

November 10, 2005

PRESENT: Dr. Charles W. Curry, Chairman  
Charles C. Schooley, Vice Chairman  
William Bashaw  
Bruce M. Bowman  
Kitra A. Shiflett  
Larry C. Howdyshell  
Betty Jo Hamilton  
Mark Grove  
Garland Martin  
Clay Hewitt  
Dale L. Cobb  
Beatrice B. Cardellicchio-Weber

OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Stanley, Extension Office  
Kay Frye, Board of Supervisor

ABSENT: Larry Shiflett

VIRGINIA: Meeting of the Agricultural Task Force Committee held on Thursday, November 10, 2005, at 7:00 P.M., in the County Government Center, Verona, Virginia.

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Chairman Curry stated that there were no items in the suggestion box.

Chairman Curry stated that the committee will continue reviewing the report.

**Finding # 53**

Agricultural production in Augusta County has traditionally been strong and has been a trademark of the central Shenandoah Valley for many years.

Ms. Shiflett moved that the finding be approved, which carried unanimously.

**Finding # 54**

Agriculture land in Augusta County has traditionally provided protection for many historical sites and structures (see Appendix L). Unfortunately, development, urban sprawl, and intensive agricultural practices have resulted in the loss or pollution of valuable historical amenities.

Mr. Bashaw moved that he would remove intensive agricultural practices from the finding and change the word urban to residential. The motion carried unanimously.

**Recommendation #54a**

The county government working through the Agriculture Program Coordinator should identify prime historical structures located in General and Exclusive Agriculture Zones along with the names and contact information of landowners.

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**Additional Suggestion:**

There should be an inventory of all historical and archeological sites even the “minor” and “suspected” ones. In many cases these sites are known only to a very few people and will be forgotten and lost if not documented in a timely manner.

Mr. Bashaw stated that the additional suggestion should be included with the recommendation. He moved to amend the recommendation as follows: The county government working through the Director of Agriculture Development should identify historic and archeological sites and collect inventory located in General and Exclusive Agriculture zones along with the names and contact information of landowners. The motion carried unanimously.

**Recommendation #54b**

Landowners should be sent the Preliminary Information Form along with an invitation to apply for the National Registry.

Mr. Howdyshell stated it should be noted that this recommendation should be voluntary.

Mr. Bowman moved that the recommendation be approved and it be voluntary.

Ms. Hamilton amended the motion with the recommendation to read: Landowners should be sent the Preliminary Information Form along with an invitation to voluntarily apply for the state and national registry. The motion carried unanimously.

**Finding # 55**

Augusta County is rich with historic sites and scenic beauty and therefore has great potential for expanding Agri-tourism. A list of examples of Agri-tourism activities is located in Appendix M.

Chairman Curry stated that there is not a recommendation with this finding.

Ms. Hamilton stated that this finding ties together with #53.

Ms. Shiflett stated that agri-tourism is another way a farmer can have additional income but it is a threat as well. She stated that there could be a liability involved.

Ms. Hamilton stated that it could have negative ramifications as well. She stated that many people come to the County just to look at the scenery.

Mr. Bashaw stated that agri-tourism cannot be stopped.

Mr. Bashaw moved that the finding be approved. Eight committee members were in favor of the motion and one in opposition.

**Finding # 56**

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The threat of terrorist activity against our nation and specifically the agricultural industry is real and while not evident in Augusta County, it must be mentioned as a serious threat in this report.

Ms. Hamilton stated that the wording while not evident in Augusta County should be omitted from the finding.

Mr. Bowman moved that it be approved as amended, which carried unanimously.

**Finding # 57**

The rapid expansion of technology has positively impacted the efficiency of production in Augusta County. Traditionally farmers have adapted quickly by incorporating new technologies and best management practices. The result is a continuous and acute need for continuing education, in-service training, demonstration plots, research farms, field days, adult education, forums, workshops, extension service support, agricultural education, professional consultants, and a host of other support services.

Mr. Bowman moved that the finding be approved, which carried unanimously.

**Finding # 58**

The emerging and expanding field of biotechnology has made significant contributions to agricultural production. Future innovations are expected to be astronomical but a public fear of the potential for negative societal affects may limit its potential.

Chairman Curry stated that there is no support data for this finding.

Ms. Shiflett stated that the fear of potential negative social affects should be omitted.

Ms. Hamilton stated that astronomical should be omitted and replaced with significant.

