



Chatham County, NC

Meeting Minutes

Board of Commissioners

Monday, April 18, 2016

6:00 PM

Historic Courthouse Courtroom

Work Session - 3:00 PM - Historic Courthouse Courtroom

Present: 5 - Chairman Jim Crawford, Vice Chair Diana Hales, Commissioner Mike Cross, Commissioner Karen Howard and Commissioner Walter Petty

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Beth Goldston submitted the following comments:

I am here to talk about the historic steel bridge over the Rocky River in southern Chatham County. To give you a little context, this is a clipping from the News and Observer from 1998 so I have been at this for a long time. I have the petition to present. There are 178 signatures. We didn't put it out in the public so much as we went door to door in the community because we wanted to find out how the people who are directly impacted by the bridge felt about it. We went to the advisory committee meeting the other night and one of the questions that was raised was how did people to the north of the bridge feel. I have a map that shows that all the households to the north of the bridge signed our petition so they are also in favor (inaudible). I am going to talk about how a major highway is nearby and this bridge is not necessary so I have a map highlighting the major highway and (inaudible). I am going to start on a more personal note. I am a runner and last Wednesday, mid-morning, I went for a run of a little more than an hour in my southern Chatham community. That community is called Asbury. It is named after the Asbury Methodist Church. My route for the run included Asbury Church, Lydia Perry, and Walter Bright Roads. During this run I did see a few cars but no problem. More noteworthy was that I saw five tandem dump trucks and two eighteen wheelers barreling down these narrow country roads. This is my big concern. For years dump trucks have been moving materials to Earth Tech which is on Lydia Perry Road. These trucks run five days a week. Lydia Perry is also a little bit of a shortcut over to highway 421. Our concern, the community's concern, is that if the Chatham Church Road bridge were replaced and the road was widened and straightened and a new concrete bridge was put in, that every truck heading south from Pittsboro from the 3M plant and others would avoid the speed limits of the major highway that is two miles away and use our community road to shave off a few minutes from their route. The negative impact of the quality of life along our road would be immeasurable. The major highway is less than two miles away. There are two convenient paved roads that provide access to the highway. There is no obvious reason that Chatham Church Road needs to be a major thoroughfare. It doesn't go to anywhere. There are no businesses and there are no subdivisions out there. It is just a road that connects two church communities. The road as it is and the single lane bridge are perfectly adequate for the needs of local traffic and the needs of the community. DOT has not deemed the bridge to be unsafe for light vehicular traffic. They did reduce the weight limit in 1998 so that trucks are not allowed to use it. I ask you to help us protect this beautiful, peaceful, historic place. Ask DOT to continue to inspect and maintain the bridge as it is. It is perfectly adequate for the needs of our community. Thank you. .

John Spoon, 3936 Chatham Church Road, submitted the following comments:

I am also going to be speaking on the Chatham Church bridge issue. I live right next to the bridge. The current situation is there is about a half a mile of gravel road and a single lane steel bridge. Everyone in the community has gotten pretty used to stopping and waiting for everyone to cross. There is a proliferation of exercise through jogging and bicycling within the community because it is a very quiet road with low speeds. People appreciate that and that is how they have gotten used to it. The future situation that is on the table with the DOT would be to replace this bridge with a new bridge and then pave the next section above that. That would, in essence, make it be highway patrol free alternative to 15-501, which I think would encourage flying up and down at 70mph. That would endanger the joggers and the hikers and would overall disrupt the quiet nature of the neighborhood. Through the petitions and the maps and the general community organization around this, I think there is strong evidence this is not something this community wants. The concern that this is addressing I would think would be response time as far as fire and emergency apparatus getting to different communities. The new fire station on Walter Bright Road is situated right next to 15-501. 15-501 has a bridge across the Rocky River. The response times from that fire house would not be affected by this bridge on 15-501. Basically they could go up and down around Johnny Shaw Road just as fast as they could get across this road. For those of you who know the nature of our community there is not much time to be saved through the practice of repaving this bridge. Basically it has come up on the list of DOT projects because it is an old one lane steel bridge. I think there are three important considerations. One is the environmental nature of the Rocky River and the folks who really want to preserve that. The second is historic preservation of this great bridge. The third and most important is the quality of life with regard to that community and the fact that putting in a new bridge there would not greatly expand the community for development. It would not make any huge difference in the world. The difference it would make would be allowing a few random stragglers who wanted to drive irresponsibly up and down our road to do that more freely. That would endanger everybody who likes to walk or jog. In essence, this is a DOT project that is going to cost a lot of money that the people affected don't want. It seems like an easy decision to make just to de-prioritize this. Tell the DOT to take their money and spend it somewhere else because the community that is affected by this does not want this project. There are plenty of places in Chatham County that do. Thank you.

Kathleen Hundley, 136 Rocky Falls, submitted the following comments:

I am concerned about the claim that, when industry of whatever sort comes into the mega site, the Rocky River will become the source of water for that industry. I also am concerned that the State of NC has approved the Rocky River as the source of water for the new industry. I know that, for two valid reasons that should not happen. First of all, the Rocky River in the Northwest quarter of Chatham County is a small river, and the amount of water in that section is minimal, particularly in seasons when rainfall is minimal. Water can be a trickle from puddle to puddle- CERTAINLY not enough for any kind and size of a major industry. The second reason is that, in the area of the river in and adjacent to the Charles Turner Dam, the river has been identified as impaired. I can't believe that any kind of business or industry would want to settle its production using water that is not fit for animal consumption.

It seems to me that, instead of the shenanigans surrounding the \$540,000 for the purchase of the megasite option, the County would be better to put some of that money to doing what is necessary to be sure the river is NOT impaired and at least a portion of the water in the river could be useable. I have another BIG concern, and

that is, if against recommendation, the Rocky River IS chosen as the water source for a business or industry in the megasite, considering the size of and amount of water IN the river, what happens to residents and property BELOW the megasite? How can that much quantity that would be needed still contain adequate water to serve the needs of the lower property and owners? Do we simply fold our hands, sigh and remember what a beautiful river we used to have- until the river was captured for and by the megasite?

I commend the BOC for not being swayed to purchase the Chatham County option now, but rather wait for several months to do due diligence on the issue of the impaired river, investigate what IS needed to clear the river for clean water AND to look into sources of water other than the Rocky River and the water in the Siler City reservoir which IS the Rocky River.

BOARD PRIORITIES

16-1651

A presentation of the Comprehensive Plan Phase 1 report by project consulting firm, LandDesign.

Attachments: [Phase I Report Draft 2016_04_11_Final_Clean](#)
[Public Engagement Plan Draft_2016_04_12_FinalDraft_Clean](#)
[Chatham County Comprehensive Plan BOC Pres 4-18-16](#)
[Current.pptx](#)

Hillary Pace, Planner, stated they are here today to present the conclusion of Phase One of the Comprehensive Plan.

Jim Elza, Chair of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, read a statement to the Board. He thanked the Board on behalf of the Steering Committee for its participation in this exciting planning effort. The committee is holding to the promise to provide multiple opportunities for citizens to participate. Many stakeholders already have. The website is operational and information is on the site. As the plan proceeds, more will be available. They hope for significant citizen participation in the coming months. This plan is about our community's future and it needs our community's voices.

Meg Neland and Jake Petrosky of LandDesign gave a PowerPoint Presentation to the Board. (Presentation attached)

Ms. Neland introduced her team. She stated Phase One involved coming up with a public engagement plan. Phase One also looked at what is going on in the County today. She reviewed the Public Engagement Plan and Community Assessment. Ms. Neland reviewed what the team discovered about land use.

Mr. Petrosky reviewed what the team learned about the environment, parks and recreation, agriculture, economic development, transportation, utilities, and housing.

Ms. Neland and Mr. Petrosky reviewed the areas of emphasis for Phase Two.

Mr. Petrosky presented some possible logos for the plan.

Commissioner Petty thanked the consultants for the work they are doing. He stated

his greatest concern is that there is full public input in the process. He asked how they define a stakeholder. Mr. Petrosky stated the stakeholders they have already met with were around the six topic areas. It was citizens, representatives of non-profits and organizations that know about that topic area. He stated every citizen and business owner is also a stakeholder. They have structured the public engagement so that there will be traditional meetings, there will be an online presence and there will be a speakers bureau.

Commissioner Petty is concerned that the voices of a lot of stakeholders will be represented by a few people speaking on their behalf. He stated the citizens want to meet on a smaller more intimate basis so that they can say what they think without feeling the pressure of a large meeting. Ms. Neland stated Commissioner Petty's points are very important. She stated you can usually predict which folks are going to come to a public meeting. Commissioner Petty stated if they go to the small communities they will find stakeholders will speak about their concerns about their specific community. Ms. Neland stated it is important each person finds a way to give feedback that fits their comfort level. Commissioner Petty also cautioned them not to be too dependent on social media as there will be people in certain parts of the county without internet access.

Vice Chair Hales stated she agreed with Commissioner Petty. The strategy has to accommodate a lot of different means of getting information out. There isn't a single voice in Chatham County. There are a couple of papers in Chatham County and a radio station but they only reach a small section of the county. She believes using churches as part of the tool kit is a great idea. She stated she is glad they will be using GIS. She noticed on the presentation that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan has not been adopted. She thinks the Board should look at that. She liked the focus on the 15-501 corridor and she believes they will receive a lot of comments about that. Vice Chair Hales asked if they would include the south west shore. Mr. Petrosky stated yes.

