

NORTH CAROLINA
RANDOLPH COUNTY

RANDOLPH COUNTY VOLUNTARY
AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD

In the matter of:

Proposed Condemnation of Allen)
Property)

FINAL REPORT

THIS MATTER coming to be heard by public hearing on January 16, 2024 before the Randolph County Voluntary Agricultural District Advisory Board pursuant to N.C.G.S. §106-740 and Article IX of the Randolph County Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance. Chairman Kemp Davis and the following Board members were present: Kemp Davis, David Allen, Bernard Beck, Ken Austin, Clifford Elliott, Bill Scotton, Lisa Holder, Steven King, Linda York, Thomas Lawrence, Joe Allen, Roger Pritchard, Hope Haywood, Chastity Elliott, Cooperative Extension Director Kenneth Sherin and Associate County Attorney Aimee Scotton were also present. Also present were: Dustin Johnson, representing Carolina Land Acquisitions and Vickie Miller HDR Engineering (Mr. Johnson and Ms. Miller were representing DOT); David Allen, owner of the subject property; and members of the public, many of them members of a Voluntary Agricultural District or an Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District. The foregoing statute and ordinance provisions require that no State or local public agency or governmental unit may formally initiate any action to condemn any interest in qualifying farmland within a voluntary agricultural district or an enhanced voluntary agricultural district until such agency has requested the local agricultural advisory board to hold a public hearing on the proposed condemnation.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (hereinafter "DOT") has proposed condemnation of portions of three tracts of property, owned by David Lee Allen. These properties are contained in an Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District. The portions proposed to be condemned by DOT are:

- From an approximately 6.93 acre tract (Identified by PIN number 8717069331) owned by David Lee Allen, two separate areas of Fee Simple right-of-way (.058 and .044 acres respectively) totaling .102 acres.

- From an approximately 40.4 acre tract (Identified by PIN number 8717153169) owned by David Lee Allen, two separate areas of Fee Simple right-of-way (.050 and .539 acres respectively) totaling .589 acres; and a Temporary Construction Easement totaling .846 acres. The Temporary Construction Easement will expire upon completion and acceptance of the project by NCDOT.

- From an approximately 35.93 acre tract (Identified by PIN number 8717046253) owned by David Lee Allen, one area of Fee Simple right-of-way totaling .901 acres; and two separate areas of Temporary Construction Easements (.279 and .023 acres respectively) totaling .302

acres. The Temporary Construction Easements will expire upon completion and acceptance of the project by NCDOT.

On January 3, 2024, DOT requested a public hearing on this matter before the Randolph County Voluntary Agricultural District Advisory Board (hereinafter the "Board") in accordance with the aforementioned statute and ordinance provisions. Notice of the public hearing was published in a newspaper of general circulation in Randolph County (hereinafter the "County") and the public hearing was held at 6:00 p.m. in the Randolph County Cooperative Extension Office on January, 16, 2024. The purpose of this hearing was to consider the following questions with regards to the proposed condemnation:

1. Has the need for the Project been satisfactorily established by DOT? This inquiry includes a review of any fiscal impact analysis conducted by DOT.
2. Are there alternatives for completing the Project that have less impact and are less disruptive to the agricultural activities of the District?

At the public hearing, DOT was invited to present evidence in support of its Project and the proposed condemnation. Members of the public were also invited to present any evidence and/or concerns regarding the proposed condemnation. The DOT representatives, Mr. Allen, and two members of the public spoke. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Board met to consider the above questions and made Preliminary Findings and Recommendations. These Preliminary Findings were made available for public inspection and comment for a period of 10 days as required by the County Ordinance. Two members of the public submitted written comments, and these are attached to this final report as Attachment A. The Board then met on January 30, 2024 to consider the additional information contained in these written comments and to produce the findings and recommendations that follow.

FINDINGS

1. **Has the need for the project been satisfactorily established by DOT?**

At the public hearing, the DOT stated that the purpose of the project was to control traffic coming in for the Toyota Site. No additional evidence was presented by DOT to establish the need for this project. Mr. Allen stated that the need for two interchanges had been established in 2018 when Toyota initially looked at the site for an automobile manufacturing facility. Toyota ultimately chose a different site for their automobile manufacturing facility. In 2021, Toyota chose this site for a battery manufacturing facility, a facility that is smaller in scope than an automobile manufacturing facility and that does not precipitate the same level of ancillary development. Never the less, two interchanges remained the plan, whether two are actually needed or not.

2. **Are there alternatives for completing the Project that have less impact on the agricultural activities of the District?**

The Board finds that there was no evidence submitted by DOT regarding the existence of alternatives with less impact on the agricultural activities of the District. At the hearing, DOT presented evidence documenting the steps that it took in planning this Project. In

summary, DOT first determined the need for the project (see above). Once that need was established, environmental and other studies were conducted that documented the presence of VAD and Enhanced VAD properties. These studies were done in order to identify the least environmentally damaging practical alternative. Furthermore, Mr. Allen and his wife presented evidence that he personally informed DOT representatives that his property was in an Enhanced VAD. The DOT contract engineer testified that the factors that were considered in making determination of the route include, but are not limited to, environmental issues, human impact, fiscal matters, and wetlands. She did not list VAD status.

In the written comments submitted by Bobby and Dottie Ferguson, Paragraph 4 speaks to the possibility that other alternative routes may have been available to DOT. This comment speaks to a right-of-way from NC HWY 421 on to Brown's Meadow Road. It also speaks to the idea that right-of-way may have been obtained to directly link Ramseur-Julian Road to Old 421 via Brown's Meadow Road.

The taking of VAD properties is supposed to be a last resort. However, there is no indication that the VAD status of any property played any role whatsoever in the placement of these interchanges. DOT presented nothing to this board regarding the consideration of VAD status. In fact, no DOT employee even bothered to show up to this hearing. Instead, they sent a contracted engineer and a property acquisition contractor. Given the lack of evidence submitted by DOT in this regard, the Board finds it impossible to determine whether or not there are alternatives for completing the Project that have less impact on the agricultural activities of the District. To the best of our knowledge, public input in regard to this matter has been severely lacking.

