Wednesday, January 15, 2025

The following members of the Committee were in attendance: Stephanie Farrell, Ron Simpson and Aleksandra Gill. Miles Foy was not present and Stephanie Farrell volunteered to reach out the Mr. Foy regarding his membership on the Committee. Also in attendance were Councilwoman Ann Schneider, Council Liaison to the Committee; Sean Taylor, Town Planning Director; and, Sandra Smith, Assistant Town Manager

- Chair Stephanie Farrell called the meeting to order. The Committee then unanimously approved an amended agenda adding discussion of the Pipeline Project and New Members for the Committee. The minutes of the prior meeting of the Committee on October 16, 2024 were also approved.
- The Committee elected new leaders for 2025. Aleksandra Gill will be the Chair and Stephanie Farrell will serve as Vice Chair.
- The Committee discussed pending CORE grant applications: the application for the Jack Blaylock property (2150 Beeson Road), and the application for the Nydorf/Hammond Property (1815 Oak Ridge Road). The Jack Blaylock property is being surveyed and is progressing through the Piedmont Land Conservancy easement process. As previously reported, the Nydorf/Hammond Property easement remains pending because the owners are first pursuing listing on the National Register of Historic Places. National Register application is a lengthy process. Upon completion the owners plan to continue the preservation easement process with Preservation North Carolina (PNC). The Alma Blaylock Property (8250 E. Harrell Rd.) is in the midst of survey and title work prior to sale to PLC. Thereafter, PLC will transfer ownership to the Town while retaining stewardship of the land.
- The Committee members were advised previously that the owners of the historic Old Mill of Guilford have the property up for sale. The Committee has long hoped to obtain a preservation easement on the property but the owners have been hesitant. Council liaison Ann Schneider will again contact

Preservation North Carolina (PNC) and the mill owners in the hope that a framework for an agreement can be reached in 2025.

- The Committee briefly discussed the Nixie Coleman/Morningview School property. Circumstances may have changed and this may no longer be a near term prospect for an easement. Several other prospective properties where easements might be appropriate were discussed and Members were identified to make initial or follow-up outreach contacts.

- Member, Debbie Shoenfeld has resigned from the Committee and her position should be filled. The Committee may also wish to have an Alternate. Those present were asked to be thinking about good candidates to be new members.

- Member Gill raised concerns about the "Pipeline Project." She explained that the natural gas pipeline owner is proposing to expand its utility easement by 50 feet. This pipeline traverses land within the Town. She believes this is under the regulatory jurisdiction of the Federal Government but wondered whether our Committee or the Town could go on record opposing the project. Member Farrell offered to share some background information she had on the project. Council Advisor Schneider was uncertain whether the Town had standing to take a position. Discussion will continue. The Committee determined that its next meeting will be held on February 19, 2025, at 1:00 in the conference room of the Town Hall.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Ron Simpson
Acting Secretary

Aleksandra Gill
Chair