Agriculture Advisory Board Meeting
Organizational Meeting
February 14, 2006
Cooperative Extension Office, Concord

Members present: Louis Suther, Vicky Porter, Randy Fisher, Jerry Pless, Marvin Bost
Also in Attendance: Tommy Porter, Ex-Officio from Planning and Zoning Commission;
Carl Pless, Extension Agriculture Agent, Advisor; and Debbie Bost, County Extension
Director, Advisor
Guests present: Turner Morrison, Farm Service Agency; Matt Kinane, Natural Resource
Conservation Service; Jonathan Marshall, Commerce Director; and Mike Downs,
Deputy County Manager

Absent: Ned Hudson, and Larry Taylor

Called to order at 4:08pm by Cabarrus County Commerce Director Jonathan Marshall.
He provided an overview that included rules of procedure and by-laws for the Board. A
copy of these proposed by-laws is attached for consideration and review. The Board
advised Jonathan that they would prefer staff to conduct this meeting until the rules and
procedures are in place.

The Board should consider a change in ordinance to physical year and not fiscal year.
Reviewed copy of proposed procedures and identified possible changes and options.

Questions were asked about the development of a draft of a county farmland protection
plan: What could be involved and how should the group go about putting this together?
The group discussed the need to assess the transition from older agricultural producers to
younger producers to keep farming a viable economic option especially when land values
keep escalating. The group also discussed the purchase of development rights and the
need for the General Assembly to re-write legislation to change the “sending zone.” The
group wants to change public perception about the value of agriculture and agribusiness.
We need to create a link to the new Research Campus and with Johnson and Wales to
direct market fresh products to businesses and restaurants. The group also discussed the
importance of economic development. Jonathan Marshall and Mike Downs advised the
Board that they had the right and obligation to offer advice to the County Commissioners
on any issue as it relates to agriculture.

Randy Fisher asked about communication with municipalities and Jonathan indicated that
the City of Concord was already asking some questions and their interest was positive.
The Agriculture Board could make recommendations, give advice and offer feedback to
the municipalities. It was then discussed who specifically to talk with in each of the
municipalities. The staff then discussed mapping all the parcels indicated through the
application process and it was decided that Colleen Nelson with Planning would put
together the map and plot the color-coded parcels that would provide a helpful visual while working through the applications pending. The Board discussed where to place the maps and decided to include the libraries along with the register of deeds, commerce, tax assessors, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Cooperative Extension Office, Soil and Water Conservation District Office, Farm Bureau, and Farm Service Agency office.

There was some discussion about properties that straddle 2 county lines. It was decided that if they qualify for present value land use, then they were able to apply for participation in the voluntary agriculture district ordinance. When land use is in question, contact Danny Seamone for his assessment.

There was discussion about the pending applications. Jonathan advised using application numbers such as (2006-01) and include a staff report and checklist for every application indicating all procedures have been completed prior to the Board Action. The duties of the clerk were explained and it was understood that all actions taken and all recommendations were to be recorded and that there could be written monthly reports to the Board of Commissioners. Annual report should be given orally at the December or January meeting. Debbie Bost was to contact Susie Bonds, Clerk to the Commissioners, about the software available to record proceedings and how and when to post meeting notices for public meetings and hearings.

There was some discussion about the city having to provide notice for condemnation and there would have to be a provision for this with communication established. The Enhanced ordinance would be recorded with the Register of Deeds and the contract between the land owner and the county will be recorded. Debbie Bost is to contact the county attorney about a legal contract for this program.

The group discussed eligible land and the minimum number of meetings. It was decided to meet quarterly with the understanding that during formation, it might be necessary to meet more frequently. It was decided that morning meetings are better for the Board. The Board would be ready to act on the rules of procedure and pending applications at their next meeting. The staff would obtain the needed maps and a meeting notice would go out about the next meeting on February 28, 2006 at 10am at the Extension Office.

The final comments were about the procedures for voting and could all of one type of application be voted on with one vote or was each application a separate vote? Staff would find an answer. Copies of the applications would be delivered to Danny Seamone, Colleen Nelson in Planning, Matt Kinane in NRCS and Soil and Water, and to Turner Morrison with Farm Service Agency. The meeting adjourned at 5:35pm.

Deborah G. Bost, County Extension Director, Recorder

Approved 2/28/06