Ms. Hamilton moved that approve the finding with the following changes: The emerging and expanding field of biotechnology has made significant contributions to agricultural production. Future innovations are expected to be significant but a public perception may limit its potential. The motion carried unanimously.

**Finding # 59**

Some State and Federal programs have a counter-productive effect on agriculture production in Augusta County.

Chairman Curry stated that Bobby Whitescarver gave the committee the support data on this finding. He stated that there is a recommendation in the report that the Agriculture Industry Council provide input on state and federal programs in Augusta County.

Ms. Hamilton stated that some of the programs have been productive.

Mr. Howdysshell stated that the finding should be omitted.

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**Finding # 60**

Federal programs contribute substantial revenue to agriculture production in Augusta County.

Mr. Howdysshell stated that the word substantial should be removed from the finding. He moved that it be approved as amended, which carried unanimously.

**Finding # 61**

Federal programs support agriculture

- Farm Service Agency
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Shenandoah Resource Conservation & Development
- Rural Development
- Forest Service
- Plant and Animal Health
- Agriculture Research Service
- Food stamps
- WIC, school lunches, etc.

Chairman Curry stated that there is no recommendation under this finding. He stated that he is not sure if he has all of the programs listed.

Ms. Shiflett stated that these should be listed under finding #60.

Mr. Howdysshell stated that the programs should be listed in order by contribution.

Ms. Shiflett moved that the finding be combined with #60 and that the money amount be listed for each program. The motion carried unanimously.

**Finding # 62**

The Virginia Outdoors Foundation in Augusta County has conservation easements.

Ms. Hamilton stated that VCC should be included in the finding.

Mr. Stanley stated that the VCC holds some easements.

Chairman Curry asked Mr. Stanley to check that out.

Ms. Hamilton moved that the finding be approved to read: The private foundations hold conservation easements in Augusta County. The motion carried unanimously.

**Recommendation #62a**

The county should create an ordinance that restricts abusive uses of conservation easements.

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Chairman Curry stated that he had a few questions on conservation easements that the County Attorney answered. They are as follows:

**Can the local government enact an ordinance that assures that land with conservation easements stays in production agriculture?**

No. The Open-Space Land Act does not expressly authorize the enactment of such an ordinance. However, a locality does have latitude in the development of its PDR or open-space easement program. A locality, for example, could establish a program which provides for the acquisition of easements only if the real property is used for agricultural purposes, or favors the acquisition of easements on real property used for agricultural purposes over real property used for other purposes. Other localities have established ranking criteria to determine which properties enter their program—use of a property for agricultural purposes might be one such criterion.

The act does authorize the imposition of limitations or affirmative obligations in the easement agreement. Va. Code § 10.1-1700. On the basis of this authority, a locality could attempt to negotiate the inclusion in the easement agreement of a provision which would require the continued use of the real property for agricultural purposes. Careful consideration would be required to determine what uses would qualify as agricultural uses, what exceptions might be permitted (e.g. discontinuation of agricultural uses for a period of time after the death of the property owner), and what consequences would follow from the failure of the property owner to comply with such an affirmative obligation. All of these issues would need to be addressed clearly in the easement agreement.

**What are the loopholes in the conservation easement program that defeat the purpose of preserving land for agriculture use and allow non-farming landowners to use the program to obtain tax breaks?**

The Open-Space Land Act, which authorizes localities to establish PDR or open-space easement programs, is not limited in its purposes to the preservation of land for agricultural use. Rather, it permits the acquisition of easements for the following purposes: “retaining or protecting natural or open-space values of real property, assuring its availability for agricultural, forestal, recreational, or open-space use, protecting natural resources, maintaining or enhancing air or water quality, or preserving the historical, architectural or archaeological aspects of real property.” Va. Code § 10.1-1700.

The act specifically contemplates that easements may be granted by a property owner (including a non-farming landowner) to further any of the permitted purposes. Assuring the availability of real property for agricultural use is only one of the permitted purposes. The conveyance of an easement for any of the permitted purposes entitles the property owner to tax treatment in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code and the state tax code.

It is the tax treatment which has been problematic. Tax credits and deductions for conservation easements are based on appraisals of real property interests to be conveyed to nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies. There have been reports of inaccurate and inflated

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appraisals, which have resulted in substantial tax advantages to property owners. In other instances, conservation easements have been granted to limit the development of real property already subject to development restrictions under local law. Critics have questioned whether tax credits and deductions are appropriate in such circumstances.<sup>1</sup> Although tax treatment and enforcement are matters of state and federal law, a locality could establish program guidelines which would limit, if not preclude, abusive transactions.