3. **Other concerns and considerations?**

The Randolph County Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance was passed in 2002 to promote agricultural and environmental values and the general welfare of the County and, more specifically, to increase identity and pride in the agricultural community and its way of life, to encourage the economic health of agriculture, and **to increase protection from non-farm development and other negative impacts** on properly managed farms. This Ordinance was passed pursuant to authority granted by the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Enabling Act (N.C.G.S. §§ 106-735 through 106-744). State law provides further protection to qualifying farmland by putting in place the requirement that, prior to instituting a condemnation proceeding involving said farmland, a State or local public agency or governmental unit must request a public hearing on the matter before the local agricultural advisory board. This requirement carries with it the necessary implication that the legislature intended for public agencies and governmental units to consider the impact on agricultural activities **before** making decisions involving the condemnation of property. In fact, the existence of the requirement that, following the public hearing, this Board must issue a recommendation to DOT regarding the proposed condemnation indicates that the intention of the law was for this recommendation to be given serious consideration. However, the fact that this hearing occurs so late in DOT's planning process removes any chance that this hearing is taken seriously. By requiring the hearing to occur only before a

condemnation proceeding is filed, the legislature has ensured that, by the time the hearing takes place, DOT has invested too much time and money in the chosen route to consider a change. All across America, farmland is being ravaged to make way for new development with little or no regard to its importance or necessity. When protections are put in place, they must be heeded if they are to be of any value whatsoever. However, it has become apparent that the protections that are in place are inadequate.

Both of the written comments submitted echo the VAD Board's frustration with the process and its inadequacy given the timing of the public hearing. There is simply no chance that the project's route will change at this point after significant resources and dollars have been spent pursuing the current route. Given Alan Ferguson's comments as to the futility of his even taking the time to submit his written comments, this Board wonders how many more people would have commented had this hearing taken place earlier in the process when their opinions might have actually made a difference.

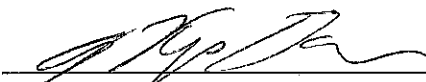
THEREFORE, based on the foregoing preliminary findings, DOT is hereby **RECOMMENDED** as follows:

Although the necessity of some access to the Toyota site has been established, there has been no evidence that the selected mode of accomplishment is the feasible alternative that has the least negative impact on the agricultural activities of the District. In fact, no evidence has been submitted to establish that the agricultural activities of the District were given any consideration whatsoever in choosing how this Project would be conducted. Given that, it is the recommendation of this Board that DOT refrain from the condemnation of the Subject Property, conduct a study as to the agricultural impact of the other possible alternatives and reconsider the chosen route. Furthermore, this Board respectfully requests that, in the future, DOT notify the VAD Board early in its planning process when a selected route appears to impact VAD property.

The Board intends to explore a re-examination of the legislation requiring this hearing with our locally elected legislators. The Board would like to see a requirement that the VAD Board be included earlier in the process to ensure that VAD properties are afforded the protection that the statute envisions.

Submitted this 30th day of January, 2024.

By:



J. Kemp Davis, Chairperson
Randolph County Voluntary Agricultural
District Advisory Board

To Randolph County NC Agricultural Board
1003 S. Fayetteville St.
Asheboro, NC 27203

January 22, 2024

With regard to the public hearing on January 16, 2024 in Asheboro concerning the proposed condemnation proceedings by NCDOT pertaining to the property of David Allen and Sharon Allen, I submit the following comments and documents:

1. According to the Randolph County GIS maps, the Allen property is clearly marked as a Voluntary Agricultural District property, in this case an Enhanced VAD. [\(Exhibit A\)](#) Developers should be required to notify governmental agencies of planned projects PRIOR to major expenditures, and to LISTEN to the community input BEFORE pouring sums of money into the project. The current notification process appears to guarantee “forgiveness” rather than permission. By the time condemnation proceedings are initiated, it is a proverbial avalanche instead of a snowball.
2. The Randolph County Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance was passed in 2002 by authority granted by the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Enabling Act (N.C.G.S. § 106-735 through 106-744), per the notes from the January 16, 2024 public hearing. The purpose of that ordinance and legislation was to preserve agricultural land and prevent opportunistic development at the expense of the agricultural community that feeds us. To quote NC Commissioner of Agriculture Steve Troxler, speaking several years ago at a community meeting regarding development of the Guilford County Prison Farm, “Hungry people are MEAN people”. It resonated with the audience then, and apparently with Guilford County officials who turned down that planned project. See “Notes” for further information regarding loss of farmland across the country.
3. Based on these documents, I submit that the NCDOT SHOULD have been aware of the presence of the VAD and EVAD. To have ignored such classification amounts, at the very least, to a lack of due diligence on the part of the NC DOT.
4. Regarding the statement made as to whether alternatives were available, attached is a copy of the document showing the NC DOT purchased a right of way in 1969 from H.B. Wicker and his wife Margaret, and a plat showing the presence of the right of way from NC Hwy 421 on to Browns Meadow Road. [\(Exhibit B\)](#) The cost of that right of way in 1969 was \$2500. In today’s dollars, it would amount to \$20,901. It would appear that those funds were wasted. The community was aware of the intention of limiting access along Hwy 421 as traffic increased, and many access points were marked as “temporary access”. The purchase of the right of way across the Wicker property would seem to indicate that NC DOT considered that a very viable option at the time.

Why would NC DOT ignore its own inventory of access options and pursue further degradation of the formerly pristine area that is now the site of the Toyota megasite? Further, right of way access supposedly was obtained to directly link Ramseur-Julian Road to old 421 via Browns Meadow Road. The ten-day comment period on the current hearing did not permit time to research ALL the data. Those old country folks appear to have known a lot, but no one would listen.

