

# Land Stewardship and Conservation Task Force

## Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the 2007 Interim

**June 6, 2007**

The 3rd meeting of the Land Stewardship and Conservation Task Force was held on Wednesday, June 6, 2007, at 10:00 AM, in Room 131 of the Capitol Annex.

Representative Robin L. Webb, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Representative Robin L. Webb, Co-Chair; Hugh Archer, Stephen Coleman, Jerry Deaton, Doug Doerrfeld, Don Dott, Jon Gasset, Greg Kuhn, William Martin, Jerry Miller, Duane Murner, Gary Verst, and Bruce Williams.

Guests: Tim Thomas (attended for Teresa Hill); Jeff Harper, Kentucky Farm Bureau (attended for Laura Knoth); Bob Wiess (attended for Juva Barber); Doug Wampler, Oldham Ahead; Karen Keown, Kentucky Heritage Council; Donna Neary, Kentucky Heritage Council; Rachel Kennedy, Kentucky Heritage Council; Mary Jean Eddins, Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund; Leah MacSwords, Division of Forestry; Lisa Chapman; Libby Jones, PACE Board; Cary Peter, River Fields; and Mackenzie Royce, Bluegrass Conservancy.

LRC Staff: Hank Marks, Katie Carney, Mark Mitchell, and John Scott.

Co-chair, Rep. Robin Webb called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM. A quorum was present and the minutes of the April 24, 2007, meeting were approved.

Rep. Webb called Ms Donna Neary, executive director of the Kentucky Heritage Council and the state historic preservation officer forward to present information about her agency. Ms Neary stated her feeling that no discussion of land stewardship and conservation would be complete without considering archeological, historic and cultural elements along with natural environmental components. She discussed the national Historic Preservation Act of 1996 and the history of the historic preservation movement in Kentucky and how her agency came into being. She identified the three areas of the Kentucky Heritage Council's efforts as focused on site protection, site identification and site development. She noted that over the years the definition of historic preservation has been broadened to include cultural landscapes, such as battlefields, cemeteries, farms, and features, such as rock fences and iconic landscapes of Kentucky. She noted that any landscape altered by human habitation is defined as a cultural landscape. She discussed at length the preservation of archeological sites. At this point, she discussed current threats to Kentucky's natural and historic character from urban sprawl, road construction, industrialization, and environmental degradation. She discussed the ways in which preserving towns can result in preserving land. She discussed the role of the Kentucky

Heritage Council in preserving the Bluegrass, and the legal definition and tax benefits associated with Historically Important Land Areas. She concluded by noting the existence of competition between those who want to preserve historic and cultural resources and those involved in the preservation and conservation of land, and stated a desire to work with the task force and other conservation groups to identify historic and cultural resources on Kentucky's landscape in order to preserve and interpret them for the public.

Next, the task force received a presentation from Doug Wampler of Oldham Ahead. Oldham Ahead advocates for tax incentives for land conservation based on the Virginia program. Mr. Wampler discussed at length the Virginia Land conservation program and tax credit incentives. He noted that Virginia has very broad-based support for conservation. In this regard, he stated that Virginia has preserved nearly 3.5 million acres since 2000 and the current goal is to protect another 400,000 acres by 2010. Between 1998 and 2000 there were 14 conservation funding ballot measures proposed in Virginia, and 13 passed. Time did not permit a second presentation of Oldham Ahead's proposal for a similar tax credit incentive statute in Kentucky. However, the hard copy of his PowerPoint presentation was provided to the task force.

The task force reconvened after a lunch break and received testimony from LRC staff assigned to the task force. Mr. John Scott provided information relating to tax credits generally, and to recent proposed tax credit legislation in Kentucky. Mr. Mark Mitchell discussed statutory law in Kentucky providing for local government approaches to land access, conservation, and preservation. He also discussed more general approaches that may be used by counties and cities to promote land protection.

After the above presentations, the task force reviewed lists of concerns, findings, and recommendations for use in the final report. There was an open discussion of concerns, followed by deliberations and agreement on findings and recommendations for inclusion in a final report. Rep. Webb stated that the final report would be "long" on findings, and very general regarding recommendations, especially funding recommendations. She noted that she had prefiled a bill to reauthorize the task force.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their participation, and the meeting was adjourned.