Mr. Hewitt moved to approve recommendation #62a. The motion carried unanimously.

**Recommendation #62b**

The local government should explore ways to assure that conservation easements are in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Cobb stated that if the easements are not in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan then they would go before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Hamilton moved to approve recommendation #62b to read: The local government should establish a statement for inclusion in conservation easement agreements that land zoned Exclusive or General Agriculture be encouraged to remain in agriculture production. The motion carried unanimously.

**Recommendation #62c**

The Extension Service should provide farmers with educational programs on conservation easements and assist farmers to determine if the tax benefits are feasible for their operation or if selling tax credits would enhance their farming operation.

Mr. Stanley stated that will take place next Monday.

Mr. Hewitt asked if conservation easements automatically get land use? He asked if the land has to be used for productive agriculture?

Mr. Cobb stated that he will have to find that information out.

Ms. Hamilton stated that if trees are planted then it is considered production.

Ms. Shiflett stated that is considered forestry.

Mr. Bowman moved that the recommendation be approved, which carried unanimously.

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<sup>1</sup> For discussion of these issues, I commend to your attention two articles published in The Washington Post, entitled “Developers Find Payoff in Preservation; Donors Reap Tax Incentive by Giving to Land Trusts, but Critics Fear Abuse of System” (December 21, 2003), and “Developer’s Tax-Credit Donations of Land Scrutinized; State Review Includes 2 ‘Conservation Easements’ Created During Approval of Celebrate Virginia!” (August 1, 2004).

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**Recommendation #62d**

The agricultural and forestal district ordinance should be amended to allow farmers to move from protecting their land via agricultural and forestal districts to conservation easements without penalty. Landowners should be allowed to exit early from an agricultural and forestal district if they obtain a conservation easement within one year.

Chairman Curry stated that this recommendation has to do with a question that he had for the County Attorney. The question and response is as follows:

**How is the best way to allow landowners who have entered into an agricultural and forestal district to pursue a conservation easement? Conservation easements are more permanent and therefore more desirable from a preservation standpoint. Because the land is already protected from development landowners are penalized by not getting a desirable appraisal from their conservation easements?**

One approach would be to negotiate a conservation easement with a property owner, which by its terms would be effective only after a fixed period of time (e.g. 10 days) following the county's approval of the withdrawal of the real property from the agricultural and forestal district. The property owner would then execute and deliver the conservation easement to the county, together with its request to withdraw the real property from the district. This would potentially address two issues. First, it would eliminate the possibility that the property owner might obtain approval of a request to withdraw the real property from the district, but subsequently fail to grant the conservation easement, as desired by the county. Second, given the interval between the withdrawal of the real property from the district and the effective date of the conservation easement, the real property could be valued for tax purposes as of the effective date of the easement. If the task force wishes to pursue this approach, I would like to confer further with tax and appraisal professionals.

Chairman Curry stated that this recommendation has to do with Mr. Byerly and land already being protected in an Agricultural Forestal District and not getting appraised when trying to be placed into a conservation easement.

Mr. Cobb stated that an Agricultural Forestal District protects farmland. He stated that the Agricultural Forestal District is more restrictive than a conservation easement.

Chairman Curry stated that conservation easements are in perpetuity and the Agricultural Forestal District is only for ten years.

Mr. Cobb stated that there is a tax break with conservation easements.

Mr. Hewitt stated that the recommendation should be removed from the report.

Ms. Shiflett stated that land is being protected more through the Agricultural Forestal District.

**Finding # 63**

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Farmers must purchase health insurance as individuals and do not have the advantage of group rates enjoyed by larger organizations.

Chairman Curry stated that there is no support data for this finding.

Ms. Shiflett stated that the health insurance through the Farm Bureau is not easy to get and it is not cheap.

Mr. Cobb stated that the bigger the number of applicants the better the rates will be.

Mr. Bashaw stated that health insurance is very expensive and a lot of farmers cannot afford health insurance.

Chairman Curry stated that farming is a high risk occupation.

Ms. Hamilton moved that the finding be approved, which carried unanimously.

**Recommendation #63a**

A special study group should be convened to explore the feasibility of offering the purchase of group health insurance for the county's farmers.

**Additional Suggestion:**

Farmers and immediate family should get free health care. This would be a significant enticement to encourage continued agricultural endeavors.