5. While the percentage of land NCDOT proposes to condemn is a fraction of the total property owned by the Allens, neighbors of the surrounding properties can vouch for the fact that even though the construction may not even be on your property, the IMPACT will be felt by everyone surrounding the construction area. The disruption will be far greater than the implied percentage of condemned property, not to mention the “temporary construction easements” which will expire only when the NC DOT has accepted the project as complete. All of us have witnessed how long it takes to complete ANY highway project. This is not an insignificant “add-on”. A finger is only a small part of your body, but its loss would have an impact.

In summary, as a former resident within the megasite footprint, it seems that “transparency” continues to be a missing piece of the planning process. We learned after much research & experience that public comment periods usually come AFTER decisions have been made. We were very naïve as to how development takes place. It was quite an education to learn that zoning boards and planning boards tend to be made up of real estate brokers, developers, business owners who would benefit from certain projects. Farmland gets tax deferrals for a reason. It doesn’t bring in a lot of income when used for agricultural purposes, but it is necessary to sustain life! Thank God for the folks who serve our country by farming! While forgiveness truly is easier to obtain than permission, it would behoove some of the pre-planners to spend some time with the “clueless souls” they need to uproot to plant their latest project. There was significant information provided by former residents to the real estate agents who chipped away at the megasite community. Tidbits such as the amount of granite that was on the site, the presence of significant Native American artifacts, a slave cemetery on the site, and the existence of the right of way through the Wicker land was well known. Money turns heads, and people look away from what they don’t want to see.

My final point is this. An unbelievable amount of money has been spent on luring major companies to North Carolina. Our own land was listed on the North Carolina Department of Commerce website for \$15,000 per acre without our knowledge, and AFTER we had told them we had no interest in selling. Seems it was being marketed to foreign and domestic companies who might be interested in locating in North Carolina. Transparency and accountability are scarce, if not nonexistent in much of government today. We can do better than that. Maybe a good way to start is to link access to food to an individual’s role in supporting agriculture. Maybe we should wink here but we need to put TEETH in legislation to make it effective!

Full disclosure: We had to move out of Randolph County and were not happy about being displaced. We still ache for the friends and neighbors who are dealing with the fallout of this “progress”. EVERY PROJECT should be considered within the context of “risk vs. benefit”. Use the resources at hand (such as EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY ACCESS) instead of displacing 90+ year old citizens, leaving many senior citizens to “suck up” the dregs of progress that robbed their retirement years of much of the joy they had anticipated in their later years. In the Allen’s case, they could claim “we already CONTRIBUTED!” because the grandfather who owned the farm lost much of it to the construction of the new 421. SOME DAY, those planners, movers & shakers will appear before a judge who KNOWS the whole story, and justice will be served. In the meantime, we can only hope our representatives who influence such matters try to ascertain facts BEFORE permitting projects to proceed. Beware those who feed you only what THEY WANT the public to know.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of our former neighbors, who still remain very close to our hearts. Thank you for your service to the citizens of Randolph County, and indirectly, to all the citizens of the state of North Carolina by keeping the value of our farming and ranching citizens at the forefront of your efforts.