Commissioner Howard reiterated what Vice Chair Hales said about the 15-501 corridor. She asked if they will include in the transportation conversation information about how CCCC and local high school students access information. Mr. Petrosky stated they have had conversations with the EDC and they brought that up as well.

Commissioner Howard stated she did not see how the different aspects of the plan will interact with each other. Mr. Petrosky stated they will integrate them with each other. Ms. Neland stated many comprehensive plans are organized according to the element so that you could take different plans and put them in a binder where they co-exist together. As the community comes up with goals for the future there are a number of things to plan into it.

Commissioner Howard stated she appreciates that they built in so many kinds of opportunities for stakeholder input. The people who can come to a commissioner meeting tend to be retired and have free time. Young families with two jobs will want to use the online survey component.

Commissioner Petty stated they are going to find different things are important to different people. Ms. Neland stated the implementation strategies employed in the western part of the county could be very different from what the eastern communities choose to do, however, all of them would be working toward the same goal.

Commissioner Cross stated Habitat for Humanity can ensure that the recipient is a resident of Chatham County. For profit affordable housing can't do that because they have federal and state money involved. Commissioner Cross and Chairman

Crawford visited Belmont Point a few weeks ago and about 30% of their residents were taken by people who lived outside Chatham County. He doesn't think there could ever be enough affordable housing in Chatham County.

Mr. Elza stated if you look at the public participation plan there will be a speaker's bureau and ambassadors. They are even looking at having a Spanish speaking staff member go out to different parts of the county.

Commissioner Petty stated they have to go to the people and ask what they want their community to look like, not tell them this is what we want it to look like.

Commissioner Howard stated she sat through three of the community input sessions the consultant had and she was impressed that they took themselves and their personal views out of it.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, to accept the Phase One report and move on to Phase Two. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1652](#)

A Transportation update to the Board of Commissioners from staff regarding Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Discretionary Funds, ongoing transportation plans and projects, and the State transportation project submittal process SPOT 4.0.

Attachments: [SPOT4.0 attachment](#)
[Transportation Update](#)

The County Manager quickly introduced the new Policy Analyst Tansy Long. She comes from Guilford County where she was a Sr. Budget Analyst for six years. She has an undergraduate degree from James Madison University and a graduate degree in Public Policy and Public Administration from Mississippi State University.

Jason Sullivan introduced Planner Cara Coppola who is new to the planning staff. He stated Ms. Coppola and Hillary Pace, Planner, will present to the Board.

Ms. Coppola presented a PowerPoint Presentation. (Presentation Attached).

Ms. Coppola stated this is the first transportation update for 2016. The Board action needed today is to approve TAC recommendation to move forward to CTP adoption without Pittsboro. The Board is also asked to approve TAC recommended methodology for SPOT 4.0 ranking for TARPO Local Point Allocation and SPOT Project Ranking list. Finally the Board needs to give official comment on Bridge 147.

A motion was made by Commissioner Petty, seconded by Vice Chair Hales, to move forward on the CTP, holding open Pittsboro's information and input for a later time and approve TAC recommended methodology for SPOT 4.0 ranking for TARPO Local Point Allocation and SPOT Project Ranking list. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

Commissioner Cross stated some years ago when they closed the Camel Back Bridge the bridge was turned over to a nonprofit organization. It was around half a

million dollars to update the bridge. If the Board is going to decide to keep the bridge it needs to figure out who is going to be responsible for it.

Vice Chair Hales stated if a bridge is in your heart, and it is the heart of that community, it becomes a matter of trying to do the very best you can to keep the structure. The Board is not deciding what to do today.

Commissioner Petty stated he understood that the Board would be asking the DOT to define the options and what they look like.

Commissioner Cross suggested adding to the request to DOT to state who is going to do the inspections and who is going to be responsible for maintenance.

Mr. Sullivan stated it may be worthwhile to ask DOT what organizations could be responsible for the bridge.

Ms. Pace stated she submitted a letter to the Clerk from the Rocky River Heritage Foundation offering to partner with whatever entity may be involved with preserving the bridge.

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Vice Chair Hales, to request additional information from the NC Department of Transportation regarding the feasibility of various options for keeping, closing, or replacing the current bridge, the environmental impacts of building a new bridge, and current traffic counts at the existing bridge as well as provide clarification or specific guidance on the inspection and maintenance responsibilities under the options. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

16-1649

Staff presentation to update the Board of Commissioners on 2015 legislative changes and implications for locally adopted ordinances and regulations.

Attachments: [2015 SOG Legislative Update](#)
[2015 Legislative update.pptx](#)

This agenda item was moved to the May 2, 2016 Board of Commissioners Meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

16-1659

Closed Session to discuss matters involving economic development.

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Vice Chair Hales, to go out of the Work Session and convene in Closed Session for the purpose of discussing matters relating to economic development. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Cross, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

End of Work Session

Regular Session - 6:00 PM - Historic Courthouse Courtroom

Present: 5 - Chairman Jim Crawford, Vice Chair Diana Hales, Commissioner Mike Cross, Commissioner Karen Howard and Commissioner Walter Petty

INVOCATION and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Cross delivered the invocation after which the Chairman invited everyone present to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Crawford welcomed those in attendance and called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA and CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Cross asked to remove Item #15-1468 from the Consent Agenda and discuss at a later meeting.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that the Agenda and Consent Agenda be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1660](#)

Vote on a request to approve the March 7, 2016 Work and Regular Session Minutes and the March 21, 2016 Regular Session Minutes.

Attachments: [Draft Minutes 03.07.2016.pdf](#)
[Draft Minutes 03.21.2016.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this Minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1630](#)

Vote on a request to adopt a Resolution Proclaiming May as Older Americans Month in Chatham County

Attachments: [may older americans month 2016.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that Resolution #2016-12 Proclaiming May as Older Americans Month in Chatham County, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1631](#)

Vote on a request to adopt a Resolution Proclaiming Vulnerable Adult & Elder Abuse Awareness Month

Attachments: [corrected elder abuse awareness month may 2016.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that Resolution #2016-13 Proclaiming Vulnerable Adult and Elder Abuse Awareness Month, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1657](#)

Vote on a request to adopt a Resolution Proclaiming April 2016 As Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Chatham County.

Attachments: [SAAM Resolution.doc](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that Resolution #2016-14 Proclaiming April 2016 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1640](#)

Vote on a request to adopt a Resolution Proclaiming April 2016 as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Attachments: [CHild Abuse 2016](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that Resolution #2016-15 Proclaiming April 2016 as Child Abuse Prevention Month, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1635](#)

Vote on a request to approve \$7,560 Community Focused Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative Funds

Attachments: [\\$7,560 Community Focused Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross,
Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1636](#)

Vote on a request to approve \$49.00 Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) Prevention Funds

Attachments: [\\$49.00 STD Funds](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross,
Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1641](#)

Vote on a request to approve \$6,182 Environmental Health State Inspections

Attachments: [\\$7,228 Environmental Health State Inspections](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross,
Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1642](#)

Vote on a request to approve \$2,606 Immunization Action Plan Funds

Attachments: [\\$2,606 Immunization Action Plan Funds](#)
[FY 15-16 Immunization Action Plan Addendum](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross,
Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1653](#)

Vote on a request to schedule a public hearing to amend Sections 7.2, 10.13, and 17.8 of the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance. The purpose of these amendments is to include zoning regulations for Sexually Oriented Businesses.

Attachments: [Redline Text Amendment](#)
[Sexually Oriented Business AttA 6JuneBOC](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross,
Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1654](#)

Vote on a request to schedule a public hearing to repeal the Chatham County Lighting Ordinance. The purpose of this Ordinance is to provide outdoor lighting regulations for the unzoned portions of the County.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1639](#)

Vote on a request to approve the naming of a private road in Chatham County

Attachments: [CAROLINA OAKS LANE PETITION](#)
[CAROLINA OAKS LANE](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[15-1468](#)

Vote on a request to approve Lease to Liberty Chapel Church of Moncure of the old Town Square in the former Town of Haywood for use as a Public Park and authorize the county manager to sign the Lease.

Attachments: [LEASE HAYWOOD TOWN SQ TO LIBERTY CHAPEL CHURCH CLEAN](#)

This item was moved to a future meeting.

[16-1643](#)

Vote on a request to approve the 2016 Audit Contract

Attachments: [Martin Starnes Contract for FY 2016](#)
[Martin Starnes Single Audit for FY 2016](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this Contract, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1650](#)

Vote on a request to approve the Tax Releases and Refunds.

Attachments: [March 2016 Real and Personal Property](#)
[March 2016 Motor Vehicles](#)
[February 2016 Motor Vehicles](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that the Tax Releases and Refunds, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1648](#)

Vote to approve a request to amend the Advisory Committee Policy Addendum to Update Recreation Advisory Committee Information

Attachments: [Advisory committee policy addendum A revision for april 18 2016.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this Policies and Procedures be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

End of Consent Agenda

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Rosa Sutton submitted the following comments:

The reason I am here is to ask for permission from the Board of Commissioners to allow me to provide transportation through the Medicaid program that is throughout Chatham County that the Board gives the money for. We have been providing transportation for ten plus years. We also have a program called Sister to Sister which is an in home aid service provider that provides services for people throughout Chatham County. I know Mr. Petty and Mr. Cross have seen me over the years here asking for the same thing. At some point in time we were providing transportation for the County and all of the sudden our contract was erupt immediately, it wasn't breached, which put us not doing transportation for the County. Now this is the fourth year. The reasons I haven't come forward until now is the first two years it took time for me to get myself together. Once I began getting ready to come back to the Board and ask for this same issue to be looked at again my son was murdered. That took another two years. I am here today, and I don't want to take another two years, to ask for the approval and the permission to ask the Board to grant us with the same option that it does with Chatham Transit. I do not want to work with Chatham Transit.

