

# Acquisition of Conservation Easement (ACE) Committee October 2015

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## Annual Report of the (ACE Committee)

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**Committee Members:** Sherry Buttrick, Richard Keeling, Bruce Dotson, Steve Mclean, Jason Woodfin, EN Garnett, Rob Farrell and Ed Smith

**Meeting Frequency:** The 2nd Monday of each month. Though meetings are scheduled monthly, we end up meeting 5-6 times/year.

**Summary:**

1. Promote the program, in cooperation with the program administrator, by providing educational materials to the public and conducting informational meetings.
2. Review the ranking of applications recommended by the program administrator, and make its recommendation to the board of supervisors as to which conservation easements should be purchased.
3. Periodically review the program's regulations, guidelines, administrative procedures and promotion and recommend to the board of supervisors or the program administrator, as appropriate, any changes needed to maintain the program's consistency with the comprehensive plan, or to improve the administration, implementation and effectiveness of the program.

For 2015, the ACE Committee oversaw the acquisition of 3 new properties (Henley, Woodson and Stargell) which achieved the following:

- protected 953 acres
- eliminated 25 development lots
- protected over 350 acres of "prime" farm and forestland
- protected 465 acres of mountaintop
- preserved 2 working family farms
- protected land with 1,600 feet of state road frontage
- protected almost 7,300 feet of stream frontage with riparian buffers
- 17,000 feet of common boundary with other protected lands

In addition, it approved a request to appraise the top 3 ranked properties (Sweeney, Clark and Dollard) which later this year could result in:

- protecting 584+ acres
- eliminating 29 development lots
- protecting nearly 400 acres of "prime" farmland
- protecting 95 acres of mountaintop
- protecting land with 2,000 feet of state road frontage (including 1,000 feet along Route 53, a major entrance corridor)
- protecting over 8,000 feet of stream frontage with riparian buffers including 6,900 feet along the Rivanna River, a state scenic river

- preserving 2 working family farms
- 17,500 feet of common boundary with other protected lands

**Conclusion:** The ACE Committee will continue its main functions (above) and periodically review and revise the ranking criteria so they are more evenly weighted. Committee members should individually reach out to more prospective clients and take a more pro-active approach to recruiting new landowners. A major goal is to reach 10,000 protected acres and restore dedicated funding to at least \$1,000,000 per year.