Sincerely yours,

Bobby & Dottie Ferguson

336-263-2209

336-263-5936

Randolph County, NC



EYAD

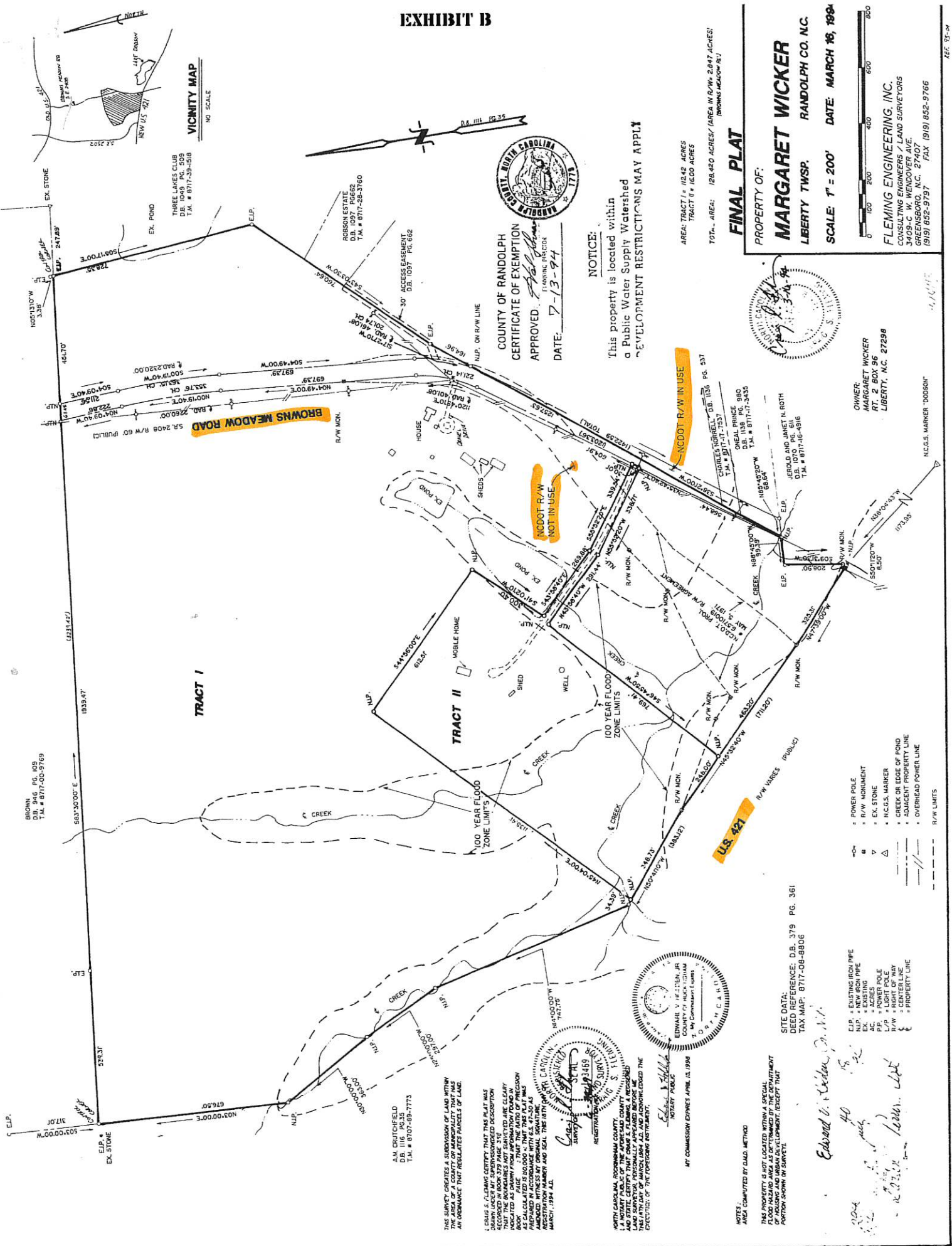
EYAD



Disclaimer: This map was compiled from recorded deeds, plats, and other public records and data. Users of this data are hereby notified that the aforementioned public information sources should be consulted for verification of the information. Randolph County, its agents and employees make no warranty as to the accuracy of the information on this map.

Map Scale
1 inch = 2257 feet
 1/22/2024

EXHIBIT B



VICINITY MAP
NO SCALE

FINAL PLAT

PROPERTY OF:
MARGARET WICKER
LIBERTY TOWNSHIP
RANDOLPH CO. N.C.

SCALE: 1" = 200'
DATE: MARCH 16, 1994

FLEMING ENGINEERING, INC.
CONSULTING ENGINEERS / LAND SURVEYORS
3409-C W. WENDOVER AVE.
GREENSBORO, N.C. 27409
(919) 652-9797 FAX (919) 652-9766



COUNTY OF RANDOLPH
CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION
APPROVED: _____
DATE: 7-13-94

NOTICE:
This property is located within
a Public Water Supply Watershed
DEVELOPMENT RESTRICTIONS MAY APPLY

AREA: TRACT I = 112.42 ACRES
TRACT II = 16.00 ACRES
TOTAL AREA: 128.42 ACRES (AREA IN R/W 2.847 ACRES)
(BROWNS MEADOW R/W)

OWNER:
MARGARET WICKER
RT. 2 BOX 56
LIBERTY, N.C. 27298



- POWER POLE
- EXISTING IRON PIPE
- EXISTING IRON PIPE
- EXISTING IRON PIPE
- EX. STONE
- N.C.G.S. MARKER
- CREEK OR EDGE OF POND
- ADJACENT PROPERTY LINE
- OVERHEAD POWER LINE
- R/W LIMITS



SITE DATA:
DEED REFERENCE: DB. 379 PG. 361
TAX MAP: 8717-08-8806

NOTES:
AREA COMPUTED BY OLD METHOD

THIS PROPERTY IS NOT LOCATED WITHIN A SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, EXCEPT THAT PORTION SHOWN IN SURVEY.

Edward G. Crutchefield
40
15
1204
1204

FE 8/14 3-16-94 Rev. PG. 3-22-N

H. B. Wicker

241-18-8351

RIGHT OF WAY AGREEMENT

8

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

STATE PROJECT 6.5710019

F. A. PROJECT None

PARCEL NO. 18

COUNTY OF Randolph

THIS AGREEMENT entered into this the 9 day of January 1969

by and between the STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION, an agency of the State of North Carolina,

and H. B. Wicker and Wife Margaret S. Wicker and Clatis J. Wicker owner of a life estate in the property, Liberty, N.C.

the undersigned, owners of that certain property located on State Highway Project 6.5710019, recognizing the benefits to said property by reason of the construction of the proposed highway along a survey line established upon their lands, and in consideration of the use of a portion of their lands for highway purposes and the sum of \$2500.00 Dollars to be paid to the property owners by the Highway Commission, do hereby grant to the State Highway Commission the right of way for said highway as delineated upon the plans for said project and as hereinafter described, and releases the Commission from all claims for damages by reason of said right of way across the lands of the undersigned, and of the past and future use thereof by the Commission, its successors and assigns, for all purposes for which the Commission is authorized by law to subject such right of way, said property being in Randolph County, Liberty Township, bounded on the north by the lands of [unclear] Recorded in Deed Book 397, Page 361, on the east by Randolph County Registry, on the south by [unclear] on the west by [unclear]. The right of way, along with special provisions, if any, is described as follows:

Beginning at a point in Survey Line Y-12 (Secondary Road 2408) said point being Survey Station 11 + 00; thence in an eastern direction 30 feet to a point, said point being 30 feet east of and normal to Survey Station 11 + 00, Line Y-12 (Secondary Road 2408); thence along the proposed eastern right of way line of Line Y-12 (Secondary Road 2408) in a southerly direction with a straight line to a point, said point being 50 feet east of and normal to Survey Station 12 + 59.28, Line Y-12 (Secondary Road 2408); thence continuing with said proposed eastern right of way line of Line Y-12 (Secondary Road 2408) and running at all points 50 feet east of and normal to Survey Line Y-12 to its point of intersection with the dividing line between Norrell and Wicker, said point being 50 feet southeast of and normal to Survey Line Y-12 (Secondary Road 2408); thence along said dividing line between Wicker and Norrell in a southwesterly direction to its point of intersection with the existing westerly right of way line of Secondary Road 2408, said point being 30 feet northwest of and normal to Survey Line Y-15 (Secondary Road 2408); thence northeasterly along said existing western right of way line of Y-15 (Secondary Road 2408) to its point of intersection with the proposed southern right of way line of Y-12 said point being 50 feet southeast of and normal to Survey Station 19 + 77.06 Line Y-12; thence along said proposed southern right of way line of Y-12 South 57 deg. 30 min. West to a point, said point being 50 feet southeast of and normal to Survey Station 25 + 00, Line Y-12; thence continuing along said proposed southern right of way line of Y-12 with a straight line in a southwesterly direction to its point of intersection with the dividing line between Murphy and Wicker, said point being 155 feet southeast of and normal to Survey Station 29 + 38.83, Line Y-12; thence along said dividing line between Murphy and Wicker in a western direction to a point, said point being the common corner between Wicker and Murphy; thence continuing along the dividing line between

Drawn by [unclear] Checked by [unclear] BY [unclear]

R/W 2-C-D

GRANTOR Index to Real Estate Conveyances — Randolph County, N. C.