Commissioner Cross stated the Manager could look into this. Ms. Sutton asked if she should expect to hear from the Manager or someone soon because she has talked to the Manager and the Manager at the Department of Social Services and she hasn't heard anything back. Commissioner Petty stated the Manager's Office is right in the middle of budget and that could be the problem but the Board will get her an answer. The Clerk asked for her contact information.

John Graybeal submitted the following comments:

This was a coincidence that couldn't be ignored. This is relevant to an item coming up on your agenda tonight. It is the lead editorial in today's New York Times. The title of it is "Transgender bathroom hysteria continued." In part it reads as follows, "After the withering backlash against North Carolina for passing a discriminatory law against gay and transgender people last month it would stand to reason that lawmakers and governors in other states would think twice before pedaling bills that dictate which restroom transgender people can use. And yet state legislatures in Tennessee, Kansas, South Carolina and Minnesota are pushing similar absurd measures. The lunacy of the heart of this demand to police every public bathroom was captured by Leon Lot, the Sheriff of Richmond County, South Carolina, who told state lawmakers last week that the law would be unenforceable because his officers could not be in the business of inspecting people's genitals. In the forty-one years I've been in law enforcement in South Carolina I have never heard of a transgender person attacking or otherwise bothering someone in a restroom, Sheriff Lot wrote in a letter to the committee studying the state's bathroom bill. This is a nonissue. (Inaudible)...to address nonissues can have serious repercussions. The hastily

passed bill in North Carolina which said people must use public restrooms based on the gender of their birth certificate and prohibited local governments from passing nondiscrimination ordinances has been condemned by corporate leaders, civil rights groups, and religious leaders. The law cost the state hundreds of jobs after PayPal scrapped plans to open a global hub in Charlotte and Deutsch Bank suspended plans to expand its operations in the state. Executives from eighty major companies, including Google, Apple and Facebook, wrote a letter to the Governor of North Carolina Pat McCrory to appeal the law arguing that it would make it far more challenging for businesses across the state to recruit and retain the nation's best and brightest workers. Mr. McCrory was running for election and made a clumsy attempt to backtrack on Tuesday when he issued an executive order that supposedly added antidiscrimination protections for state workers but left the law fundamentally unchanged. The only way for North Carolina to avoid even greater financial consequences is for Mr. McCrory and the state lawmakers to repeal the law. Federal agencies are considering steps they might be required to take because of the discriminatory law. For example, the Federal Department of Education which gives North Carolina more than four billion dollars annually may withhold some funding because the law violates Title IX, a civil rights law, the Federal government has taken the position in individual cases that barring students from using restrooms based on their gender identity is a violation of their rights to equal treatment. The Department of Education has drafted guidance for schools that would give administrators a clear national standard. That document should be released now. Despite what supporters of these laws might claim, the measures do nothing to make restrooms safer. They will only further stigmatize and endanger people who have already faced systematic discrimination. If lawmakers who might want to follow North Carolina's abhorrent example aren't moved by appeals to equality and human rights they should ponder this reality, the price of bigotry is becoming quite steep." Below the Mason Dixon Line I have noticed sometimes that what appears in the New York Times doesn't get a lot of respect but people who live in other parts of the country, including people who might be thinking of locating businesses in North Carolina will be paying attention to it and other publications of this sort. Thank you.

Jerry Markatas submitted the following comments:

I noticed that there are some other people old enough to be grandparents in this room and as our little ones come along we all hear little kids who learn how to grab your attention by saying something like "underpants". Most of us did not expect this kind of behavior from Raleigh. Later on in school, most of us have experienced to our embarrassment the realization that there are times when group of kids will gang up on other kids unfairly for whatever reason. In those instances we expect a teacher or some other responsible person to have something to say about it. I see a parallel with this bill. When this bill landed on the Governor's desk he had the opportunity to actually read it and see what was in it and respond responsibly. I want to talk about what is in it. This has been examined, Section Two is an anti-family, anti-labor, anti-worker bill that prevents citizens of North Carolina from filing employment discrimination cases in state court. Did you know about that? I don't think it has been featured in the news. We are talking about underpants. The other thing is that there is some history here. Back in 1984 when Jesse Helms was running against Jim Hunt, Helms was forty points down in the polls. He turned to a campaign that demonized and targeted gay people and black people. He won. Now, we have to ask ourselves are we going to be lead around like this and are we going to allow people to be done out of being able to bring legitimate cases to court when they need a hearing. I am here to support our commissioners joining with other municipalities in taking a stand on this bill and asking not just for a little patch, not for a smiley face to be put on it, but to have it repealed. Let's get down to the issues that

we need to work on. We need to take care of our schools; we need to not be at the bottom of the list nationally now that Mississippi is doing better than we are. We have a whole list of important items like when the Medicaid assistance for 500,000 people was turned down. That not only left those people out in the cold but that neglected to understand that there is a lot of money that moves through the medical system. That is a lot of jobs that North Carolina deserves as well as any other state. There was no special session called for that and there was no special session called for making sure our schools are equipping our students to do their best. Instead, we had an underpants special session in Raleigh. We must not stand for it. Thank you.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

16-1655

A legislative public hearing rezoning request by Robert and Kimberly Wagner for Parcel No. 83841 being approximately 11.23 acres and Parcel No. 83271 being approximately .26 acres from CD-Neighborhood Business for the Rivenbark boat and RV storage facility to R-1 Residential. The property is located on New Elam Church Road, Cape Fear Township.

Attachments: [More Information from Planning Department Website](#)

Jason Sullivan, Planning Director, reviewed the specifics of the request.

Robert Wagner, applicant, addressed the Board.

This Agenda Item was referred to the Planning Board.

16-1638

Request to receive public comment on the Chatham Advance Manufacturing Site ("Megasite") land acquisition and vote on a request to approve the option.

Attachments: [BL Purchase Option.pdf](#)
[CAM Site Option Presentation 4-18.pptx](#)
[CAM Site Option Presentation 03.21.16.pptx](#)

Kyle Touchstone, President of the Chatham Economic Development Corporation, presented a PowerPoint Presentation to the Board. (Presentation Attached)

Commissioner Howard asked what the State will do in terms of marketing if the land is under public control. Mr. Touchstone stated if a high yield end user were to come to the State, the State would only market the sites under public control.

Commissioner Howard asked what made Mr. Touchstone comfortable that the State will do what they say they are going to do. Mr. Touchstone stated he was surprised that the land was not already under public control. His prior experience with large megasites had been with those that were under public option. Commissioner Howard stated the State has not historically been able to recruit an auto manufacturer. How will HB2 impact this? Mr. Touchstone stated he has received no calls from perspective businesses about HB2. In other states he has noticed that auto manufacturers made statements that they do not discriminate. Mississippi has a similar measure and the auto manufacturer has said it does not discriminate but they have not taken action against the state or moved operations.

Vice Chair Hales asked how long the facility in Mississippi has been open. Mr. Touchstone stated the facility made their announcement in 2007 and they opened in 2011. Vice Chair Hales asked if the Golden Leaf Foundation is interested in a three year option. Mr. Touchstone stated unofficially the Golden Leaf Foundation is interested in a three year option. That is strictly due to them wanting to make an investment in a site that does not go back to a private individual and will not benefit a community. Vice Chair Hales asked who had control of the land in Mississippi. Mr. Touchstone stated three counties formed the PUL Alliance and they had options with over 25 individuals.

Commissioner Petty stated the Golden Leaf Foundation and the Utilities Fund are talking about coming up with thirty million dollars to help fund this potential project.

Vice Chair Hales stated the Randolph megastie is just up the road. They have other partners that are not government partners to help purchase the property. She asked if the EDC would pursue a public/private partnership. Mr. Touchstone stated the EDC would be very happy to pursue a partnership. He would hope other communities would be interested in entering into a partnership with the County but he thinks they are going to need to see a commitment by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Petty stated he attended a meeting that was intended to be a collaborative effort between Guilford County, Randolph County and Greensboro. The assumption was that Chatham County would benefit from the site as well. Chatham didn't have anything to bring to the table. Chatham County has done more with its megasite in far less time than the Randolph megasite. There are too many owners involved in the Randolph site to get something pulled together. Chatham has the advantage of having only two owners for the megasite. Chatham County knew from the beginning that the property would have to be used in some sort of incentive package for a potential tenant. It wasn't until recently that the County knew it would have to have ownership or an option in place to promote it. The Secretary of the Department of Commerce spent a good amount of time in Japan in 2014 with Toyota and other auto manufacturing facilities. Now the County knows what it needs to do and the good news is there are additional funding options available to get the water and sewer done.

Commissioner Howard stated eighteen months ahead of someone in the course of eighteen years means nothing. At the last hearing the former Chair of the EDC said time was not of the essence. Mr. Touchstone wishes he could produce a timeline. Every company is going to have their own timeline. He would be elated if the County had a company locate here within a year but he can't answer whether that would happen or whether it would take two to three years. It is the County's responsibility to be as prepared as it can be for when someone does come along. Economic Development is not a sprint, it is a marathon that we have to continue investing in. That goes for everything including workforce, to K-12 schools, through our community college structure for training, through land, through the community infrastructure and he appreciates the work the Board has done to keep moving the project in the right direction.