Mr. Howdysshell stated that the recommendation should be changed to read: The Agriculture Industrial Council should explore the feasibility of offering the purchase of group health insurance for the county's farmers.

Ms. Shiflett moved the recommendation be approved as amended, which carried unanimously.

Chairman Curry stated that the public meeting will be the second week in December. He stated that the committee has committed to a public meeting for feedback. He stated that the draft should be ready by the end of November. He asked Ms. Frye if the committee should present what they have now to the Board or have the public input meeting?

Ms. Frye stated that the Board can extend the deadline. She stated that the committee should come up with their recommendations and have input from the public. She stated that not meeting the deadline would not be a problem. She stated that the Board is interested in what this committee comes up with.

Mr. Howdysshell stated that the Steering Committee would like to see a copy of the report.

Chairman Curry stated that the report should be given to the Steering Committee after the changes have been made with the draft.

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Chairman Curry stated that the committee will go over the tabled items and approve or remove them from the report.

**Recommendation #1a – Tabled**

The county government should establish a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program for the Exclusive Agriculture zone.

**Additional Suggestion:**

Consider applications in General Agriculture

Various sources of funds should be used for the Purchase of Development Rights.

**Change Recommendation #1a to read:**

**The County government should establish a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program for the Agriculture Conservation Policy Area of the Comprehensive Plan.**

**PDR Subcommittee Suggestion (replace above recommendation):**

Augusta County should establish a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program under the direction of the Director of Agriculture Development and with the leadership and discretion of the Agriculture Industry Council. PDRs should be made available to farming landowners in areas with Exclusive and General Ag Zoning.

The Task Force strongly recommends the inclusion of Installment Purchase Agreements (IPAs) as part of the PDR program.

Augusta County should establish a dedicated and permanent source of funding at an appropriate level to sustain a viable PDR program.

Ms. Shiflett stated that she would like to use the PDR Subcommittee's recommendation.

Mr. Bashaw stated that the money from the land that is being developed by the developers should be applied to PDRs.

Mr. Howdysshell stated that the committee should only make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and leave the fine tuning to staff.

Ms. Hamilton stated that the PDR program will probably not be up and running until the Agriculture Industry Council and the Director of Agriculture Development is up and running. She stated that PDRs will not happen immediately. She stated that it may take years to building the funds for the program.

Ms. Shiflett stated that it took Rockbridge County several years to get their criteria.

Mr. Grove stated that he agrees with Ms. Hamilton. He stated that recommendation #1b is the first priority and then PDRs.

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Mr. Howdysshell stated that PDRs should come under the task for the Director of Agriculture Development.

Ms. Hamilton moved that the PDR Subcommittee's recommendation be approved. Six of the committee members were in favor, two in opposition, and one abstaining from the vote.

**Recommendation #4a – Tabled**

The county government should design and implement sliding scale zoning that limits the number of lots that can be created per boundary of contiguous parcels under common ownership in agriculture zones.

**Recommendation #4b – Tabled**

Augusta should consider time restrictions in their sliding scale zoning code to prevent development from happening all at once.

**Recommendation #4c – Tabled**

The Exclusive Agriculture zoning should be amended to allow one lot to be created every five years if the parcel is over 40 acres. A parcel that is 40 acres or less should not be divided except to family members and the property owner must hold on to it for at least five years (Rockingham County).

**Recommendation #4d – Tabled**

The General Agriculture zoning should be amended to allow one lot to be created every three years as long as the parcel is over six acres. Spousal division rights should be eliminated (Rockingham County)

Mr. Cobb handed out a map of the Agricultural Zoned Parcels in Augusta County. He stated that they are broken down into 2-15 acres and 15-40 acres. He stated that staff took a farm in the County and applied the Clarke County's ordinance. He stated that they came up with the following results:

62.87 acres	3 Single Family Lots
189.98 acres	6 Single Family Lots
20.12 acres	2 Single Family Lots

Mr. Cobb stated that with all of the lots combined which equals 272.97 acres, seven single family lots would be created using Clarke County's ordinance.

Chairman Curry stated that the County Attorney stated that using a contiguous lot rule has had a limited number of court cases and is a grey area.

Mr. Cobb stated that there is a maximum of three acres. He stated that according to the map there are many small parcels that would be cut off.

Chairman Curry stated that he is concerned with using Clarke County's sliding scale because of the amount of lots that would be created.

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Ms. Shiflett stated that under Clarke County's regulations development will occur all at one time.

