

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 28, 2002

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Michael H. Drewry, Administrator, Purchase of Development Rights Program

SUBJECT: Purchase of Development Rights Program - Update

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The Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program was last discussed with the Board of Supervisors on November 27, 2001, at which time the Board adopted the PDR Program ordinance. The general information contained in this memorandum and the details presented to the Board at the work session will be to inform and update the Board on the status of the PDR Program.

Since the adoption of the PDR Program ordinance, the five member PDR Committee was appointed by the Board, and the PDR Program ranking system was approved by the County Administrator and the Director of Development Management. Also since the adoption of the ordinance, informational materials have been developed and published, citizen awareness and education has begun, and an initial property application period is occurring. Citizen awareness consisted of two mailings to all James City County landowners who own agricultural real property consisting of 20 acres or more, advertisements and articles in the Virginia Gazette, articles in FYI and the Ships Log, information on the James City County website, and information was presented on Channel 48. Citizen education consisted of presentations to area citizen groups and organizations, a landowner workshop on conservation easements and tax benefits, and individual meetings with landowners to discuss land preservation and the PDR Program. During the implementation of citizen awareness and education, an initial property application period is occurring from March 1, 2002, until May 31, 2002.

Upon the initial application period ending on May 31, 2002, the applications will be evaluated according to the PDR Program criteria for eligibility and priority. During June, the PDR Committee will review and prioritize the properties and an appraisal Request for Proposal (RFP) will be advertised. In July, it is anticipated that property recommendations will be presented to the Board for approval and final negotiations will occur. In August, property appraisals will begin and upon completion, the County Administrator will invite landowners to sell a conservation easement on selected properties. If there are no title issues and upon the final approval by the Board, it is planned that conservation easement closings will occur before the end of the present year.

PDR Programs are relatively new to the Commonwealth of Virginia and the citizens of James City County. In the initial property application period consisting of 90 days, a total of 17 James City County landowners expressed an interest in applying. A breakdown of this interest as of May 21, 2002, is as follows: five completed applications representing a total of 316.5 acres have been received; an additional 13 landowners representing 2,155.4 acres have requested an application or are actively discussing applying by May 31, 2002.

Further details will be provided on the status and goals of the PDR Program at the Board of Supervisors Work Session. If you have any questions on the PDR Program, please contact me.

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Michael H. Drewry