



Post Office Box 1314, Carrboro, NC 27510

Community group begins

Preserve Rural Orange is a non-profit community organization that formed in September of 2008, in response to the University of North Carolina’s plans to build a new airport within Orange County. Of several proposed sites, the top two lay within Bingham Township, (the southwest region of Orange County). At that time, very little information was available regarding the University’s plans for the airport. Residents were surprised and concerned as they began to learn more about the threat of an airport.

Bingham Township has a long history as an agricultural area of the county. Dairy farms flourish here, and families have farmed these same thousands of acres of land for generations. The land includes the Haw River, Collins Creek, and Cane Creek watersheds and the source of Chapel Hill and Carrboro’s drinking water. Rural residents share a commitment to preserving their farms, woodlands and way of life. Historically, neighbors have come together over concerns that would have impacted the environmental integrity of watershed land, woodlands and farms.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
Community group begins	1
What we have accomplished	1
Opportunities to get involved	2
Timeline for completion of organization	2

In the fall of 2008, community volunteers focused efforts on opposing the proposed airport. In order to create a lasting organization, residents founded Preserve Rural Orange as a nonprofit organization to address current and future development plans that would adversely affect the rural community in southwest Orange County. We are committed to working for the preservation of our rural lands and community. We work to gather accurate information, communicate with public officials and organizations, research issues, and share information through publicized updates and community educational forums.

What we have accomplished - September 2008 to present

Looking back over the last six months, here is an overview of some of the activities and achievements of Preserve Rural Orange (PRO):

At the beginning of September, 2008, a handful of neighbors and local businesses had already begun circulating a petition opposing UNC’s plans to build a new airport in Orange County. By October, (and many additional volunteers later!) over 2000 signatures appeared on the petition presented to county commissioners.

More volunteers from the community assembled and formed

ad hoc committees. These committees researched issues related to the proposed general aviation airport, met with public and university officials, raised public awareness and contacted the media.

In September and October PRO sponsored two public meetings held at the White Cross Recreation Center. Several hundred rural residents and friends came together to listen to speakers, offer viewpoints, share resources, and organize a well-reasoned opposition to the proposed airport.

Please see *What we have accomplished* on page 3

Opportunities to get involved

Please consider volunteering to serve on one of the following committees or groups. Every committee needs additional members! If you have volunteered in the past and have not been contacted, please give us your name again. Some committees have not yet become active, and those who volunteered may not have been contacted.

Steering Committee

Alex Castro	Cliff Leath
Patricia Fullagar	Tom Schopler
Erin Haygood	Laura Streitfeld

Timeline for completion of organization

The Steering Committee of Preserve Rural Orange, at this time, is made up of six members. We need additional members to better represent our community, diversify ideas, and spread responsibilities among more people. We have postponed some decisions in hopes of putting these decisions to a larger committee.

Our timeline for the completion of organization is as follows:

Through March 31st we are collecting nomination forms for Steering Committee members. During the month of April, nominations will be circulated. We hope to welcome up to six additional members to the Steering Committee during our regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Monday, May 4th. Nomination forms are available either enclosed in this newsletter, attached to our Community Survey, or available on request from admin@preserveruralorange.org. For further details on this process, please contact Erin Haygood, Legal Committee Chair at ehaygood@gmail.com

Currently the Steering Committee is circulating a survey. We want to collect as much community input as possible as we establish organizational decisions and policies. Please fill out a survey if you have not already. Surveys will be collected on March 31st 2009. Responses will be compiled

Committees

Finance Committee (FC)... Fundraising/ Development Subcommittee (FDC)... Legal Committee (LC)... Media & Publicity Committee (MPC)... Newsletter Subcommittee (NC)... Outreach and Membership Committee (OMC)... Political Committee (PC)... Research and History Committee (RHC)

