



MEMORANDUM

Date: July 10, 2007

To: Lancaster County Planning Commission

From: Jack D. Larson, Director of Planning/Land Use *JDL*

Subject: Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs)

The attached article provided by the Northern Neck Planning District Commission is an interesting "read" from the standpoint that "Lancaster County" could be substituted for "Goochland County" as it pertains to updating the comprehensive plan and the objectives for the update. It also refers to State matching funds if a locality does create a PDR program.

July 14, 2007

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Goochland will apply for program to buy easements Supervisors say it will help the county conserve farmland

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By CALVIN R. TRICE
TIMES-DISPATCH STAFF WRITER

Goochland County will try to balance property rights with growth controls through a

state easement program established to preserve farmland.

The county Board of Supervisors agreed yesterday to apply for a Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services program that allows the local government to purchase conservation easements from property owners.

Growth pressures are escalating for Goochland, which lies just west of populous Henrico County. But as developers and homebuyers turn to Goochland for a rural setting beyond the Richmond area's more developed suburbs, Goochland's residents and government leaders want to maintain their land's rural character.

The county is updating its comprehensive plan that outlines which areas will be set aside for business, industry, and new homes and which should remain undeveloped. The Goochland government has taken a relatively conservative approach to growth by trying to direct it to select areas.

However, as in other rural areas throughout the state, farmers looking to retire often have nothing but their land values to support them into old age.

At yesterday's regular meeting, the supervisors approved an application for the Local Purchase of Development Rights Program. Run by the Agriculture Department's Office of Farmland Preservation, the program provides matching funds for localities to buy conservation easements from farmers whose land counties want to protect from development.

Goochland has set aside nearly \$1 million for such nondevelopment easements.

The county government has thus far restricted major development to the eastern end of the county near the Henrico line with plans to cluster further development around nine crossroads communities throughout the county.

The development-rights program would provide compensation to landowners outside those growth areas without bringing in unwanted growth, board Chairman Joseph Lacy Jr. said at yesterday's meeting.

The supervisors anticipate passing a resolution at an upcoming meeting that would authorize county workers to implement the program.
Contact Calvin R. Trice at (540) 932-3674 or ctrice@timesdispatch.com.

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