Chairman Curry stated that the County Attorney suggested that the committee look into cluster zoning. He stated that the County Attorney did provide Loudon County's ordinance to him regarding cluster zoning.

Mr. Hewitt excused himself from the meeting.

Mr. Bowman asked Mr. Cobb his thoughts on the topic.

Mr. Cobb stated that the ordinances can be tightened to eliminate family member exception. He stated that affidavits could be signed when subdividing land.

Ms. Shiflett stated that the recommendations conflict with one another.

Mr. Howdysshell stated that the committee can recommend items to the Board and then staff should work out all of the details.

Ms. Shiflett stated that there are known loopholes with the subdivision ordinance and one of them is the family member exception. She stated that if Augusta County did the sliding scale years ago it may have worked but she is leery of all of the divisions that would occur if they implemented sliding scale.

Ms. Hamilton stated that the committee should ask the Board of Supervisors to tighten up the ordinance and watch for loopholes. She stated that tightening up the ordinance is probably the better way to go.

Mr. Bashaw asked what would happen if the County did away with the family member exception?

Mr. Howdysshell stated that it would hinder the people it was meant to help.

Mr. Cobb stated that staff should work out the details in the ordinance. He stated that they should limit the number of lots in Exclusive and General Agriculture zoned districts. He stated that family member exception should be limited to children. He stated that that staff is needed to create the regulations and make sure that if a lot is being created under family member exception it is kept that way.

Ms. Hamilton asked if the committee could recommend under Exclusive Agriculture sliding scale and in General Agriculture zoning the ordinance be tightened?

Mr. Cobb stated that the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors went through the maps and clustered the zoning together. He stated that Chairman Curry wanted Exclusive Agriculture in his district. He stated that they did not use any criteria and it is not consistent. He

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stated that it is tough to create rules and regulations when the criteria is not consistent. He stated that there are as many lots created in agriculture as in residential. He stated that it is easier to create lots in agriculture than residential. He stated that in residential there is a public hearing that goes before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors when rezoning lots to residential.

Ms. Hamilton stated that the process should be switched to have public hearings on the agriculture land that is being developed.

Chairman Curry stated that a Special Use Permit could do that.

Mr. Bashaw asked if the County could limit the number of lots created in one year?

Mr. Cobb stated no. He stated that alternative septic systems would probably slow down development in agricultural zones.

Mr. Howdysell stated that the Virginia Health Department approves them. He stated that the County can only require the maintenance of the alternative septic systems. He stated that the County does not want to challenge the state.

Mr. Cobb stated that the County can change the ordinance to state that if the land is not on public water and sewer a Special Use Permit would need to be applied for in order to build on the land.

Ms. Hamilton moved that the committee come up with a new recommendation to read: The Board of Supervisors should take the steps necessary to limit the number of residential lots created in agriculture zoned land.

1. Ordinance Revisions to Limit Lots
2. Sliding Scale
3. Cluster Zoning

Mr. Cobb stated that ordinance revisions should include family member exception be limited to children only and boundary line adjustments should be limited.

Ms. Hamilton stated that it is included in the report already. She stated it could be listed in both places.

Ms. Hamilton amended her motion to read: The Board of Supervisors should take the steps necessary to limit the number of residential lots created in agriculture zoned land.

1. Ordinance Revisions to Limit Lots
  - Family Member Exception Be Limited To Children
  - Boundary Line Adjustments
2. Sliding Scale
3. Cluster Zoning

The motion carried unanimously.

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Chairman Curry stated that the committee needs to take action on recommendation #4c and #4d.

Mr. Bashaw stated that General Agriculture should be changed from three years to five years in recommendation #4d.

Ms. Shiflett moved that both recommendations be approved as amended. Three committee members were in favor, four in opposition, and one abstained. The motion failed.

Mr. Bowman moved that the recommendation #4c and #4d read as follows:

**Recommendation #4c**

The Exclusive Agriculture zoning should be amended to allow one lot to be created every five years.

**Recommendation #4d**

The General Agriculture zoning should be amended to allow one lot to be created every three years.

Seven of the committee members were in favor of the motion and one in opposition. The motion carried.

**Recommendation #12b**

The county should establish and publish an ideal prototype for targeted industrial prospects.

Chairman Curry stated that he is leery about publishing that information.

Mr. Howdyshell stated that the ideal prototype is evaluated on the needs of the County.

There was not a motion on recommendation #12b.