Commissioner Petty stated that even though we don't know a timeline we do know that all the auto manufacturers are running at capacity. They have to have new facilities. If the County is not in a position to capitalize on that expansion then it is going to miss that window of opportunity. There are no guarantees but this is an investment in the development of the property for economic purposes. The option is tied to the owner spending the money for further development and preparations for a high end user.

Vice Chair Hales asked if a high yield user has to be an auto manufacturer. She stated she would feel better if the EDC did not focus solely on auto industries but also other high yield industries.

Commissioner Petty stated he doesn't think the County is limiting itself to just the auto industry, it is just a good example of a high yield industry.

Commissioner Howard stated she would like to know things more than anecdotally. She asked if a one year option is in the best interest of the County and Siler City and is this the best and highest use of this money for the community of Siler City. Mr. Touchstone stated the Board of Commissioners sets the EDC's budget and goals every year. One of those goals was to continue marketing the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site. It was not the decision of the EDC but through the negotiations of the County Board Attorney and the property owner's attorney. He can't answer whether this is the best use for Siler City. They are trying to help that community achieve greatness in any way possible. The money could be used for something else but he doubts it would have the same impact.

Chairman Crawford stated the Board was moving into deliberations rather than asking questions. He opened the public hearing.

Cindy Bray stated she is a Siler City Town Commissioner and will defer her time to Bill Haiges. She stated she hopes Siler City has the Board of Commissioner's support.

Chip Price stated he is a Siler City Town Commissioner and will defer his time to Bill Haiges. He asked the Board for its support. He has been a lifelong resident of Siler City. He has been in manufacturing and saw what decline can do. Siler City went from a very vibrant community to one that is almost unrecognizable.

Tony Siler stated he is the District 1 Siler City Town Commissioner and will defer his time to Bill Haiges. He stated Siler City needs jobs.

Larry Cheek stated he is the District 2 Siler City Town Commissioner and will defer his time to Bill Haiges. He stated he would appreciate the Board of Commissioners doing anything they can to benefit Siler City. Every day he is asked when they are going to get jobs and industry. With the Board's help that dream can come true. He would appreciate the Board's support.

Michael Constantino stated he is the District 3 Siler City Town Commissioner and he will defer his time to Bill Haiges.

William Haiges stated he is the Siler City District 4 Town Commissioner and is here to speak on behalf of the Board. He submitted the following comments:

Good evening honorable commissioners, staff, and citizens of Chatham County. My name is Bill Haiges and I am a town commissioner representing District 4 in Siler City. I am here to speak on behalf of the Siler City Board of Commissioners and in favor of the proposal for the County to purchase the option for the land for the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site. Some questions that were ask last week and Commissioner Crawford and Commissioner Howard asked this evening, you asked what could the Board of Commissioners do for Siler City. I am here to tell you the most important thing you can do for the Town of Siler City is support and purchase the option on this land. Commissioner Howard, you asked tonight is this the best thing for Siler City. I think we have a large contingent of folks here from Siler

City that would say, yes, purchasing this option is in the best interest of Siler City and the citizens and residents of Siler City.

Chatham County is a tale of two counties. According to the State of North Carolina, Chatham County is classified as a Tier 3 county. That is the best level a county can achieve and we are one of only twenty counties in North Carolina that are at Tier 3. Drive through Siler City the shuttered and decaying manufacturing facilities would indicate otherwise. We do have some very outstanding companies located in Siler City, Brookwood Farms, Basic Machinery, Acme McCrary, Olympic Steele just to name a few. Unfortunately, they are the exception rather than the rule. We are also very fortunate to have a very large arts based community and we are very grateful to have them. For Siler City to truly move into a Tier 3 level like the eastern portion of the County, we need good paying jobs. People that live here can actually work here and not have to spend time and money commuting outside of the county. We are not only working outside of the county but also spending money outside of the county. This hurts existing businesses and the county ends up not seeing the sales tax revenue from those out of county purchases. A high yield manufacturer would draw workers from outside of Chatham County, making this a destination, keeping and attracting more dollars per worker. Last week the joint commission meeting between our Board and this body, Commissioner Crawford asked how this would affect his district, which is 20% Hispanic. The answer to that is a high yield manufacturer would serve to raise real wages and benefit all regardless of income strata. All people, black, white or Hispanic, raising their standard of living and becoming less dependent on government assistance. Without such a manufacturer the resulting increase in good paying jobs, Siler City will continue to shed jobs rather than create, causing more people to seek public assistance.

Siler city's vision statement reads "Siler City is a safe, prosperous and vibrant community where diversity, innovation and education drive success in a globally competitive society." A bedroom community for Liberty, Greensboro and the Triangle is not my definition of driving success in a global competitive society. It has been argued that the site has failed to reach expectations because potential manufacturers have looked at our site and left. It is not that we don't have an appeal, especially as a trade magazine ranks the Siler City site as number three and one of the top three in the southeast. Recently, Southern Development Magazine in its winter issue of 2015 had on its cover the statement for the first time in fifteen years, full employment in the south was in sight. Can we get there? Inside that issue was an article titled "Ten most outstanding markets driving large MSA economies." In that top ten list was the Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site. Now if we are going to be able to draw and have the State market us, as we have heard this evening, beyond what our very own capable EDC is able to do we need to have the site publicly controlled. In fact, public control of this type of site is now a requirement for funding for the Golden Leaf Foundation. That came out on April 7. We are the only state in the southeast to not have an automobile manufacturer. Mercedes Benz recently announced plans for a facility in Georgia. They have existing plants in Charleston and it has expanded. Volvo announced a new facility in South Carolina and we know how successful the BMW plant has been and what they have done for Spartanburg. I have heard argument that by fixating on an auto plant, Siler City would be in position for competing with jobs in Mexico. But I really think the reality is that North Carolina is competing with other southeastern states for jobs. This state has never been committed to automobile manufacturing like other states such as Alabama, Tennessee, South Carolina and recently Mississippi. With that, sentiment seems to be changing. Governor McCrory said in a January economic forum, the State intends on pursuing a major manufacturer, either an automobile or aerospace using North Carolina's megasite offerings. Again, without public control of the land, we will not even be in the discussion.

An auto plant would be a major game changer for the County and the State. It is estimated that for every job created by an automobile manufacturer there are five jobs created by related suppliers, thus we get the term high yield manufacturer. The potential for the Siler City site conservatively could be 1,000 jobs at an auto plant. If the estimates are correct, that would mean an additional 5,000 jobs for related suppliers. Think of what that would do for this county, for Siler City and this region. That would be 6,000 workers living and spending money in Chatham County, equating to direct revenue for Chatham County. Now, we also heard earlier about the Randolph megasite. In the Carolina Journal's April issue, the cover was "Randolph megasite not ready for prime time." Inside that article talks about the funding from the North Carolina Railroad. North Carolina Railroad committed to buying nineteen of those parcels. They have yet to close on any and they have committed to thirteen million dollars in funding to do so. Thirteen million dollars is more than three times their annual net income of four million dollars. They only have five million dollars cash on hand. It is going to be hard to see how they are going to be able to invest the money in that site. Duke Energy hasn't even started looking at what it would take to provide power to that facility. They are way behind the power curve when it comes to a megasite. According to this it says power lines may take years to complete. We are here, we are just about ready.

I know reference has been made by opponents of this measure to a study for the Center for Competitive Economics at UNC's Keenan Business School. Let's understand the study was actually done in 2009 with data preceding the great recession. Data in that study also included years during the dot com bubble burst in 2000 and 2001. The study did not measure or examine the effectiveness of local economic development incentive packages and was solely based on incentive packages available at that time by the State of North Carolina. We live in a different world than we did seven years ago. Dredging up arguments based on a study that old is completely disingenuous. It has also been argued by opponents of this proposal that perhaps the CAM site could be a solar power plant or solar farm. Siler City Town Board has approved three solar farms in the last three to six months and beyond the initial construction phase, these facilities will have a grand total of zero jobs. The initial construction will have fifty plus jobs but the construction is specialized and unlikely to positively impact the local economy during construction as skilled labor will need to be located here for a few months as the site is brought online. I believe that solar power is a great source of energy and I am proud that our Board has approved these sites but it is not an economic game changer like an automobile plant would be.

I have spoken at great length here about what an auto plant could do for this town and this county but the CAM site could easily support other manufacturing industries but it wouldn't be the job multiplier that an automobile manufacturer would be. Jobs would be significantly above minimum wage, good paying jobs that are going to keep our young people here to raise their families. Good paying jobs that would not balance the budget solely on the backs of our residents. I want to bring up a comment about old rural versus new rural. Old rural are areas dominated by single defining economic sector that sets the expectations for wages and education. Commodity production with downward price pressure from globalization, income and education levels falling behind nationwide averages. Declining population based on declining economic opportunity, cheap is good, cheaper must be better. Old rural communities and regions are haunted by what they used to be rather than being energized by what they could be. Moving to the new rural are regional approaches to diverse economies based on continual creation of competitive advantage. Broad linkages to urban and global economies are seen as critical strategies and recruiting entrepreneurs and immigrants, not low wage manufacturing. Quality of life is critical.

Our children and grandchildren are having to leave to find prosperity. If that is happening, our approach is failing. Old rural means that many children have to leave. New rural represents the potential of greater opportunity, the potential of a future that would keep our kids at home. No, it is not guaranteed but it is however, entirely possible. Old rural is dead or dying but there is a new rural there for the communities that can find a way.

