

**We'll See You At Upstate Forever's
Second Annual Bid & Boogie
Fundraiser!**

October 23, 2001

6-9 p.m.

Johann's Restaurant, Greenville

For more information, see www.upstateforever.org/BB2001.pdf

UPSTATE UPDATE NUMBER 26

October 2, 2001

1. Support The Kind-Gilchrest-Boehlert Amendment to the Farm Bill!

The Agriculture Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives has been trying to rush a \$170 billion, 10-year farm bill to the floor that ignores the growing demand from communities and farmers for environmental protection and farmland conservation. The vote was originally scheduled for September 13 but was postponed after the horrific events of September 11. It now appears that the vote will take place tomorrow or Thursday.

A substitute bill, known as the "Kind-Gilchrest-Boehlert Amendment," H.R. 2375, has been introduced and represents what is probably the best opportunity that we will have in the next 10 years to support voluntary, incentive-based farmland conservation programs, improve water quality and enhance wildlife habitat. It will:

- Preserve farmland by providing \$500 million per year, which can be matched by states, for conservation easements
- Provide \$500 million per year for protecting wildlife habitat
- Provide \$2 billion per year for agricultural non-point source pollution abatement
- Preserve 250,000 acres of wetlands per year through the Wetlands Reserve Program
- Provide \$100 million per year for urban and community forestry projects

- Provide funding for farmers’ markets and regional food systems.

The Kind-Gilchrest-Boehlert Amendment already has 140 co-sponsors, with at least 20 more leaning that way. The magic number for passage is 218.

Conspicuously absent from the list of co-sponsors is any representative from South Carolina. The two Upstate representatives are Lindsey Graham and Jim DeMint. ***Please contact them today and urge them to co-sponsor and vote for H.R. 2375, the Kind-Gilchrest-Boehlert Amendment.*** Here is how to reach them:

Representative Jim DeMint
 Phone: 202-225-6030
 Fax: 202-226-1177

Representative Lindsey Graham
 Phone: 202-225-5301
 Fax: 202-225-3216

Thank you for your support!

2. Greenville County Council Committee Refuses To Take Action On New Standards for Commercial Parking Lots.

We are very disappointed that Greenville County Council’s Public Service, Planning and Development (“PSPD”) Committee has refused to approve a new landscaping ordinance for commercial parking lots in Greenville County. The Greenville County Planning Commission has been working on this ordinance for over a year. A broad-based committee of developers, builders, planners, conservationists and interested citizens, including ***Upstate Forever*** Associate Director Diane Eldridge, was appointed by the Commission to study the issues and draft an ordinance. The committee ***unanimously*** recommended the ordinance to the Planning Commission, which in turn ***unanimously*** recommended it to the PSPD Committee.

Upstate Forever believes that the ordinance should apply to non-commercial parking lots and that tree protection should also be required. The committee, however, was unable to reach a consensus on those issues. But at least this ordinance would establish basic, minimum landscaping standards for commercial parking lots and not allow any more massive, treeless seas of asphalt in the county. The benefits of landscaping are not

merely aesthetic—there are also significant air quality and water quality benefits.

Phyllis Henderson, a member of the PSPD Committee, is quoted in The Greenville News on August 19, 2001 as expressing a preference for incentives. We agree that incentives should be provided in the ordinance, but they should be directed at encouraging developers to do better than the minimum. We will never achieve an effective ordinance if it merely encourages developers to meet minimum standards.

Ms. Henderson is also quoted as saying that enforcement of the ordinance would be an “administrative nightmare.” The developers on the committee do not share that view. In fact, enforcement of this ordinance will be considerably easier than enforcement of the county building code. It is not that hard to count and identify trees!

Mark Kingsbury, another member of the committee, is quoted in the article as saying that this ordinance should be consolidated with the storm water management ordinance. That ordinance, however, has just been drafted, and its enactment is many months away. There is no reason to delay the landscaping ordinance any longer. It can always be amended after the storm water ordinance is approved.

For those *Upstate Forever* members who live in Greenville County, please contact your County Council representatives today and let them know that you support the new standards for commercial parking lots and want it enacted without any more delay. The names, addresses and phone numbers of the Council members are available on the county web site, www.greenvillecounty.org/countycouncil/members.

Thank you for your support!

3. *Upstate Forever Executive Director To Be On Panel For Smart Growth Forum in Spartanburg On October 25.*

The Spartanburg Herald-Journal is hosting a Smart Growth Forum at the Tracy Gaines Auditorium at Spartanburg Technical College on October 25, 2001 beginning at 7 p.m. *Upstate Forever* Executive Director Brad Wyche will join Frank Nutt, a member of Spartanburg County Council, James Talley, Mayor of Spartanburg, Dr. Ron Romine of the University of

South Carolina at Spartanburg, and Donna London with the Storm Thurmond Institute for a wide-ranging discussion of growth and land use issues facing Spartanburg County. There is no charge for admission. For more information, contact Mike Smith, Editor of the Spartanburg Herald-Journal, at 864-582-4511 or Mike.Smith@SHJ.com.

We hope to see you there!

4. *Upstate Forever Member Designs LEED-Certified Building.*

Congratulations to *Upstate Forever* member Scott Johnston whose firm, the Johnston Design Group, LLC, has received certification from the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program for the Rosewood House of Recovery in Greenville. It is only the third building in South Carolina to receive LEED certification.

LEED is a rating and certification system developed by the United States Green Building Council, a broad-based, non-profit organization whose members include the American Institute of Architects, the Bank of America, Target Stores, the National Audubon Society and hundreds of other businesses and groups. The LEED system provides specific criteria on what constitutes a “green building.” These criteria are grouped into the following categories: innovation in design; sustainable sites; water efficiency; energy and atmosphere; materials and resources; and air quality. For each criterion that is met, credits are given, and different levels of LEED certification are awarded based on the total credits earned, ranging from a basic certification (26-32 credits) to Platinum (52 and higher credits). For more information, see www.usgbc.org/programs/leed.html.

Well done, Scott!

5. *Quote of the Week.*

“This year’s farm bill represents an opportunity to do more not just for agricultural producers, but also for consumers and society at large. Our bill would shift \$2 billion from commodity payments to payments for participation in voluntary conservation programs. This lets us assist the family farmers who have lost ground under the current system while we use taxpayer dollars more sensibly to protect natural resources and environmental quality. If we don’t do this, many of the nation’s rivers and

lakes will remain polluted, hundreds of species will fall closer to extinction, and millions of acres of open space will be lost forever as small farmers go out of business and their land is sold for development.”

Wayne Gilchrest (R-Md.) and Ron Kind (D-Wisc.),
“Better Protection for Farmers and Their Land,”
The New York Times, Aug. 29, 2001