

**Planning Board Minutes
January 12, 2016**

The Duplin County Planning Board met on January 12, 2016. This was the first meeting since the August 11, 2015 meeting. Members present included: Charles Edwards, Jr., Bobbie Jean Rivenbark, J.B. Merritt, Deborah Kornegay, and Ann Herring. Others present: Elizabeth Stalls (Duplin County) and Javier Latre (ESA Renewables, LLC).

The meeting was called to order by Charles Edwards at 6:58pm. Charles welcomed the new County Planner, Elizabeth Stalls, and the new Planning Board member, Ann Herring.

A motion was made by Ann Herring, seconded by J.B. Merritt, to approve the minutes from the August 11, 2015 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board received a request for site plan approval for an ESA Renewables, LLC project off W. Charity Road. The project is situated on a tract of land that is not next to a public road, and a 30-foot easement will be necessary for site access. The developer has requested a variance to the 300-foot setback distance from existing residences. The reason for the requested variance is because the access road easement is within 300 feet of an existing residence and church. A signed easement has been obtained from the owner of the property on which the access road would cross. Discussion was held by the Board members regarding the church sited 267 feet from the proposed access road. The Board decided it will not grant a variance to the ordinance without written approval from the church's governing body. Board Chairman, Charles Edwards, Jr., asked Elizabeth Stalls to check with the county attorney, Wendy Sivori, about the necessary requirements of the letter from the church. The Board agreed that they were comfortable with the residence due to the signed easement, but wanted to receive communication or acknowledgement from the church before deciding about a variance. The other option would be for the access road to be moved further away from the church outside of the 300-foot setback distance. Discussion was closed. No vote taken regarding the request for a variance and will be reconsidered once further action is taken regarding the church within the 300-foot setback distance.

Charles Edwards asked Elizabeth Stalls to share some background information about herself with the board. Charles asked the board if they were agreeable with only holding meeting as needed instead of set meetings each month. Everyone on the board agreed that "as needed" was the preferred schedule. Elizabeth will continue to check with Charles each month about holding the board meeting and will communicate via letter with board members regarding whether or not the meeting will be held.

There being no other business requiring the board's action, a motion was made by Deborah Kornegay, seconded by Bobbie Jean Rivenbark, to adjourn.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is February 9, 2016.

Submitted,

Elizabeth Stalls
County Planner