



## Legislation Text

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File #: 19-0525, Version: 1

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**Item:**

**Approve the Final Budget for the Amed Tilley Farm Conservation Easement and Approve Capital Project Amendment No. 20CPA000011 Decreasing the Open Space & Farmland Preservation Capital Project 4730DC083 by \$82,850 and Budget Amendment No. 20BCC000030 transferring \$82,850 to the General Fund to Support the Purchase of the Glenn Farm Conservation Easement**

**Date of BOCC Meeting: November 12, 2019**

**Request for Board Action:**

The Board is requested to approve the final budget for the Amed Tilley Conservation Easement and approve Capital Project Amendment No. 20CPA000011 decreasing the Open Space & Farmland Preservation Capital Project 4730DC083 by \$82,850 and Budget Amendment No. 20BCC000030 transferring \$82,850 to the General Fund to support the purchase of the 34.5 acre Amed Tilley Farm conservation easement. The property is part of the historic Amed Tilley Farm, originally a tobacco farm, that includes the Amed Tilley House ([www.opendurham.org/buildings/amed-tilley-house](http://www.opendurham.org/buildings/amed-tilley-house) <<http://www.opendurham.org/buildings/amed-tilley-house>>), a County-registered historic home built in 1904. John Monroe purchased the property for his specialty nursery, Architectural Trees, that was known for its distinctive and unusual plants and large mature trees. In 2010 Mr. Monroe planted over 700 blueberry plants of five different varieties for a U-Pick blueberry farm, which is currently managed by Family Farmstead.

The federal Agricultural Lands Easement Program (ALE) grant awarded to the farm will pay for 50 percent of the federally approved appraisal value of the easement rights. The appraisal approved by the federal program has to meet federal standards, and the approved value for the easement was \$160,500. The federal grant pays for \$80,250 of the land cost of the easement; the remaining 50 percent is provided by Durham County plus associated closing costs. No new county funding is needed since the \$82,850 for the county's share of the acquisition and closing costs was previously set aside from open space capital project funds for this project when the Board approved the purchase option for the easement. The attached budget summarizes the total cost for this easement. The transfer of \$82,850 from the open space and farmland capital project account to the General fund for the purchase of the land is a technical transfer that provides the Finance Department with a more concise end of year accounting of assets purchased by the County in each fiscal year. In addition, the County Manager was previously authorized to execute the final easement documents as well.

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:** This acquisition helps to implement Strategic Plan Goal 4, "Environmental Stewardship and Community Prosperity," by increasing the amount of open space and farmland that has been protected by Durham County.

**Resource Persons:** Jane Korest, Open Space and Real Estate Manager; Celeste Burns, Open Space and Real Estate Coordinator, Peri Manns, Deputy Director of Environmental Engineering, Keith Lane, Budget Director

**County Manager's Recommendation:** The County Manager recommends that the Board approve the final budget for the Amed Tilley Conservation Easement and approve Capital Project Amendment No.

20CPA000011 decreasing the Open Space & Farmland Preservation Capital Project 4730DC083 by \$82,250, and Budget Amendment No. 20BCC000030 transferring \$82,850 to the General Fund to support the purchase of the Glenn Farm conservation easement

County Manager: \_\_\_\_\_