



September 15, 2008

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Dr. George Lucier
Chairman, Chatham County Board of Commissioners
12 East Street, P.O. Box 1809
Pittsboro, NC 27312

Dear Chairman Lucier:

This letter is to express the support of the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA) for the rezoning and conditional use permit application by Historic Mann's Chapel Event Center & Café for a property at Poythress and Lamont Norwood Road. The proposed event center and café will be a model project for the development of Chatham County's local food system, and so will (1) be desirable for the public welfare, (2) will enhance the integrity and character of surrounding districts and benefit the health, safety and welfare of the community, and (3) will be consistent with the objectives of the Land Conservation and Development Plan.

Based in Pittsboro, CFSA is a membership-based organization of more than 1,100 farmers and consumers in North and South Carolina that is committed to supporting locally-based organic food systems. Chatham County has lead the region in its support for sustainable farming and food system development, and the further development of that system is an important policy objective for our community which has been recognized by numerous County board and authorities, including the Chatham County Cooperative Extension Advisory Board. The proposal for the Historic Mann's Chapel Event Center and Café represents a logical step in the further development of our local food system.

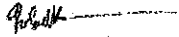
By restoring an historic country church as a community events center and café serving products from a neighborhood organic farm, the proposal offers a sustainable approach to preserving and promoting the best of Chatham County -- our history, rural values, open spaces and farmland, and strong sense of shared community. The farm on Gilmore Road, one mile from the Chapel and owned by the Faircloth family for over a century, would gain renewed life as a bustling center of organic farming, providing food Chatham County's people.

The project also would create a locally-owned business that enriches our community by providing an inclusive work environment and employee profit sharing, incorporating "green building" strategies throughout the renovation, and by contributing a share of profits for local land preservation.

CFSA believes this sort of business is good for farmers, good for the community, and good for the land. It delivers on the triple bottom line of sustainable development, and thus contributes ample benefits to the community to justify the rezoning and conditional use permit sought in this application.

I welcome you to contact me for any additional information that I might provide with respect to this project and sustainable food system development in Chatham County.

Sincerely,



Roland McReynolds, Esq.
Executive Director
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association