Project Groups

**Waste Transfer Station
Animal Research Facility**

Please look for a more detailed description of committees and project groups on our website in the near future. To learn more about ways to get involved, please e-mail your contact information to admin@preserveruralorange.org. The chair of the committee or group will contact you directly.

and reviewed at the April 6th, 2009 Steering Committee meeting. An additional meeting may be convened. Questions regarding the survey collection process can be directed to Erin Haygood, ehaygood@gmail.com

On June 1st, 2009 the Steering Committee will approve a final draft of bylaws and resolutions, to be published for community comment. On July 6th, 2009, the Steering Committee will vote on Bylaws and Resolutions. If approved, the Legal Committee will then begin the process of application for 501(c)(3) status.

Following July 6th, the Membership and Outreach Committee will begin the process of enrolling members. Memberships will be available with minimal or no dues. Every member will be eligible to vote in the September 2009 annual meeting.

During the September 2009 annual meeting a new Steering Committee/Board of Directors will be seated. Current Steering Committee members will be eligible for Nomination to the 2009 Board. Committees will be chaired by a member of the Steering Committee/Board.

What we have accomplished continued from page 1

By November, a loosely formed Steering Committee launched the Preserve Rural Orange website. The Media and Publicity Committee printed yard signs and bumper stickers reading “No Airport.” Soon these could be seen along roads and in yards throughout the county (thank you to everyone who displayed signs and bumper stickers!).

The Legal Committee made an application to the North Carolina Secretary of State and received Articles of Incorporation as a nonprofit agency. The Research Committee collected data on flights at Horace Williams and information on many regional airports throughout NC.

In addition to the airport issue, committee members and volunteers began to gather facts about the Orange County Waste Transfer site selection, and a project group formed to lead this initiative. Volunteers also began collecting information about the UNC Animal Research Facility on Orange Chapel-Clover Garden Church Road.

In December and January PRO collaborated with photographer Jesse Kalisher to present the “No Airport: White Cross” photo exhibit. At the exhibit opening on January 9, 2009, community members and supporters celebrated UNC Chancellor Holden Thorp’s announcement of his decision not to create an airport authority and to move flights to RDU.

In January PRO members attended a tour with Orange County commissioners of the OWASA property chosen as a possible site for the county transfer station. In February, a representative from Preserve Rural Orange joined the Orange County Commissioners on their tour of the Greensboro Transfer Station and wrote an informational update for our website.

This month, Preserve Rural Orange is bringing the community an informational meeting on the transfer station issue and making plans for the future.



October 27, 2008 meeting – Photo by Greg Rapp



Billie & Warren Ray
Photo by Jesse Kalisher © Jesse Kalisher

Donations

Please consider making a donation to cover our costs of printing, mailings, and website services. At this time donations are not yet tax-exempt.

PRO will apply for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status as soon as possible in 2009. The Legal Committee will undertake this project and welcomes your help!

The first annual meeting of Preserve Rural Orange will be held in September 2009.

More information to come!

Preserve Rural Orange

Post Office Box 1314
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To join and receive news updates,
send contact information to:
admin@preserveruralorange.org

For more information, contact us at:
info@preserveruralorange.org

(919) 801-7294

...to preserve, strengthen, and defend
the viability of the rural community
of Orange County, North Carolina,
its watershed land, farms and
woodlands...

Upcoming meetings

Solid Waste Advisory Board Special Meeting Tuesday, March 31, 2009, 7:00 pm

Solid Waste office, 1207 Eubanks Road, Chapel Hill
Contact: Gayle Wilson at (919) 968-2885

Orange County Commissioners Meeting Tuesday April 21, 2009, 7:00 pm

Southern Human Services Center, 2510 Homestead Road
Presentations on transfer station by county staff
and Olver, Inc. engineering consultant
Contact: Donna Baker at (919) 245-2130

PRO Animal Research Facility Meeting (date TBA)

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

<http://preserveruralorange.org>



Preserve Rural Orange.org

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