24

COIT FAMILY NAME INDEX No. 153817 © 1969
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Mfr. Coit Patent Index Systems

Open at Proper Tab according to First Letter or Letters of Name and refer to Buff Sub-Index sheet for page reference.

REG. U. S. PAT. OFFICE
Randolph County Index, Since 1885
An Identifying Trade Mark

(A)

Date of Inst.	GRANTORS				GRANTEES	Kind of Instrument	Book	Page	BRIEF DESCRIPTION FOR IDENTIFICATION ONLY CORRECTNESS NOT GUARANTEED
	SURNAME	GIVEN NAMES ABCDEFGHIJ	GIVEN NAMES JKLMNO	GIVEN NAMES PQRSTUWXYZ					
1965	Wicker	Flossie Brothers			Trustees for Macedonia Baptist Church	Deed	902	366	Tract
1965	Whicker		Minnie T.	Russell	Edith T.-Waybright Robbins	Deed	906	8	Lots #195/197-Parrish-Ross Sub.
1965	Wicker	Dorothy O. Frank Franklin		William M.	Carolina Power & Light Company	Easement & R/W	903	515	
1965	Wicker		Mary Farlow		Graham Production Credit Assn.	D/T	924	583	2 acres
1965	Wicker	Eula		W. A.	Richard H. Plummer	d/t	928	497	Tracts CANCELLED
1966	Wicker	Mary James Wade Judith J.			Francis MacArthur Wicker	Deed	931	406	5.12 acres
1967	Wicker	Brenda P. Francis M.			Daisy Mize-J. D. Martin	Deed	946	474	parcel
1967	Wicker	Donald Harper Eunice Scotton			Carolina Power & Light Co.	R/W	926	495	
1967	Wicker, et al	Donald Harper Eunice Hattis Scotton			W. O. McGibony, Trustee	D/T	956	243	40 Acres CANCELLED
1967	Wicker	Franklin R.	Mary F.		Archie L. Smith, Trustee	D/T	956	312	40 Acres CANCELLED
1957	Wicker	Flossie	M.		G. E. Miller, Trustee	D/T	959	38	Tract
1967	Wicker, et al		Louis Jo Anne		Lewis Wicker	Deed	953	297	9 Acres
1967	Wicker	Frank	Mary Farlow		A. Alton-Mary Ruth Lucas	Deed	953	358	134.02 Acres CANCELLED
CANCELLED		Gertrude Keller Clatie I. H. B.			Archie L. Smith, Trustee	D/T	963	442	2 Acres
1969	Wicker		Margaret S.		Eugene B. Graham, III, Trustee	d/t	965	141	Lots #37/44-J. Floyd Deaton
					State Highway Commission	R/W	989	35	

NOTES

- \$2500 paid in 1969 for Wicker right of way to Browns Meadow would be \$20,901 adjusted for inflation, in 2023. Annual inflation over this period was 4.01%.

How many acres of farmland are lost a year?

- That's almost 1 million acres of agricultural land every year. Another factor contributing to the loss of farmland is estate settlements of farmland owners. Around 40% of the nation's farmland is owned by people over 65, so up to 370 million acres of farmland could change hands in the next 20 years.

[Surface Pressure: U.S. Losing Farmland at Alarming Rate](https://www.agweb.com/news/business/farmland/surface-pressure-us-losing-farmland-alarming-rate)

www.agweb.com/news/business/farmland/surface-pressure-us-losing-farmland-alarming-rate

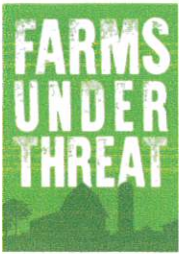
<https://theworld.org/stories/2020-08-07/us-lost-11-million-acres-farmland-development-past-2-decades>

<https://www.morningagclips.com/n-c-ranks-second-in-nation-in-potential-agricultural-land-lost-by-2040/>

N.C. ranks second in nation in potential agricultural land lost by 2040

Based on current development rates, 1.1 million acres of ag lands will be converted

PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2022



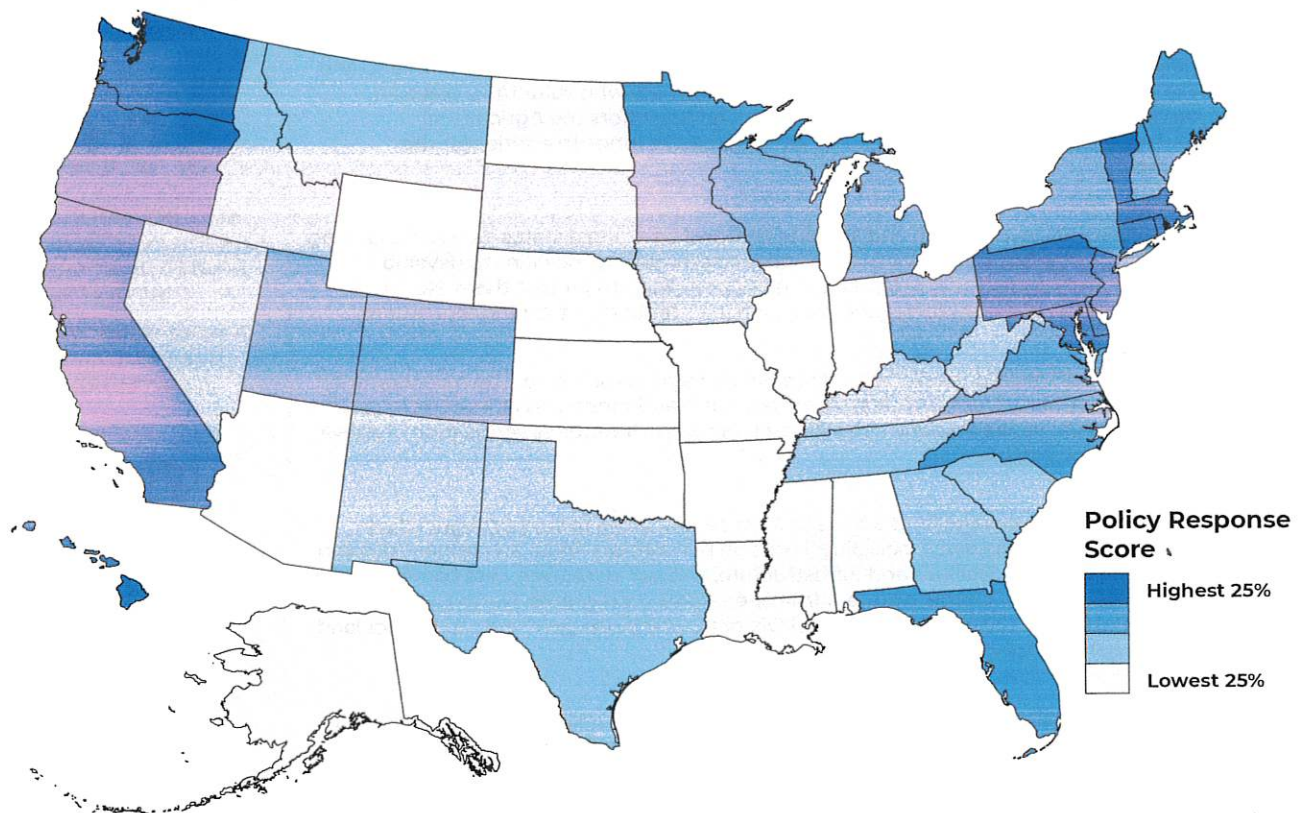
THE STATE OF THE STATES

Agricultural Land Protection Scorecard Highlight Summary

North Carolina


Farms Under Threat: The State of the States mapped agricultural land conversion and evaluated state policy responses. The Agricultural Land Protection (ALP) Scorecard evaluated six policies and programs that protect agricultural land from development, promote farm viability, and facilitate the transfer of agricultural land. American Farmland Trust (AFT) conducted research between 2016 and 2019 and used quantitative and qualitative factors to compare approaches that are tied to the land in all 50 states. Results for each policy are summarized in *policy scoresheets*; scores from the scoresheets are combined into Policy Response Scores in the *ALP Scorecard*. The map shows state Policy Response Scores by quartile.

EXTENT OF STATE POLICY RESPONSES TO THE THREAT OF CONVERSION



<p>RELATIVE CONVERSION THREAT</p> <p>HIGH</p> <p>North Carolina scored among the top states for the conversion of agricultural land to urban and highly developed (UHD) and low-density residential (LDR) uses.</p>	<p>RELATIVE POLICY RESPONSE</p> <p>MEDIUM</p> <p>North Carolina scored in the middle of all states for policies and programs that address the threat of conversion.</p>	<p>HOW IS THIS STATE DOING?</p> <p>North Carolina is in an orange box because its conversion threat is higher than its policy response, relative to other states. Learn more at www.farmland.org/farmsunderthreat</p>	<p>POLICY RESPONSE High Medium Low</p> <p>CONVERSION THREAT Low Medium High</p>
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HOW NORTH CAROLINA STACKS UP

North Carolina Score 

Median Score 

Top Score 



Policy scoresheet scores: Final policy scores compared to the median and the highest scores achieved by all states that have implemented each policy. Even among high-response states, no state received a perfect score for any individual policy; every state has the potential to do more.

ABOUT THE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Purchase of agricultural conservation easement (PACE) programs permanently protect farmland and ranchland from non-farm development. They compensate landowners who voluntarily place an agricultural conservation easement on their property. North Carolina offers the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, which provides funds to entities for the purchase of easements.

LAND-USE PLANNING

Land-use planning policies manage growth and stabilize the land base. Most states delegate planning authority to local governments, but some play a more active role, requiring localities to develop comprehensive plans, identify agricultural resources, and adopt policies to protect them. North Carolina requires the adoption of a local comprehensive plan in order to enact zoning regulations.

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

Property tax relief (PTR) programs reduce property taxes paid on agricultural land. The most common approach is use-value assessment (UVA), which assesses farmland and ranchland at its current use value. North Carolina administers the Present-Use Valuation Program. It requires verification of active agricultural use in order to be eligible.

AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS

Agricultural district programs encourage landowners to form special areas to support agriculture. Farmers receive protections and incentives including: limits on annexation, limits on eminent domain, protection from the siting of public facilities and infrastructure, and tax incentives. Less common is requiring district enrollment to participate in state-administered PACE programs. North Carolina authorizes Voluntary & Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts, which use covenants to restrict land to agricultural use for a period of several years.

FARM LINK

Farm Link programs connect land seekers with landowners who want their land to stay in agriculture. Administered by public or private entities, they offer a range of services and resources, from online real estate postings to technical assistance, trainings, and educational resources. AFT only included publicly supported programs. North Carolina's publicly supported program is NC Farmlink.

STATE LEASING

State leasing programs make state-owned land available to farmers and ranchers for agriculture. Sometimes their primary purpose is to make land available for agriculture. More often, agricultural use is secondary to generating income for a public purpose or protecting wildlife habitat.