**Recommendation #35c**

A Sliding Scale Land Use Taxation program should be initiated on a voluntarily basis in the exclusive agricultural zone and agricultural and forestal districts. The agricultural program coordinator should coordinate the program and maintain documentation that a clear explanation of the program has been provided to the farmer. Rollback taxes should be limited and similar to those currently used for the land use program. Time limits for voluntarily agreeing not to develop should be similar to those currently used in agricultural districts. The sliding scale should benefit farmers in exclusive agriculture zones and agricultural and forestal districts to the maximum extent allowed by the law.

Chairman Curry stated that the statement on the rollback taxes should be omitted.

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Mr. Bashaw stated that Exclusive Agriculture should be omitted and replaced with agricultural zones. He stated that it should not only be limited to Exclusive Agriculture.

Chairman Curry stated that this is an option that the County has not applied yet.

Mr. Bashaw moved that the recommendation be approved to read: A Sliding Scale Land Use Taxation program should be initiated on a voluntarily basis in agricultural zones. The Director of Agriculture Development should coordinate the program and maintain documentation that a clear explanation of the program has been provided to the farmer. Time limits for voluntarily agreeing not to develop should be similar to those currently used in agricultural districts. The sliding scale should benefit farmers in agricultural zones to the maximum extent allowed by the law. Seven of the committee members were in favor with one abstaining from the vote.

#### **Prioritize Topics**

Chairman Curry stated that the committee should give staff an idea of the order of topics that are the committee's priority.

Ms. Hamilton stated some of the top items are:

1. Agriculture Industry Council and the Director of Agriculture Development
2. Ordinances Changes
3. PDR
4. Land Use Six Year Revalidation

Ms. Shiflett stated that sliding scale should be listed.

Ms. Hamilton stated that when loopholes appear the ordinances should be changed.

Chairman Curry stated that the Comprehensive Plan should target agricultural and rural conservation districts.

Ms. Hamilton stated that the County government should aggressively lobby for a state program that provides low or no interest capital grants and tax incentives for elderly farmers to pass their property along to prospective future farmers. (Recommendation #27a)

Mr. Bashaw stated that sliding scale land use is very important.

Chairman Curry asked if there were any other findings or recommendations to be added to the report?

Mr. Bashaw stated he would like to add that the Board of Supervisors take advantage of any opportunity to control development by controlling where new roads go.

Chairman Curry stated that is already mentioned in the report.

Chairman Curry read a new finding that was suggested:

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**Finding #52.3**

There are numerous statewide agricultural events held throughout the state which draw attendance and participation from Virginia and other Mid-Atlantic states:

- Virginia Beef Expo
- Virginia Cattleman's Convention
- VA-NC Shepherd's Symposium
- Breeders Shows
- VA State Dairymen's Convention
- Numerous Special Breeding Livestock Shows
- Virginia Agriculture Expo

Ms. Hamilton asked Mr. Stanley to provide more events.

Ms. Hamilton moved that the finding be approved. Seven committee members were in favor and one abstained from the vote.

Chairman Curry stated that the recommendation that was suggested to go with the finding is as follows: Augusta County should build a facility to host agricultural events which would draw tourists' dollars to the area and establish Augusta County as the showcase for agriculture in Virginia.

Vice Chairman Schooley asked if she meant a facility other than Expo?

Ms. Hamilton stated that there is not a place in Augusta County for all of the events to take place at.

Mr. Howdyshell asked how much space would be needed?

Ms. Hamilton stated that Washington County's facility is small but works well.

Mr. Howdyshell stated that Rockingham County's fairgrounds have ample space. He stated that if another facility is built that means that another farm is being developed.

Vice Chairman Schooley stated that perhaps money should be used to expand Expo.

Ms. Hamilton stated that she disagrees.

Chairman Curry asked if there was a motion to approve the recommendation?

Ms. Hamilton moved that the recommendation be approved. One committee member was in favor with seven being in opposition. The motion failed.

Chairman Curry stated that the next item on the agenda is to discuss meeting dates and the public meeting.

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Chairman Curry stated that the second Thursday in December may be a good date for the public meeting. He stated that the committee will not meet again until the public meeting. He stated that the committee will not meet on November 17<sup>th</sup>. He stated that staff should advertise the public meeting.

Mr. Bashaw stated that the report should be placed on the website.

Mr. Stanley stated that he would be happy to send the report to his mailing list and announce the meeting.

The committee voted on the public meeting date being December 8<sup>th</sup>, which carried unanimously.

Chairman Curry stated that there will be another meeting on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Chairman