Finally, I would like to say if this body does not approve the proposal to purchase options on the CAM site land, the potential for landing a major manufacturer will be dead in the water. Siler City will remain in decline. Yes, we may get some residential development, which comes at a net loss. As many have said in the past, residential development simply doesn't pay for itself. You will sign the death warrant for what could have been a safe, prosperous and vibrant community where diversity, innovation and education drive success in a globally competitive society. Thank you.

Lewis Fadley stated he is a member of the Siler City Town Board. He would like to echo Commissioner Haiges comments. He believes adopting the option is the highest and best use of the money. There are far too many families in need of a good paying job. Over 80% of the students at Jordan Matthews are on free and reduced lunch. That means those families need help feeding their kids and a job could turn that around. A job could give them dignity. A job could give them a sense of purpose. He asked the Board to adopt the option and help Siler City be what it can be.

John Grimes, Mayor of Siler City, stated President Kennedy said "a rise in tide lifts all ships." The tide has gone out in Siler City. The jobs are gone. They need another tide to come in and he believes a major manufacturer at the CAM site could do that. There is very little money moving around for the individual shop owners in Siler City. He has seen many small businesses close their doors. He asked the Board to pass the option.

Bryan Thompson, Town Manager of Siler City, submitted the following comments:

Thank you for bringing this to the Board and extending the public hearing so that we might all have a chance to talk about it. There are few things that were said tonight and a lot of that does resonate with us. Commissioner Hales, one of the things that you mentioned is putting all our eggs in one basket. Being a member of STEP, you understand the activities that we have going on within Siler City. Our governing body, our bodies appointed by the board, our citizen groups are partners in the community. I know as a Board, as a staff every decision that we make, every time we come to a fork in the road and we have a decision whether or not it is a solar farm or an initiative or a grant, we are asking ourselves one question. What decision advances the mission of Siler City. What advances our people, what advances our culture, what advances our social and economic needs. Everywhere from doing pre-planning and getting down to the nuts and bolts and nitty gritty where we roll up our sleeves and do a lot of hard lifting up front just so we can look to that deferred gratification later on with the Downtown Master Plan, with the Pedestrian Master Plan, with the Airport Layout Plan, with the Parks and Recreation Plan. We have had a lot of that work that was done with the partnership we have with you, the County Board and Chatham County. We are grateful for that. We hope that the grace you have extended thus far will not discontinue moving forward. Putting all of our eggs in one basket, one area that we are a bit deficient is when it comes to utilities and where we have an aging utility infrastructure. One that for the longest time we haven't been able to do a whole lot with because of the recession and how that hit Siler City a lot sooner than it hit much of the other places in the nation. Though we are seeing some economic uptick in Siler City it is relatively anemic. The Town Board has made very difficult

decisions understanding that we just can't wait for something large like the megasite but that we have to start doing for ourselves today. The Board has made the tough decisions today so that we aren't faced with difficult or impossible decisions tomorrow. We have increased water rates and the water rates, this is all the eggs in a basket, they are on the backs of residential rooftops and we need to diversify that base so we don't strangle our local economy in spite of our need for stronger infrastructure. A vote for the megasite, a vote for this option, a vote for the Siler City future is a vote for that improved advancement and the mission that we are trying to serve in investing in the quality of life and the services we provide our community. I respectfully ask for your support tonight.

Steve Seilkop submitted the following comments:

I live not far from Siler City and I appreciate what all of these folks have been talking about. I am not here tonight to advocate for or against entering into the megasite option agreement. Instead I want to express concerns and raise questions that I think need to be answered before proceeding. My heart goes out to Siler City and I am not really concerned about spending half a million dollars for the county's economic development or theirs. But I am concerned about the path that it takes us down. All these folks have talked about a lot of benefits that would accrue from the megasite but we haven't talked about the cost. If we decide to proceed with further megasite support it looks to me at a minimum we will be on the hook for fifteen million dollars if we buy the first 500 acres. Where does it go from there. I suspect we will have to spend more because from what I read it sounds like 1,000 acres is typically considered the minimum viable size at such a site. To meet these minimum requirements we would have to anti up thirty million dollars or find partners that would give us the option to do so. Once we get through tax incentives and the like it may be up to fifty million dollars. We have to look at the end game here. What is it going to cost us, all of us? Fifty million dollars is not atypical for one of these sites from local municipalities. That is a lot of money but it is chump change compared to what the public expenditures are for typical sites. On the order of 200 to 300 million dollars. Much of this will come from our state taxes and in at least my mind there is no question whether this should be viewed as an investment or corporate welfare. The reason I say that is because public expense for each job created in many of these projects exceeds \$100,000 per job. That is a lot of bucks for a job. What I haven't seen from anybody, from you folks or the EDC is a cost benefit analysis on this proposed megasite. Maybe you have that but I couldn't find it. If you have it, we all deserve to see it. If you don't have it you need to do that analysis. I think that analysis should include the following elements: the total estimated cost, both county and state, for a viable megasite, estimated state and county costs for each job created, fiscal costs to the County associated with estimated growth and housing and population, a sense of the likelihood of the success for finding such a megasite and finding clients for that megasite. How many empty megasites are there across the country? How long have they been empty? We also need an estimate of the length of time it will take to repay the County if indeed the project is successful. If you do this analysis it may give us the confidence to proceed but we need to do it or it may suggest that if we decide to spend thirty million dollars on economic development for the County, it ought to be used to pursue many different angles rather than putting all our eggs in one basket.

Donna Silvulka, 3942 Reeves Chapel Church Rd, Siler City, submitted the following comments:

As noted by the previous speaker, the costs of competing for a megasite are not inconsequential. In addition to a cost benefit analysis, I think three additional factors

should be considered. Number one – do due diligence. This is no field of dreams build and they will come. We know that is not true. I think you need to understand what your competition is within the state. I think you ought to do an analysis of CAM and competing sites. Included in that analysis should be a list of the pros and cons of each site. Be honest about it. Look at potential development costs of each site, particularly the cost of land. Are there private investors willing to assist you or others and if so by how much? How strong is your working relationship with the General Assembly versus others? Remember, this is going to be a partnership. After completing this analysis, you have to honestly ask yourselves how does Chatham County and Siler City stack up against the competition? Two – be all in or don't be in at all. Fifteen million might buy 500 acres but that is not likely to be enough to be competitive relative to other sites. Be thinking more on the order of at least 1,000 acres for roughly thirty million dollars. Is Chatham truly willing to pay this much? What will be the source of this money? In addition to the purchase of the land, what will Siler City, Chatham County offer in tax abatements and other tax incentives? Beyond monetary compensation, what other incentives, if any, will you offer? Make a list, be specific. How much lobbying are you willing to do to make it happen? Who will do this lobbying? What other entities will assist in making Siler City – Chatham competitive? The Community College, the EDC, the hospital, Chatham Arts? Expressed support by these entities is not enough. What will they specifically be willing to do for you? Make a list, be specific. If Siler City and Chatham County aren't going to do everything possible to land this plant, they should not waste tax payers' money. Half measures are not a winning strategy here. Three – have a Plan B. If after spending potentially no less than thirty plus million and for some strange reason you do not land this plant, what will Plan B be? If there is no Plan B, Siler City and Chatham County should make one before considering any purchase of land. In conclusion, I am not saying don't do this but it is obvious that I am highly skeptical. I think at the very least, the County and City are operating in an information void that must be filled before making any further and final decisions. Thank you.

Tom Roberts submitted the following comments:

Thank you commissioners for the opportunity for me to speak in favor of the proposed option agreement for the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing site. My name is Tom Roberts and I am an eastern Chatham County resident, President of Aqua North Carolina and Board member of the Chatham County Economic Development Corporation. Tonight I am here to speak as a citizen. You have the opportunity to send a strong message to the worldwide business community that Chatham is ready for job growth. I would venture to guess that the other ninety-nine counties in the state would be envious of this opportunity that presents with this option agreement. By affirming your commitment to the site, you are telling those that may be interested in Chatham that not only do you welcome them in our county but are willing to invest to demonstrate that commitment. It is true all opportunities come with some risk, but this is an opportunity for you as the elected officials of Chatham County to make a decision that has the potential to change all, not just Siler City, in Chatham County. Thank you for your consideration.

Twig Wood submitted the following comments:

I don't have a whole lot to add other than Bill Haiges and others from Siler City. I would say it was troubling to me last Tuesday when I heard that 91% of our tax revenue in the county comes from residential. To me that is a dangerous scenario that could crumble. All that being said, I want to strongly urge you to pass this option. We need it, we are dying on the vine. I don't know how many of you come down to Siler City but all you have to do is ride through the streets. We are in terrible shape. This gives us a fighting chance. Thank you for your consideration.

Ben Atwater submitted the following comments:

I moved to Siler City forty years ago in September. When I came it was a bustling little town. If the situation were now, not only would I probably not move there but there wouldn't be a job for me there. You folks in the east and the north are very fortunate. You have people dying to come here. We don't have that, we are just dying period. I keep hearing this talk about all the money but it is my understanding we wouldn't exercise the option unless we already had it lined up. We need these jobs. We need to keep people here. Our Town Manager mentioned we are at a fork in the road and we are. The paraphrase Yogi Berra, please take it but take the right one. Thank you.