NORTH CAROLINA: KEY FACTS

\$0.06

AMOUNT INVESTED PER CAPITA IN PERMANENTLY PROTECTING FARMLAND THROUGH 2017

Among states with PACE

Smallest (TX): < \$0.01
Largest (DE): \$6.03

0.23

ACRES DEVELOPED PER NEW PERSON ADDED TO THE STATE'S POPULATION BETWEEN 1982 AND 2012

Fewest (CT/MA): 0.11
Most (ND): 4.07

✓ YES

PENALTY IMPOSED WHEN LAND IS WITHDRAWN FROM PTR PROGRAM

States w/ penalty: 29
States w/o penalty: 21



Farms Under Threat is American Farmland Trust's multi-year initiative to document the status of and threats to U.S. farmland and ranchland and to identify policy solutions to ensure the protection and conservation of America's diverse agricultural landscape. For more information about AFT, visit www.farmland.org. If you have any questions about the analysis methods or would like access to data, please contact AFT's Farmland Information Center: www.farmlandinfo.org or (800) 370-4879.



Explore our scorecard and scoresheets at www.farmland.org/farmsunderthreat

NC FarmLink

[Home](#) » **NC Farmland Loss**

NC Farmland Loss

Find this page at:

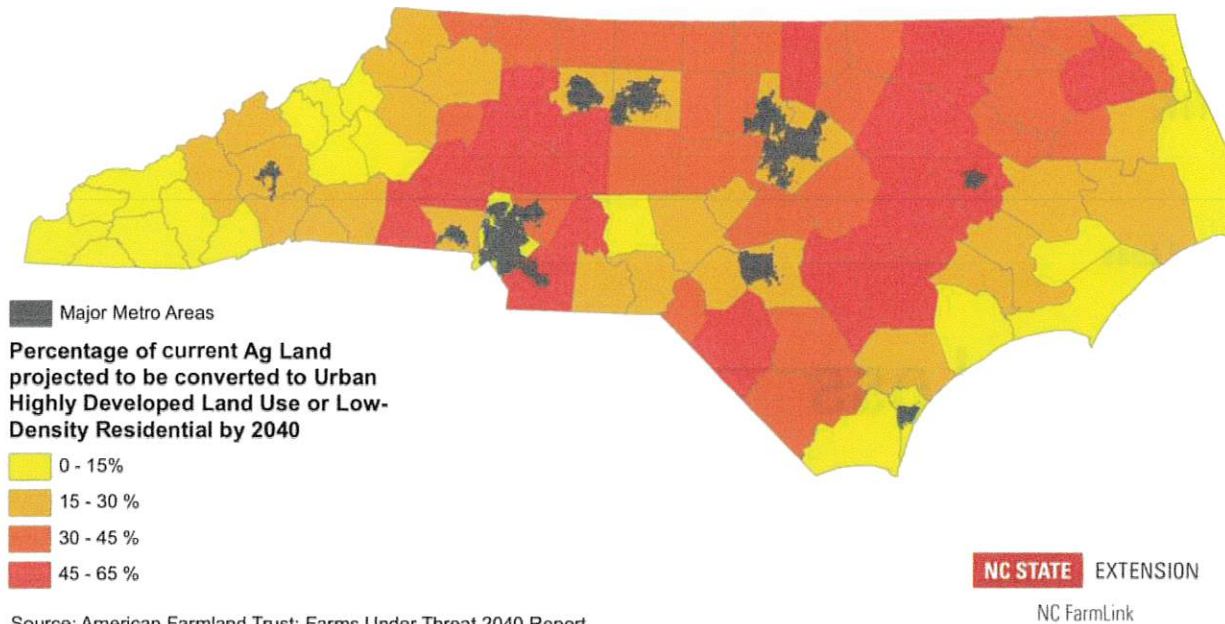
go.ncsu.edu/readext?693426

› [en Español](#)

North Carolinians love the phrase – Murphy to Manteo – to describe their beloved state that spans the Coastal Plain, Piedmont, and Mountain physiographic regions and all the associated ecosystems. North Carolina is blessed with a broad range of agricultural growing environments and it grows major row crops like corn, wheat, and soybeans as well as hundreds of horticultural crops including vegetables, fruits, berries, and landscape plants on 5,947,713 acres in its 100 counties from Cherokee to Currituck!

But by 2040, that acreage will be reduced to 4,750,413, a loss of 1,197,300 acres, if estimates are correct in a recent report by American Farmland Trust (AFT), [Farms Under Threat 2040](#). The report also shares information on the location and quality of agricultural land, the threats posed by development, and policies that can help protect farmland and ranchland. This first-of-its-kind assessment was created by American Farmland Trust and Conservation Science Partners to empower farmers, citizens, and policymakers to protect the agricultural land base. We invite you to explore the information presented here and then take action by advocating for farms and farmers in your county or region. The following map shows where AFT projects the highest rate of farmland loss in NC in the next two decades.

Projected Farmland Loss, 2016 - 2040



Source: American Farmland Trust: Farms Under Threat 2040 Report

North Carolina estimates for farmland loss are ranked 2nd in the whole United States, just behind Texas. Loss is estimated to be close to 1.2 million acres under the 'Business as Usual' development scenario. The reports shares how that can be reduced by the 'Better Built Cities' development scenario.

How to Get County Information

To get county data to share with your local community, elected officials, or for a school report, go to [Farms Under Threat 2040 Web Mapping Tool and State Summaries](#) . You will see a short pop up introduction to the website. Read it and then scroll down and click 'close'. Then Zoom in on the map to the state of North Carolina and click in your county of interest. You will see your county specific data on the right. Scroll down to see the proportion and acreage of the county's best ag land that will be converted under the 'Business as Usual' scenario.

For a deeper dive into the report and data, and to explore the maps, visit the Spatial Mapping, Policy Scorecard, or Call to Action sections of this site. See this guidance on how to navigate these pages.

