

**CAC Meeting
Minutes**

December 17, 2025

Committee Attendance: Gene, Naisa, Lee, Jennifer, Deborah, Julie, and Tyler

Others in attendance: Sophie and Ashish

The meeting started at 5:31 pm. Gene reviewed the agenda and opened the meeting. Sophie shared that the Conservancy's 501(c)(3) status was approved by the IRS earlier in December and noted it will be shared with the community in the Conservancy's annual letter.

Resident Input

Julie shared that there is a significant beaver problem near Tulip Poplar Pond near the trail and bridge that heads to Grassland Grove on the way to North Star. Trees have been taken down by the beavers and flooded the woodlands. Sophie will talk to Land Stewardship team.

Some of the Facebook comments about the Deer Management Program were discussed especially the initial lack of transparency about the resident/non-resident makeup of the hunters. It was also shared that many residents who hunt feel like they don't know how to apply or what the eligibility requirements are. There was a discussion about the original intent of the program as a wildlife management tool rather than a hunting club which has informed decision making over the decade plus lifespan of the program, but that at the same time it is important for residents to provide feedback. The CAC liked the idea of inviting the DWR officer who guides the program to our January or February meeting to discuss these matters and solicit resident feedback.

Deborah suggested concessions and food trucks at the pool as a community engagement idea and potential revenue-source. This is an HOA amenity, and the Conservancy would need to invest money and labor to bring concessions to the Lodge pool, for example, which most likely would not provide payback given that this is not our mission/area of expertise.

Board Advisor Updates

Ashish provided a board advisor update on fundraising. He discussed grant opportunities, including Regenerate Virginia (DEQ, Section 19) and a Healthy Soils grant. Our Farm Director applied for this grant requesting taller chicken fencing to expand the land where our laying hens can safely graze and improve soil use and a used compost spreader. Ashish also mentioned that there might be some solar funding or solar placement opportunities for Conservancy land, the Farm, packing shed, and HOA buildings, if there is interest from the HOA Board/staff. He

recommended that the next step is to review Conservancy utility bills to identify the best candidates for solar conversion. Solar panel visibility on agricultural land was shared as something that really needed to be considered. Ashish also mentioned that PEC has had great success with corporate volunteer days and that we should consider corporate partnerships especially with data center companies.

Board advisor updates continued with Karyn's comments, shared by email since she could not attend the meeting, on gauging community direction and ensuring grants are mission-driven. The group agreed it would be useful to review results from the community survey conducted approximately three years ago to identify what has and hasn't been acted on and use that to inform a new survey effort.

Discussion centered on the key themes already brainstormed by Naisa and how to best act on that with the CAC. The group discussed that they still hope to collaborate with the RAC and Gene will reach out again to discuss. There was conversation about whether the survey should be developed in-house or professionally with pros and cons shared on both sides especially that doing it in-house would save money or would there be more trust/completion of the survey if done by a third party. Naisa will send out an email asking for CAC volunteers to work on a community survey.

Education Discussion

The education discussion focused on 2026 Conservancy opportunities tied to 501(c)(3), grants, and trails, with interest in rotating topics (including conservation practices). Sophie shared that two grants have been submitted and that an invasive species grant application with the county (Tree of Heaven and others) is progressing. Sophie noted the property tax relief application tied to 501(c)(3) is due December 31 and could save approximately \$50,000 annually.

She outlined the key benefits of the conversion:

- Relaunch the DSFP Produce Fund with our own fundraising portal
- Potential relief from county real estate, personal, and vehicle taxes
- Discounts
- Corporate sponsors, donations
- Grants

Other benefits discussed included software discounts and eligibility for Google nonprofit online advertising. Julie suggested exploring a potential partnership with a GMU and their conservation program/Institute for the Earth. The group also discussed short "slick sheets" (brief pitch materials) and simple methods to collect resident feedback at events (e.g., one-question cards).

Committee Business

Committee business included fundraising coordination (Gene and Tom), survey planning (Gene and Naisa), and Conservancy 101 (Naisa). This included the need for “slick sheets” – one pagers about various important topics, brochures for realtors, an interactive map of Conservancy/HOA amenities and leveraging/updating the Conservancy’s existing trails app (e.g. remove Bear Barn Tree House). There was also discussion about the 2025 program which provided welcome bags and a visit from a volunteer to each new homeowner (building upon the 2024 effort to send a welcome email to all new residents). Julie who participates in the effort shared that most people are not home, so she now has a postcard to leave recommending that the residents come to the BH to pick up their welcome bag. For this group, it was discussed that one pager with whom to contact for what between the Conservancy and HOA would be incredibly helpful. Finally, the group discussed creating a CAC postcard asking for feedback that committee members could share with neighbors and have at events. The group briefly checked alignment with strategic plan goals: engagement, operational excellence in land/farm management, and diversified funding.

Actions / Next Steps

- Sophie to bring deer management information to the January or February CAC meeting and include a knowledgeable speaker.
- Form a task group for the survey work; Naisa to send the initial meeting invite.
 - Review the prior community survey (approximately three years old), identify gaps, and use results to inform a new survey.
- Committee to review Conservancy 101 draft and identify enhancements (including an interactive amenities map and integration of the trails app per Lee’s email).
- Consider holding CAC tours of the Fleetwood Operations and Farm in March.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30 pm.
- Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 – 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm at Boat House.