Stacey Curtis submitted the following comments:

I am a Chatham County tax payer. I am a resident of Siler City. I am a member of the Chatham County Planning Board. Long ago I was an economist in Washington, D.C. I wear many hats but I am speaking as a tax payer tonight. I would like to talk to you about the megasite which has changed from a low risk investment opportunity for the County into a fifty-seven million dollar public works program, which would be shouldered by debt taken on by we, the tax payers. I am not saying that is a bad thing. I am not an opponent of development of a megasite. Everyone wants to find a way to bring jobs to Siler City. Siler City is a fantastic place with a lot of character. We would all benefit from attracting more activity and having more commerce. The question before us now, however, is not the emotional question of jobs or no jobs or megasite or no megasite. I have a really hard time with conversations once they reach that level of polarity and emotion. What I would like to ask you to do tonight is to consider doing four things as part of due diligence for the option contract. Number one, there should be a professional appraisal of the land. I don't think that is asking too much. If I were going to buy a house for fifty-seven million dollars I would have an appraisal done. That is really, from what I understand, conventional. Number two, I got this idea from what another set of county commissioners did when they were contemplating a megasite coming to their town in Alabama. They weren't sure if they were being asked to spend twenty-five million dollars and they didn't know if it was going to be a good deal or not. They went to talk to their bond underwriters and they asked them if we borrow this much money what is it going to do to our credit record. We do have that option as a county. If we want to know we can ask Standard and Poor, we can ask Moody's. We just recently had an increase of our credit record, thanks in part to the EDC, so kudos to them for that. We need to protect it and we need to act responsibly. Number three, I would love to see the Environmental Review Advisory Committee review the plans for water and sewer service and make sure that they are comfortable with it. I think that is a reasonable request as well. Number four, I would like to see if you can more closely explore what if any opportunity for economic collaboration will exist after June of 2017. I heard tonight it might be possible even to go out until June of 2018. When you ask people why that window can't be longer, I haven't really understood the answer. People tend to mumble and say the owners can only do it until then but what is the fuller story. If we want to be reasonable, if we want a successful plan we need to understand how can we make it a longer window. This isn't just a yes or no. If anyone wants to talk about this and the economy and reports I've quoted in the past I am happy to do that. I didn't think it was disingenuous to put a 2009 study, I am really not the most disingenuous person you meet. I am a lot of bad things but I am not disingenuous. Thank you for your time.

Shawn Poe submitted the following comments:

I am here as a resident of Chatham County, a citizen and I am also here as the Executive Director of a nonprofit in Siler City. We currently employ sixty people and we employ people that have disabilities. I have to go out of the county to get the majority of the work for them to do. We do assembly and packaging in Siler City. I am right next door to Brookwood Farms. We desperately need this option. We need jobs, we need growth. I am asking you to vote for this option, not only for me and my children and my grandchildren but for the people I work with everyday and for all of the citizens of Chatham County. I would like to use the analogy of playing a ball game. You can't play a ballgame if you don't have a team. I want you to be the team that votes for this option that gives us a chance and that all of Chatham County will win. Thank you.

Todd Roper submitted the following comments:

I am here twofold. I am here as a citizen of Chatham County. I live out in Silk Hope. I also have a business in Siler City and I have one in Pittsboro. What I would like to take is maybe a different approach. I came here twenty-six years ago. When I came here, I had just finished business school in Alabama and I noticed that one of the things they taught us in business school was you can have a productive business if you have an intersection of roadways. When I got out of law school and came to Siler City I thought this is pretty neat. There is an intersection of roadways. There is US 421 and Hwy 64 that intersect in the middle of our state. Transportation is a big portion of us being able to attract businesses. Someone had some insight many years ago about how to get business in Siler City. What I would like for you to recognize is this, history does repeat itself. In the 1950's and 1960's there were some business men in Siler City that got together and there was a collaboration. There was a collaboration between city, county, state, and the private sector. What were they able to achieve? They attracted businesses. What type of businesses? We had furniture, we had textile, we had chicken processing. We were able to provide them what they needed. We were able to provide them water and sewer. We were able to provide them what they needed. And what was the biggest thing they wanted? To be wanted. They wanted us to show them that we wanted them in our community. We had to come forward and show that we were eager, anxious and wanted them to come. That is what you have an opportunity to do. What happened back then is the textile industry and the other industries had about a fifty year useful life. What happened? The fifty year useful life ended. Now we have nothing there. It is sad to go through Siler City. You have a chance for the next wave of economic prosperity for the citizens of Chatham. That chance is not to sit on the sidelines. That chance is to compete. We must compete. We must be there ready to attract an automobile manufacturer. We are talking about a multi-billion dollar industry. Jobs, jobs, jobs. There is no one in this room that doesn't want jobs created for Chatham County. I have my family here. My kids can't work here. Everybody wants to have their children in a position, their grandchildren in a position to work here in Chatham County and to be successful. If we do nothing, we achieve nothing. We must do something so that our families can live, work and have a place to raise families and to be prosperous. Thank you.

Joshua Lee submitted the following comments:

I also come to you tonight as a citizen of Siler City. I have lived in Siler City for almost ten years. I also own a business with Mr. Roper. I want to approach things a little differently just as some others have said. I am also a member of various local community service boards. As part of our outreach programs, it requires money. We require donors. The ancillary benefits of a megasite can be a game changer for us. Instead of going out and trying to knock on every door we can possibly find to get someone to donate \$10, \$20, \$50 or \$75, we will have the opportunity to go and seek

some new businesses who want to become a part of our community. Businesses who want to provide back to the people that live in Siler City. Opportunity is a word that keeps being tossed around tonight and it is important because it is, in my view, the most important civic decision a civic entity has had to make in the ten years since I've been in Chatham County. The essence of an option contract is an investment. It is an investment in the future. It is to provide yourself with the opportunity to take additional steps to reap rewards from your investment. This is an opportunity for this Board to make an investment not only in Siler City but in the County and its citizens and the education of its young people. I ask you to adopt the option tonight. Pass the option. Give Siler City a chance to get back and bring more to its citizens. Thank you.

Jay Stobbs submitted the following comments:

My wife and I live at 62 Winding Ridge in Colvard Farms. If you don't know where that is, it is about as far north and east as you can get in Chatham County. Durham is within a stone's throw of my house but I am a citizen of Chatham County. When we came here about eleven years ago and made our travels around the county meeting people and going to different meetings and groups, I kept hearing the refrain jobs, jobs, we need jobs. I thought we started moving in the right direction a couple of years ago when it came up for the Wal-Mart decision. There was a lot of push back and negativity an concern about risk. Every time I go down 15-501 that Wal-Mart parking lot looks pretty full to me. Payrolls are up and I also understand that Wal-Mart has partnered with the County a couple of times on some social needs programs. I think that is a win-win. I think that was a good decision to make. Today we have a similar issue, a bigger issue with the megasite. I am still hearing jobs, jobs, jobs as I go around the county. The last couple of weeks I've been to a number of groups and forums and I have heard people talk EDC, I've heard the pros and cons. I think the pros immensely exceed the cons. The cons are mostly around the risk. If you buy a new car, house or piece of property there is risk involved. You want to get your money back. I think what the EDC has done, they have done the due diligence. I think this is a good initial investment to keep this project alive. I think we have a timeline here of June, we need to make a decision. I would ask the Board to go forward with this decision. We need to get these jobs. I understand 60% of the citizens of Chatham go outside the county for jobs. Let's bring those people back. Let's support Siler City and the citizens of Chatham County. Let's invest in this megasite. Thank you.

Doug Emmons submitted the following comments:

I am a resident of Pittsboro. I serve on two Chatham County nonprofit boards, one is the EDC and the other is the literacy council. I am speaking tonight in favor of the option agreement for the following reasons. One, the CAM site has been under development for over three years. We have all known from the outset that the development of a large industrial site can take multiple years, even five to ten. This truly is much like a marathon. It is not a sprint. We need to exercise patience yet continue our forward momentum of staying the course to develop the site. Today the CAM site is farther along than any other North Carolina site with significant infrastructure planning certifications from McCallum Sweeny, the State of North Carolina and Norfolk Southern Railroad. These organizations all recognize the CAM site as being suitable for large scale manufacturing. The lead we currently enjoy over these other North Carolina sites, however, will narrow if we don't seize the opportunity to place the CAM site under public control, which will enable us continued North Carolina support and that of outside foundation funding. Second, when McCallum Sweeny concluded their initial report three years ago, we really lacked any incentives in the state versus other states to competitively be on par. This changed.

North Carolina has since implemented some incentives, maybe not as totally competitive as we'd like but they are moving in the right direction. The County and Siler City have done the same. Third, I would say our county is behind this growth, with what you've heard tonight and also some of the efforts I would point to from the Community College. They have instituted programs now that are providing hard skills training to new employers. They have provided for accelerated attainment of associate degrees through the high schools. Chatham Literacy, the organization I serve on as well, is now offering workforce soft skills training to Chatham County businesses and residents at no cost to better prepare Chatham County's workforce for new employment. I believe the county is supportive of landing a large manufacturer and we are building bridges to help that happen. Is everything perfectly aligned for success? No. I wish it were. We live in a state right now that is somewhat controversial. I think as other people have pointed out we as leaders in this county owe it to the citizens of the county to lobby those representatives and senators of our state and help ensure that they hear our viewpoints. We need to explore parallel efforts to market our site in addition to the State's efforts. We need to support this option agreement to keep Chatham County in play. Siler City wants and needs this option badly. Siler City has suffered the most as Chatham County's economic conditions have changed and industry has moved on. Landing a large manufacturer at the CAM site would enable Siler City to become a much more economically stable and diverse community with significant supporting businesses to both existing new firms in the area. Residents would have new job opportunities and you will have a much happier constituency. This option agreement presents an opportunity to demonstrate leadership on the part of the County commissioners to seize the situation to help Chatham County continue to move forward to attract a solid large scale manufacturer. I sincerely request that you vote in favor of this agreement. Thank you.

