

# SUMMARY OF INTRODUCTORY WORK SESSION

## DRAGON RUN LAND USE POLICY AUDIT

April 7, 2003 - Saluda, Virginia

### ATTENDEES :

Jack Miller	Middlesex County Supervisor
Matt Higgins	Middlesex County Planning Director
Lorna Anderberg	Friends of Dragon Run
Mike Anderberg	Friends of Dragon Run
David Birdsall	Resource Management Service, Inc.
Anne Ducey-Ortiz	Gloucester County Planning Dept.
Patricia Tyrrell	USDA - NRCS, Tidewater Resource Conservation and Development Council
Paul Koll	King & Queen County Zoning Administrator
Andy Lacatell	The Nature Conservancy
David Fuss	MPPDC
Vladimir Gavrilovic	Paradigm Design

Prepared by: *Vladimir Gavrilovic*  
PARADIGM DESIGN

*April 14, 2003*

### GENERAL ISSUES

1. The reason that the Dragon Run area has been preserved in a relatively pristine state is a tradition of STEWARDSHIP for the past 100 years or more
2. The traditional "economic engines" in the watershed have been FORESTRY and FARMING
3. Should the Dragon Run Watershed have a special "standing" under the Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Ordinances of each County?
4. Key Ecological factors that may influence Local Land Use Policies:
  - Forestry Resources (including fragmentation)
  - Aquatic Resources /Water Quality
  - Invasive Species (See presentation by Greg Garman/VCU)

5. Currently low development pressure in the watershed due to:
  - Existing protection zones & districts discourage intensive development
  - Development constraints in the watershed including flooding, wetlands and poor soils
6. There is growing concern that “ENGINEERED SYSTEMS” could open environmentally sensitive areas that don’t support conventional septic systems up to development
7. The watershed is moderately subdivided in the lower portion with relatively large landholdings in the upper portion
8. Current Health Department regulations that allow sewage/sludge application on farmland 25’ from water are creating an environmental problem.
9. The current requirements for Agricultural/Forest/Wetland BMP’s are INCONSISTENT and confusing to property owners
10. A very big Issue is “USER FRIENDLINESS” of regulations for average citizens
11. The goal of regulations should, at a minimum, be to support VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE by residents

## ISSUES BY COUNTY

### MIDDLESEX COUNTY

1. There are a number of businesses in “Grandfathered” commercial zones in the area.
2. Currently low development pressure on the watershed
3. Route 17 corridor doesn’t have sewer and water but is designated as a “Community Corridor” so it could experience some growth.
4. Pitts Lumber and the Virginia Speedway are major businesses in the County. (potential campground upgrade for the Speedway)

5. The 5,000 acre wooded wetlands up to Rt. 602 are potentially threatened by the prospect of future wetland logging
6. Middlesex and King and Queen require BMPs for Agricultural and Forestal Uses - a plan is filed with the County but the Forestry Department is the lead agency (Counties are hands off)
7. The County has a Dragon Run Conservation district in the watershed that protects against development in sensitive areas and is based on setbacks and soil types
8. The County has a Resource Husbandry district that protects against the fragmentation of agricultural and forestal lands (100 acre minimum lot sizes)
9. The County has Land Use Taxation but no Agricultural/Forestal Districts
10. The Middlesex Comprehensive Plan's number one goal is "Preserve Open Space" BUT is it implemented through the Zoning Ordinance?
11. Middlesex recently had a very successful training session for landowners on the Chesapeake Bay act regulations

### GLOUCESTER COUNTY

1. Residential Development is not a big threat in the Dragon Run Watershed but the Route 17/Route 33 corridor/intersection may have increasing pressure for "Community Uses" (RC-1, B-4, I-1 zoning)
2. Family Subdivisions are a potential issue in the watershed area
3. There are no Water and Sewer extensions planned in the watershed area
4. The 17/33 intersection has a number of Non-Conforming uses that could affect the watershed
5. This study should look at the issue of permitted uses in the zones that are in the watershed area
6. 2 of the 3 direct discharge permits in the watershed are in the lower Dragon Run area (is there a threat of more point-source pollution in this portion?)
7. Gloucester has voluntary Agricultural/Forestal Districts
8. There is a wastewater treatment plant at Rappahannock Community College

KING & QUEEN COUNTY

1. The County is currently updating its Comprehensive Plan
2. The Dragon Run SAMP process will help inform the County's Comprehensive Plan Update
3. A draft of an OVERLAY zone for the Dragon Run area could be a helpful outcome of this project
4. Some statement of "Visionary Compliance" among the four Counties would be a useful outcome of the SAMP process.
5. Residential development is limited somewhat by the requirements of major/minor subdivisions – a MAJOR subdivision requires rezoning to Residential Use
6. Average development over 16 % or 5000 sq. ft. impervious cover in the County requires Water Quality impact assessment
7. The watershed is primarily in Agricultural zoning and use (except for the Landfill) which allows Single Family Houses and a minimum lot size of 2 acres
8. The Millers Square Subdivision has a communal well water treatment system

NEXT WORKSESSION

- Tuesday, May 13, 6PM-9PM at the MPPDC office in Saluda