Policy Scorecard

The Agricultural Land Protection (ALP) Scorecard is a state-by-state analysis of policies and programs that address the loss of farmland to development. Intended to inform decision-making and legislative action, it assesses state actions, measures their performance, and highlights effective aspects of the following programs and policies:

1. Purchase of agricultural conservation easement programs (PACE)
2. Land use planning and growth management
3. Property tax relief for agricultural land
4. Agricultural district programs
5. Farm Link programs
6. State leasing programs

You can view North Carolina's policy scorecard here: [Agricultural Land Protection Scorecard Highlight Summary](#).

Other Resources

Additional relevant statewide information includes the [Local Farms & Food Profiles](#) for each county in North Carolina, based on 2017 and 2012 USDA Ag Census data and developed by NC FarmLink along with the [Local Food Program](#), and the [Center for Environmental Farming Systems](#). County economic impact data for forestry is provided [here](#) and a state infographic is available at [USDA](#)

WRITTEN BY



Dr. Noah Ranells

NC FarmLink Director, Eastern Region

Horticultural Science

NC State Extension, NC State University

PAGE LAST UPDATED: 1 WEEK AGO

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE

- [Get County Estimates of Farmland Loss](#)
- [Insurance Coverage Options for Fresh Produce Growers](#)
- [Working With an EMG Association](#)
- [IV. NC State Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program Policies — NC State Extension Master Gardener Program Guidelines](#)
- [Chatham County Farmers' Markets Open the 2020 Season With New Social Distancing Policies](#)

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Hughes, Lauren A.

From: Scotton, Aimee C.
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 10:21 AM
To: Hughes, Lauren A.
Subject: FW: In the Matter of the Proposed Condemnation of David and Sharon Allen Property

From: Kenneth Sherin <Kenneth_Sherin@ncsu.edu>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 10:09 AM
To: Scotton, Aimee C. <Aimee.Scotton@randolphcountync.gov>
Subject: Fwd: In the Matter of the Proposed Condemnation of David and Sharon Allen Property

Another public input submittal.
Kenny

Kenneth Sherin

Broadband Access and Education Coordinator
[Broadband Resources for Extension](#)
County Extension Director
NC Cooperative Extension, Randolph County Center
1003 S. Fayetteville St
Asheboro, NC 27203
336-318-6000
kenneth_sherin@ncsu.edu



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Alan Ferguson <alanfergusonlaw@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Jan 26, 2024 at 9:55 AM
Subject: In the Matter of the Proposed Condemnation of David and Sharon Allen Property
To: <kenneth_sherin@ncsu.edu>

January 26, 2024

Kenneth Sherin
Randolph County Cooperative Extension Director

Mr. Sherin:

I and my wife live on fifty acres on Troy Smith Road, about half a mile from David's and Sharon's property.

I read with interest the recent Preliminary Report regarding the condemnation of their property under Voluntary Agricultural District protection, but I have only now summoned up the energy to formally comment on the matter. It all seems such a waste of time. As the Preliminary Report emphasized, how on earth is a hearing on this matter to be taken seriously when the issue is joined after millions of dollars are spent, land is formally taken for the project, and DOT people are already on adjoining land doing preliminary work for the interchange which will partly cover the Allens' land? It seems foolish to even write about it for a few minutes. I have no interest in being just another one of the pieces of furniture on a stage that was long ago set up as part of the service for the megasite project. I have no more patience for listening to or participating in the lip-service paid to the preservation of rural lands and lifestyles. Nonetheless, I finally could not let the moment pass to make a few further comments about our experience here, so here are a few thoughts.

The approach to the choice of the land to be taken here is typical of the manner in which rural land and its residents are seen. Our land is seen as "undeveloped." I heard this again about another tract on local news, just the other day. Think for a moment what an insult to us this is. Personally, my wife and I have put all of our personal resources and energy into developing our little agricultural parcel into a good place for us and our animals. In doing so, we have been good stewards of the land. We have cared for the soil, the grasses, and the trees, and we have in doing so provided habitat for unknown numbers of animals living around us. Our land is, like much of the Allen property, highly developed.

I know after twelve years of raising questions about the megasite that this all counts for absolutely nothing when a large project providing "jobs" comes calling. As I was told early on, "you people really should just find a place to move off to." Another early proponent of the megasite described the area as "covered with old farm buildings, broken down equipment and hobby farms", as though the land was afflicted with some sort of plague. Well, as it turns out, those who said we should just leave were probably right, and a part of me wishes I had packed up my stuff then and moved as far away as I could get. Hundreds of my hours and a lot of heartache (much of which is still to come, I fear) would have been prevented. I said often and loudly over the years that we rural residents were being treated no differently than the rabbits and squirrels who also lived on our "undeveloped" land. It's hard to argue that I was wrong.

I knew at the time that if the money came, we would have a project placed upon us. The sudden viability of electric motor vehicles provided that push, and here we are today. As I said, this project has been in the making since 2012. It is laughable to the point of cynicism that the VAD would be having a hearing on a taking in late 2023. I have warned for years that the megasite project was much more than the purchase of parcels of land on which a factory would be built. It was obvious that hundreds of surrounding acres would be impacted by the need for road construction and for the building in of heretofore nonexistent water and sewer services from Greensboro. There have been a number of public meetings with maps, drawings and speakers describing proposed roadway improvements. It was obvious that many of these affected acres were agricultural. In fact, the parcel opposite the Allens' property, across US 421, and also taken, contained cattle, chickens and other animals. As I write today, there are workers on that site doing the preliminary work for a project on which the VAD has been asked to provide a report! And where was the concern for agricultural use during this time?

Is it any wonder that so many citizens have become distressed and disheartened about having any real say about public affairs? I could write about this with ease for the next two hours, and I suspect it would have the same effect as this little note. But my hope is that someone can do a better job than I have for the past nearly twelve years in speaking up for rural America. As for now, if this sad and flaccid process is the best that can be done for protecting agricultural uses and lifestyles, then we should probably do away with that process. The manner in which the Allens' property has been approached is shameful, and is a process about which all of us as citizens should be embarrassed.

Alan Ferguson
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