Mike Dasher submitted the following comments:

I live in Moncure. I am speaking here tonight regarding the proposed purchase option of the CAM site. I would like to urge you to exercise the same due diligence that any reasonable buyer would before entering into a contract of this size and scope. It certainly seems to me that there are many unanswered questions regarding both how this contract was negotiated and the price and terms were arrived at but also the justification for the urgency and why this purchase option is required at all. When this was presented last month to the commissioners the explanation given was that the State of North Carolina had changed the rules and they were now requiring public ownership of the property in order to market it. I am still not clear as to what that means in terms of exactly what marketing the State of North Carolina is planning to do. But if that is indeed the case, I hope we will see or hear some explanation of this from the appropriate state officials. Last week I read comments from a former commissioner that everyone involved in this over the last three years has known that it needed to be under public control. If that is the case, I don't know why we haven't been preparing for this since the beginning. As for the offer itself, how was this negotiated and by whom? Is there some correspondence or are there prior drafts that are available so that we can understand how these terms were arrived at? Was there an appraisal done and most importantly why is the County being asked to sign on the dotted line after the terms have already been negotiated. I know all of you want to see Siler City grow and prosper and I venture to say that everyone in this room does as well. I am very troubled that many are being misled in to putting all their hopes of future growth and development on this megasite. Personally I would be more favorable to this purchase option and the megasite overall if it were part of a larger comprehensive plan. This is really a hail mary. Sometimes they work and I sincerely hope that this one does. To charge out on the field with no other plays in the playbook is not a game plan. Frankly it is a disservice to Siler City and the

County and it shortchanges a proud town that can and should have a prosperous future. This is a lot of money to spend and could very well lead to more money from you down the road. After some deliberation you may determine that this is a worthwhile investment but I hope it will be one part of a larger, viable, measurable plan for Siler City. I hope the EDC, the Town of Siler City and the County will work toward a real economic development strategy rather than wishing and hoping and relying on a white knight that may never come. The people there deserve more than that. Thank you.

John Graybeal submitted the following comments:

This is a subject flooded with questions to which I certainly do not have the answers. If you haven't been able to figure out the answers either, I would repeat the suggestion I've made before to some of you that you need the assistance of an economist and/or a consulting firm. If I were in your seat, I would certainly not feel comfortable voting on this matter without some expert assistance.

This matter involves a huge number of questions and I make no claim to raising all of them. But some of them arise in several categories:

1. The economics of the option/purchase transaction itself, including:
 - The Huge dollar amounts involved both for the option and any subsequent purchase, e.g., over \$57 million for the entire property
 - The fairness of the option price and of the per/acre values assigned the property if it were exercised
 - Are there rational funding mechanisms available to the County if it were to proceed?
 - The fact that all of the property is not actually owned by the seller (?)
 - That the option money would apparently not be returned to the County if the option were not exercised
2. The standing of this site as a competitor with other sites both in NC and elsewhere. What are the odds that if all factors were favorable (e.g., the public involvement factor), this site would attract a substantial industrial firm? Have any firms expressed an interest in the site? If not, why not? If so, why have negotiations with such a firm not proceeded further?
3. The history and rationale for the public involvement requirement. Who originated this requirement and what is the basis for it? How has this supposed requirement been communicated to us? Is there a document? There is no obvious reason why development of such a project should require the property to be owned in whole or in part by the County.
4. The poor track record of NC in attracting big industrial plants – as compared with other southern states, e.g., Alabama, South Carolina, Tennessee. Articles in the N&O have stated that NC's problem has been a failure to offer competitive incentives. If that is the case, has NC indicated any willingness to be more competitive?
5. In evaluating the chances of obtaining a substantial industrial firm at this site, we must consider the obstacles that have been raised by the General Assembly. They include (1) as mentioned, unwillingness to offer competitive incentives; (2) actions of the General Assembly causing great harm to the public education system in NC (it is frequently said that companies considering locating a plant or business take into account the strength of the public schools system); and (3), most recently, HB2 to which well over 100 businesses have expressed opposition and some have canceled plans for operations in NC. The businesses that have spoken out against HB2 are

national firms of the sort being sought for the megasite.

In short, the General Assembly has taken major actions the results of which are to make it less likely that businesses will locate in North Carolina while, at the same time, telling Chatham County that it must come up with mega-millions if it wants the Dept of Commerce to advocate for the Siler City megasite. This does not sound like a very promising situation for Chatham County.

Debby Wakefield submitted the following comments:

I live in Oakland Township. I am here tonight to encourage the Chatham County Board of Commissioners to refrain from purchasing an option on the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing site until it has done its due diligence and ensure that purchasing an option is the best interest of the citizens of Chatham County. The due diligence process should answer at least two questions. The first, the County needs to determine whether the asking price of the land, approximately \$30,000 an acre, is a fair market price. As of now no professional appraisal of the land has been undertaken. As a result the commissioners have no idea what the land really is worth. Second, the County needs to determine whether the Rocky River can provide the water and wastewater resources needed for a successful manufacturing site. As you know, the Rocky River from the Charles Turner reservoir downstream to Varnal Creek below US Hwy 64 is on the North Carolina list of impaired waters. It is on this list because the river has low dissolved oxygen levels. Until the reasons for low dissolved oxygen levels has been determined and the river is taken off the impaired list, the County cannot be sure that the Rocky River can provide the water and wastewater resources needed for a successful manufacturing site. For these reasons, Chatham County should not rush to judgment and purchase an option on the manufacturing site. The County should take its time and be sure its actions will benefit all of Chatham County. Thank you.

Billy Williams submitted the following comments:

I am from Siler City. Mr. Chairman and Commissioner members I want to first thank you for coming to Siler City last week and taking one more night out of your schedule to meet with the folks in Siler City. At this time I am going to ask some people that may be in this room to support this to stand up. There are several things that have been said tonight that are actually not completely factual. I don't want to get into those specifics but it is real simple. The site is certified. It has been certified by the State and County regulations and the federal, whoever regulates all that. The due diligence has been done. The facts are out and anyone who has not looked at those or wants to keep asking the same questions over and over, all you have to do is read the documents. They are not private. Everything is public. Another area that needs to be clarified, you keep talking about all the investment. This is an option. This is not an actual purchase. There is a big difference. You alluded to Randolph County's five million dollars. This is \$540,000 because it is an option. That five million that they put in is a purchase. Maybe if you want to spend five million, take the other four and half million and send it to Siler City. They will find something to do with it. That is not what you are being asked to do. You are being asked to simply work with an option that puts us in control, that the Golden Leaf and the State say has to happen. Any of you that have not read the Golden Leaf publication, it says plainly that the money has to be publically controlled or publically owned. The option makes it publically controlled. I stand here and ask you to vote 100% for this tonight. The County needs it, not just Siler city but the County and the State. I might add there is money in place that exceeds by ten million dollars from the State what took Volvo to South Carolina. The State has done their part. That is not a secret. It is easy to clarify that. If anybody has any other questions on it, the answers are there. Thank

you for your time and I appreciate your support.

Virginia Penley submitted the following comments:

My name is Virginia Penley and I reside at 465 Rosswood Road, Chapel Hill, 27516, in Northern Chatham County. I have lived in Chatham County for over thirty years and near my current location for nearly 45 years. I have witnessed a lot of change in Chatham County and specifically Pittsboro and Siler City. I am not here this evening to advocate for or against pursuing the option to purchase agreement, but rather to provide some input. At some time or another I have communicated with every member of this board. Based on my experiences, I have no doubt that you will deliberate and make a decision that is in the best interest of Chatham County. Of course, I understand the need to invest in economic development and I support the desire to promote prosperity for all citizens of Chatham County. In this specific instance I request that the board do the following:

- 1. Negotiate a better price per acre for the purchase for more favorable terms to the County including, but not limited to, the option term, the end use of the option funds, and the basic requirements for triggering the purchase. For example, the County should only be purchasing the property if an end user has executed a letter of intent with a commitment for good paying jobs.*
- 2. Hire a third party to provide an appraisal based on current use and highest and best use scenarios.*
- 3. Ascertain whether the opinion of probable cost to develop the site for approximately \$106,000,000 is realistic and who would be required to invest that capital.*
- 4. Study whether the County should just purchase the property outright for a favorable price and pursue other economic development drivers such as an intermodal freight terminal or a large scale industrial solar farm.*

In any case I support the efforts by the county to invest in its citizens, businesses and municipalities. For more information I have submitted to the record the 2010 marketing plan for Siler City, the opinion of cost presented to the State, the opinion of price presented to the EDC by the seller and a study of megasites in the Southeast by a neighboring state. Thank you for your time.

Chris Ehrenfeld submitted the following comments:

I am the Chair of the Chatham Economic Development Corporation. First, I want to read a resolution that the Chatham EDC passed. It is a Resolution in Support of the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site Proposed Option Agreement.

Whereas the Chatham Economic Development Corporation is a 501 (c)3 economic development non-profit organization that is responsible for business recruitment, business retention and expansion and entrepreneurship for Chatham County; and

Whereas the Chatham County Board of Commissioners has outlined a 2015-16 goal for the Chatham Economic Development Corporation of recruitment of new business through the marketing of the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing (CAM) Site to major industries that will enhance the financial position of Chatham County and the resident workforce; and

Whereas the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site is an 1802.18 acres industrial megasite located in Chatham County and recognized as a North Carolina Certified Site and a Norfolk Southern Prime Rail Served Site; and

Whereas the Chatham County Board of Commissioners is considering a property option agreement of the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site; and

Whereas the property option agreement payment would be used for engineering, designing, marketing and promotion, option extension, planning costs; and

Whereas a public option of the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site will assist in the marketing of the site to prospective business, allow for a set sale price and assist in obtaining public grants for continued development; and

Whereas the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site will assist in bringing significant economic benefit to Chatham County, creating businesses and jobs that will help end the County's current status as a bedroom community.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Chatham Economic Development Corporation that we support the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site proposed property option agreement as currently envisioned and strongly advocate for the Chatham County Board of Commissioners to give favorable consideration and approve the proposed option agreement.

Certainly the EDC supports this. The EDC has been working with the CAM site for four years now. The CAM site has moved along tremendously in terms of development status. It might not look any different but in terms of engineering, surveying, site analysis, consultative analysis, you name it. We are so far along and this is the next logical step that needs to happen for us to get toward our goal and our objective of landing a high yield manufacturer. Ideally that manufacturer is an auto manufacturer. We are certainly not looking exclusively for an auto manufacturer. We are looking for a high yield manufacturer. That means somebody that is going to employ thousands of jobs. This option agreement, you have to look at the advantages and disadvantages. From a real estate perspective, what is nice about this option is most options you use your money and it is gone. You give your money to the seller and the seller can do whatever they want with it. In this case, the seller is obligated by contract to put that money back into the site and to do further engineering, the last bit of engineering it needs to really be far along in the development process. That gives us a huge competitive advantage and that makes that site even better prepared for a manufacturer, whether it happens in the next year or not. The land is more valuable for that end user because of this money being put into the land to engineer it further along for that end user. It is a true win-win. Our site is already further along than the competition. We need to keep taking those steps to stay ahead and we have a very unique product. There are only two other megasites in the State of North Carolina. I can't guarantee you we are going to land an auto manufacturer but when you have something as unique as that you are very likely to land a large scale manufacturer at some point in the future. Unfortunately, I know Commissioner Howard asked when it can happen, we don't know. If we stay the course and we keep developing this land and making it better, we stand a real chance of landing a major manufacturer versus taking a step to the side and missing out on that opportunity. I hope you will do the right thing. I appreciate all that you do for Chatham County. I think this will be a tremendous windfall one day for Chatham County and I hope you will do the right thing. Thank you.

The Chairman closed the public hearing and opened the floor up to the Board for deliberations.

Commissioner Cross stated the money came from the sale of the business park in Siler City and it was money earmarked for economic development. He feels most of the questions have been answered. The Board started back in October and has had five closed sessions and had a public hearing on March 21st and extended it to tonight. The Chatham County Board of Commissioners had a joint meeting last week with the Siler City Town Board. He believes this is a gamble the Board should take. He stated it would be a disaster to walk away at this point. The EDC has done what the Board asked them to do.

Commissioner Cross made a motion to approve the property purchase option for the CAM site in Siler City. Commissioner Petty seconded the motion. There was discussion.

Vice Chair Hales stated no one in the room doubts the sincerity and the need for good jobs in Chatham County and specifically in Siler City. She stated everyone should be paying attention to small business. Small business is essential across all these communities. She has information coming from BMW down in South Carolina on water usage. They don't really know what water usage is and what it is going to entail. The painting operation at BMW uses 132,000 gallons a day which is not a lot in the large scheme of things. These plants are all robotic and air conditioned. There are several distributors to the auto industry in Chatham County or nearby. Today she had a discussion and was told that there may be a 1% chance of an auto manufacturer coming to the United States in the next year and a half. She hears what everyone is saying but doesn't want this to come back to the Board in eight years because the jobs didn't materialize. The option agreement says the owner of the site will be involved in marketing. What does that mean?

Commissioner Howard stated the length of the option is not ideal. There are questions about the price of the land. There has not been a cost benefit analysis. There are questions about the time frame for landing a major manufacturer and whether it is viable for Siler City. To say that a risk is calculated you need all the background information and all the questions answered. She does not think this is the best option that could be negotiated on behalf of the County. She still does not know what a reasonable amount of time is to expect to land a major end user at the CAM site.

Commissioner Petty stated economic development requires an investment. He stated this option is an investment in economic development. This is money the County will need to spend to stay on the cutting edge with the other competitors. The Board discussed affordable housing during an October Work Session. They learned that Siler City suffers from 6% higher unemployment than the rest of the county. 59% of the household incomes are less than \$35,000. That is not per person that is per household. 43% are paying more than 30% of their income for housing. There are 470 Section Eight vouchers giving out every year for housing in Chatham County and there are 258 people on the waiting list. There are 787 homeless students, 86% of which are considered homeless because they double up with other people. 50% of Chatham County students are on free and reduced lunch. As a result of that meeting the Board came up with some ideas of things it wanted to do but everything they discussed did nothing to address the real problem. While they were good solutions and ideas, most of it was more funding to deal with the problems. The way to fix these problems is to provide jobs. He stated the majority of the people in this county do not have an objection to the Board taking this risk. He believes the return is worth the risk.

Commissioner Howard stated she doesn't think anyone is disputing that Siler City is

facing a serious challenge and a high yield end user will make a significant difference for the town and the county. She asked if this is the right time to do this and also is this the best option the County can get. She believes the language in the option is very loose and leaves a lot of room for interpretation.

Commissioner Petty stated he believes not funding it sends the wrong message to the citizens and the State.

Commissioner Howard stated the question is whether the County should move forward with this particular option right now.

C

A motion was made by Commissioner Cross, seconded by Commissioner Petty, to approve the property purchase option for the CAM site in Siler City. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Chairman Crawford, Commissioner Cross and Commissioner Petty

No: 2 - Vice Chair Hales and Commissioner Howard

BOARD PRIORITIES

[16-1656](#)

Vote on a request to adopt a Resolution Honoring Chatham County's Outstanding Volunteers of 2016

Attachments: [Volunteer Resolution 2016.doc](#)
 [Chatham County Volunteer Discriptions 2016.pdf](#)

Chairman Crawford read the resolution into the record.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that Resolution 2016-16 Honoring Chatham County's Outstanding Volunteers of 2016, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

[16-1658](#)

Vote on a request to adopt a Resolution Urging NC Legislature to Act on Behalf of All Its Citizens, and Rescind HB2.

Attachments: [HB2 Resolution.doc](#)

The Chairman read the resolution into the record.

Commissioner Howard made a motion to adopt the resolution, Vice Chair Hales seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Petty stated he does not believe in any level of discrimination. He believes this bill is something that is under review and didn't accomplish its intended purpose. He believes it may work itself out. He would prefer the Board not get in the middle of the fight and let it have an opportunity to work itself out.

Commissioner Howard respectfully disagreed with Commissioner Petty. She

believes confronting this ugly piece of legislation is essential. The more communities that do this the faster it is going to find its way out of the state. She believes every single person in Chatham County should feel supported, safe and respected. This is a far overreach by the State into local governmental authority. She believes Economic Development Corporations should be doing the same thing across the state.

Commissioner Petty stated there are privacy issues with people that want to go into locker rooms and changing facilities and what happens to their right to privacy. He asked if anyone would want to send a child into a changing room or locker room and have mixed company there. He believes that was the intended purpose, it was not intended to discriminate.

Vice Chair Hales stated it may not have been the intention but it is going to be the reality. She is concerned about the lack of State protections and she believes that is what the Governor was trying to address in his executive order. It is an overreach by this Legislature and another slap telling local governments that they don't know what they are doing.

Commissioner Cross stated he doesn't like any of the bill, particularly the part that takes away an employee's right to sue for wrongful termination in the State courts. Most people can't afford to take it to any other court. He would guess if one did take it to Federal court it would be multiple times more expensive and would take much longer.

Chairman Crawford stated the bill is interfering with local government. This was a Trojan horse bill where they said it was about one thing but the content of it was a slap against all the workers. These things would never sail in a regular session. We are trying to invite people into the state to invest, create jobs and enjoy the tourism but then there is this prejudice. It is based on a crude understanding of people who are transgender. If they really care about the safety of women and children they would have called a special session that would have dealt with child abuse. They picked a target they thought they could beat up on. The first time he taught at UNC Chapel Hill he worked with a graduate student as his teaching assistant and he will call her Connie. Connie went through a transition where she became a man named Connor. Under this law Connor has to use the lady's room with Connor's mustache or Connor faces the choice of breaking the law and going where he now feels comfortable going. Chairman Crawford believes this is a bad law from start to finish.

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Vice Chair Hales, that Resolution #2016-17 Urging NC Legislature to Act on Behalf of All Its Citizens and Repeal HB2, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross and Commissioner Howard

No: 1 - Commissioner Petty

MANAGER' S REPORTS

The County Manager reminded the Board members of their one on one budget meetings with staff on April 28th and April 29th.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Vice Chair Hales stated she was surprised to learn that the Chatham Parks and

Recreation Master Plan had not been approved. The County Manager stated the plan was done in 2009 but was never approved by the Board of Commissioners. She stated she would talk with the Recreation Director about the best way to proceed. A light update is probably in order.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Petty, seconded by Commissioner Cross, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty