

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 17, 2025

CALL TO ORDER – A regular meeting of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Deuntay Diggs, Chairman, at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 17, 2025 in the Board Chambers, George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center, 1300 Courthouse Road, Stafford VA.

ROLL CALL – The following members were present: Deuntay Diggs, Chairman; Tinesha Allen, Vice Chairman; Meg Bohmke; Pamela Yeung; Darrell English; Monica Gary.

Absent was Supervisor Crystal Vanuch.

Also in attendance were William Ashton, County Administrator; Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney; Taylor Dunn, Deputy Clerk; various staff members; and other interested parties.

INVOCATION

Ms. Gary led the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Boy Scouts of America Troop 218 led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

CHAIR REMARKS

Mr. Diggs said that for his Chair Remarks, he would first like to extend a belated happy Father's Day to all the fathers in their County. He said that he would next like to provide an update on their locally administered transportation projects. He said that Stafford County was investing \$70 million in transportation improvements across the community, focusing on enhancing roadway safety, improving accessibility, and reducing congestion.

Mr. Diggs said that currently, they had three major projects under construction: the Berea Church Road Improvement Project, the Route 1 Courthouse Road Intersection Improvement Project, and the Telegraph Road and Woodstock Lane Improvement Project. He said that they were scheduled to begin the Staffordboro Boulevard sidewalk project on July 1. He said that additionally, there were multiple other safety projects in design, with start dates in future years. He said that improving transportation was a strategic priority for their Board, so he was pleased with their progress and looked forward to much more.

Mr. Diggs said that he would like to thank the North Stafford Rotary Club once more for the beautiful flags for heroes displayed on their Government Center campus. He said that those flags were put up yearly by the North Stafford Rotary Club to honor those who had fought for their community and were still fighting for their country, as well as everyday heroes in their community.

He said that earlier that day, he had spoken at the flag retirement ceremony, which was very moving, and he knew they would miss seeing the flags waving at their Government Center.

Mr. Diggs said that congratulations were in order for Stafford County's two wastewater treatment facilities, Little Falls Run and Aquia, for being selected to receive a 2024 Platinum Peak Performance Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies. He said that this award recognized public wastewater treatment facilities for their outstanding compliance records in the 2024 calendar year. He said that the Platinum Award recognized 100% compliance with permits over a consecutive five-year period. He said that this was the 21st consecutive year for Little Falls Run and the second straight year for Aquia.

PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION TO FREDERICKSBURG AREA HEALTH AND SUPPORT SERVICES RECOGNIZING JUNE AS A MONTH OF RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS OF DIVERSE SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS AND GENDER IDENTITIES IN STAFFORD COUNTY

Mr. Diggs presented the Proclamation to Fredericksburg Area Health and Support Services Recognizing June as a Month of Recognition and Support for Individuals of Diverse Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities in Stafford County

Joseph Little, Executive Director of the Fredericksburg Area Health and Support Services, accepted the proclamation. He said that on behalf of the Fairfax Area Human Assistance Society, the Pride Center FXBG, and all the individuals they served, including the underserved and the marginalized, he thanked the Board of Supervisors for this proclamation.

ADDITIONS – DELETIONS AND APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR AGENDA

ADD ON TO PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS BY DEPARTMENTS: PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER ADOPTING A RESOLUTION TO REQUEST WESTLAKE DEVELOPMENT LLC CONVEY PROFFERED LAND TO THE COUNTY AND TO EXPRESS THE BOARD'S INTENT TO CONVEY LAND TO THE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE HARTWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REPLACEMENT PROJECT; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-178

William Ashton, County Administrator, said that there was one add-on item to Presentations/Reports by Departments for Planning and Zoning. He said that the Proposed Resolution R25-178 and proffers were attached in the Board's meeting materials.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Bohmke, to approve the Regular Agenda as amended.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary

No: (0)

Abstain: (1) Yeung

Absent: (1) Vanuch

Dr. Yeung said that she abstained from the vote because she disagreed with the process that led to this point, which was flawed, lacking proper notice, a work session, and transparency. She said that she would not be supporting this item. She said that as she had not seen the actual proposal, she was being asked to vote on a comprehensive plan that did not exist. She said that considering the current economic climate, with layoffs and uncertainty, she believed it was premature and process-deficient to move forward with this project. She said that the absence of a technical review committee, which she had previously mentioned, was a significant concern.

WORK SESSION ITEMS

DISCUSSION ON HOUSING DEMANDS

Chip Boyles, Executive Director of the George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC), said that he was joined by Sam Shoukas, the GWRC Director of Housing. He said that they served the local governments of Planning District 16, which included Stafford County, the City of Fredericksburg, and the Counties of Spotsylvania, King George, and Caroline. He was there to provide the Board of Supervisors an update on the Regional Housing Assembly, a program of the George Washington Regional Commission that served as an advisory committee to examine all types of housing within Planning District 16 from a regional perspective.

Mr. Boyles said that the comprehensive group included representatives from local government, the private sector, nonprofit housing organizations, attorneys, real estate agents, mortgage brokers, and citizens. He said that as they considered the types of housing needed, they could not ignore the end-users – the citizens who would be benefiting from these housing solutions. He said that tonight, he would provide a brief overview of their work with this advisory committee and answer any questions or discuss housing specifics.

Mr. Boyles said that as a reminder, he had approximately 30 years of experience in housing, ranging from localities of 2,000 people to serving as the Director of Housing and Community development for the City-parish of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he oversaw a \$20 million annual budget for housing to serve their 400,000 citizens. He said that in 2019, the George Washington Regional Commission developed a regional housing plan, focusing primarily on addressing the affordable housing needs in Planning District 16 and retaining high-quality affordable housing within their region.

Mr. Boyles said that to define affordable housing, he would like to clarify that it did not necessarily mean low-income housing. He said that according to the federal definition, affordable housing referred to housing costs that did not exceed 30% of a household's monthly income. He said that housing costs strictly included rent or mortgage payments, insurance costs, and utility costs, but excluded other expenses such as daycare costs or transportation. He said that using a household income of \$83,750 per year, the maximum amount a family could spend on rent or mortgage payments was \$1,750. He said that unfortunately, there were limited units in their region that could be obtained for this price.

Mr. Boyles said that notably, the Fredericksburg Area Association of Realtors' most recent data showed that the median household sale price in Stafford County was \$579,000. He said that at this rate, \$1,750 was unlikely to cover much of the mortgage. He said that they also examined other factors, such as insurance and utilities, which they believed were on the conservative side. He said that in these situations, the costs were typically lower for a unit in an apartment complex than for a single-family house. He said that to reiterate, their definition of affordable housing specifically was related to the percentage of one's income paid towards housing costs.

Mr. Boyles said that they also acknowledged that it was a supply and demand issue. He said that the more houses available, the more they met the demand at all levels. He said that what they observed was that in areas of high demand, such as Stafford County, people were eager to live there, so they may choose to buy houses at lower price points than they normally would, but then invest more in those houses, taking them out of the affordable range. He said that as a result, the lower end of the demand spectrum became narrower.

Mr. Boyles said that for example, if someone was moving from northern Virginia and selling a \$1.5 million house, they could afford to buy something in Stafford above the asking price and invest more in it; however, this took it out of the affordable range. He said that therefore, they believed that housing must be considered at all levels. He said that discounting market rate housing was not helpful because they needed both the higher-end and lower-cost housing to meet the overall need.

Mr. Boyles said that the GWRC became involved in housing because local governments identified a need for it and because they saw it within the regional economy. He said that additionally, it fit within their strategic plan, which was developed with the help of Stafford over the past few years. He said that three years ago, they adopted a five-year plan, which was updated this year, and housing and health were among the priorities. He said that there were already areas where local governments asked for their help in looking at the issue from a regional perspective.

Mr. Boyles said that he wanted to emphasize that they were not trying to tell local governments what to do regarding housing; they were providing opportunities, options, and information so that they could make informed decisions. He said that they wanted to examine how housing affected the entire region and the opportunities for working with their other local governments. He said that housing issues were similar to transportation, and they must consider the broader regional context.

Mr. Boyles said that the GWRC also partnered with the Mary Washington Health System and the Regional Health Department, which conducted a five-year community health assessment. He said that for two five-year periods, housing had been identified as a quality-of-life issue to address health concerns. He said that when people did not live in adequate housing, they were more likely to get sick and stay sick, and therefore, housing was a priority for health. He said that the other two priorities, as identified by this assessment, were mental health and accessibility to healthcare.

Mr. Boyles said that GWRC to work with Mary Washington Hospital and the Regional Health Department on the housing component of this assessment. He said that the Mary Washington Health System Foundation had funded them for three years to continue this program. He said that they had been able to sustain it without seeking local government funding assistance so far, and

they hoped to continue the program into the future. He said that the Housing Assembly, which had about 32 current members, was a volunteer group with no membership dues.

Mr. Boyles said that Dr. Yeung served as vice chair, and Jay Hicks with General Properties was the chair of the committee. He said that their executive committee provided direction on a day-to-day basis. He said that one of the key accomplishments of the Housing Assembly was the 2019-2020 Housing Plan developed by GWRC, which identified 42 housing strategies for their region. He said that they narrowed this down to four priority strategy areas and were working to make progress on.

Mr. Boyles said that the first of these areas was an awareness campaign, which was what they were doing tonight. He said that they wanted to communicate why this was important to all of them, both locally and regionally, and what information they could share with local governments and private businesses, using their own data to inform future development. He said that for example, using the Weldon Cooper population estimates, they found that Stafford County was expected to grow from 156,000 people in 2020 to 211,000 people by 2040, resulting in 55,000 more residents.

Mr. Boyles said that this translated to a need for 18,000 new homes by 2040, across various price levels. He said that when looking at the entire region, they expected to grow by 111,000 people, requiring 45,000 new homes. He said that what they were really trying to work towards was to look at all the other affected areas and consider the impact of housing growth on their communities. He said that one thing he often emphasized when discussing housing was that they wanted to move away from the idea that people needed to move until they could afford a house.

Mr. Boyles said that Caroline County was a prime example of this, being one of the fastest-growing counties in the Commonwealth due to its proximity to northern Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Richmond, and its abundance of available land, making it relatively affordable. He said that however, if there was one thing that all five jurisdictions in GWRC agreed on, it was that they needed to address their traffic and congestion problems. He said that if people moved to Caroline, Orange, or further out, they were more likely to travel through their region's jurisdictions, creating more traffic and congestion. He said that if they could develop strategies to move people closer to their work and live in affordable, higher-quality housing, they would feel like they had achieved one of their priorities.

Mr. Boyles said that their second priority was the need for a regional housing authority. He said that he wanted to be clear that they did not need a traditional federal-style housing authority, but rather a one-stop shop where people could get information about housing, and they could help stakeholders. He said that this could potentially include development, not just for rental properties owned by the housing authority. He said that in fact, there had not been a new housing authority created in America in over 25 years, largely due to the need for a large population to support such a program.

Mr. Boyles said that alternative options, such as land banks and community land trusts, could be explored. He said that these programs allowed developers to own the property underneath the houses in perpetuity and sell the houses to homebuyers, potentially reducing the cost of the house

by \$150,000. He said that the Housing Assembly would likely examine these possibilities and recommend them to local governments.

Mr. Boyles said that their third priority was housing rehabilitation and preservation, particularly in rural areas. He said that many people needed repairs to their homes, such as roof replacements, plumbing fixes, and handicap accessibility modifications. He said that however, these repairs often fell on lower-income families who could not afford them. He said that the GWRC had had success with repairing and replacing septic tanks through an environmental program that provided assistance to all income levels. He said that they aimed to expand this type of assistance to include roofing, plumbing, and other repairs for households in need.

Mr. Boyles said that the downside to this was that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, the largest funding agency for this in the country, was currently under threat of elimination from the federal administration. He said that if that program was eliminated, it would be challenging to find grant money for these types of repairs. He said that it remained one of their top priorities, but they were closely monitoring the situation.

Mr. Boyles said that their fourth priority was to be able to review and help local governments with their comprehensive plan updates to explore density options and expand housing education efforts. He said that not many people were aware that state code in Virginia required local governments to include an affordable housing element in their comp plans. He said that many comp plans were created before the law was enacted, and they had only been updated since, resulting in some counties lacking this element. He was aware that Stafford County had an affordable housing element, although he was unsure of its level of detail.

Mr. Boyles said that to illustrate the state code, it stated that a comp plan shall include designation of areas and implementation measures for creating affordable housing. He said that this meant that every comp plan for jurisdictions with zoning was required to have this element. He said that their Housing Assembly was reviewing this and aimed to provide suggestions and recommendations, working closely with local governments.

Stewart Schwartz, Executive Director of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, said that as an Eagle Scout, he was pleased to see Troop 218 present. He said that he would like to pick up where Mr. Boyles had left off on comprehensive planning solutions and share ideas with the Board on how to address the interconnected housing, land use, and transportation challenges that they and many other jurisdictions faced today.

Mr. Schwartz said that in terms of his own background, he had served in the Navy and later went to law school, before discovering urban planning as a fulfilling career. He said that he had a deep love for the state, having moved from up north, married a Virginian, and fallen in love with the state's natural beauty, character, and the forests, rolling hills, and wetlands that his wife adored. He said that these were the things that kept him here and deeply involved in planning the future of their state.

Mr. Schwartz said that the Coalition for Smarter Growth worked in the greater Washington, D.C. region, partnering statewide, and focused on the urban crescent from the D.C. area through the

Fredericksburg region, Richmond region, and down to Hampton Roads. He said that they had created their Blueprint For a Better Region in 2002, which had been updated recently and could be viewed on smartergrowth.net. He said that their mission was to advocate for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented and accessible communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

Mr. Schwartz said that he would like to start with the top issue they were wrestling with: traffic. He said that this presentation was about how everything was interconnected. He said that to look at northern Virginia, the 150-acre, \$300 million interchange had tried to dig the way out of their traffic problems, but the challenge remained that their new and wider roads filled up again very quickly, sometimes in as little as five to eight years. He said that they had all been experiencing I-95 congestion, and a study by VDOT found that spending \$12 billion on adding one lane in each direction on I-95 between Richmond and Washington would make zero difference in traffic congestion. He said that this was why they had invested significantly in intercity rail.

Mr. Schwartz said that they must consider the reason why there was so much traffic. He said that Stafford was sort of in the hotspot of traffic in the urban crescent, which had 65% of the state's population and gross state product. He said that this meant it was very important to get things right in this area. He said that the reason for the traffic all came down to land use. He said that they were going to focus on Centreville and identifying the center of it. He said that It had all the elements of a village, including shopping, a church, various types of homes, and offices, but it was not very walkable, making it difficult for residents, especially families with children, which made it difficult to live without cars.

Mr. Schwartz said that as a result, they needed to provide ample parking for their cars, they had created a society that discouraged walking, and had made public transit an unpleasant experience, with inadequate sidewalks and infrastructure to ensure pedestrian safety. He said that this led to a lifestyle where every trip was taken in a car, resulting in a chaotic and expensive existence.

Mr. Schwartz said that many of the issues they were discussing today regarding housing affordability were also related to transportation, which was the second highest cost for households. He said that according to AAA, the estimated annual cost to own a car was over \$12,000. He said that by living with one car instead of multiple ones, individuals could save a significant amount of money, and living in a truly walkable community without a car could lead to even greater savings.

Mr. Schwartz said that the way they grew and developed their communities also played a crucial role in these combined monthly housing and transportation costs. He said that Mr. Boyles had mentioned that housing costs should not exceed 30% of monthly income, and the combined housing and transportation costs should not exceed 45% of monthly income. He said that many people had moved to Loudoun County, where housing costs were high, but the primary reason for this was the high transportation costs due to the need to drive.

Mr. Schwartz said that however, they could design their communities differently. He said that the provided simplified illustration showed how their current development patterns, separating shopping centers, schools, and work and play areas, led to excessive driving and traffic. He said that in contrast, a mixed-use, walkable community could achieve the same level of development

with fewer trips and less traffic. He said that for example, if a household parked once and walked to school, after-school activities, work, and shopping, they could reduce their transportation costs.

Mr. Schwartz said that another alternative was to add a transit component, allowing every trip to be walking after arriving by transit. He said that this concept was also illustrated in a slide from New Urbanist Architects, which showed a community with all the necessary components, but separated, and the tendency to put all traffic onto one large arterial, paid for by taxpayers, rather than connecting things. He said that on the lower left of the slide, they had a consistent distribution of housing, retail, and other units, arranged in a grid of streets, which meant not every trip would be on the main arterial. He said that this allowed for more opportunities to walk and bike, and provided independence for children.

Mr. Schwartz said that he had seen the downtown Stafford concept, which utilized a grid of streets, and he believed it had the potential to transform this area into a more humane and walkable place. He said that this was a conceptual idea, but it was about reimagining existing spaces to create more livable communities. He said that they should consider the needs of their children and the neighborhoods they built. He said that unfortunately, many children in Stafford County lacked access to safe and convenient ways to walk or bike to school.

Mr. Schwartz said that in contrast, when communities were designed with connectivity in mind, children could have independence and walk to school on their own. He said that to address traffic problems, they needed to address land use and how they designed their communities. He said that a grid of streets and connectivity were crucial, and mixing different land uses was also important. He said that they had previously emphasized the importance of land use in solving transportation problems; however, he now believed that housing in the right locations was the key to addressing their transportation problems.

Mr. Schwartz said that this concept was supported by what Mr. Boyles had discussed earlier. He said that what had been missing was the "missing middle" between detached single-family homes and high-rise housing developments. He said that since World War II, they had stopped building medium density developments such as duplexes triplexes, townhouses, and courtyard apartments. He said that however, there was a growing movement to rebuild the "missing middle."

Mr. Schwartz said that for example, a duplex in Arlington looked like a typical single-family home, but it was actually a beautiful example of mid-density development. He said that in Alexandria, Virginia, a public-private partnership had created 100 market-rate homes and 52 affordable homes on a site that had previously been underdeveloped. He said that similarly, garden apartments, which were once common, could be designed to be affordable and walk-up.

Mr. Schwartz said that one of his favorite examples was of medium-density development was in Alexandria, Virginia, where 60 units were built on top of a fire station. He said that as someone who lived near a fire station, he could attest that the sirens would not start until the fire trucks were about a block away from the station, so they would not disturb the residents. He said that this public-private partnership had been a great success, with the developer building housing in conjunction with the fire station.

Mr. Schwartz said that additionally, medium-density development was often built over retail, making it easy and short to walk to shops. He said that combining this with modern, frequent bus rapid transit, like the one on Route 1 in Potomac Yard, would be ideal. He said that this area was a wonderful example of a well-designed street, with double rows of trees, two lanes of cars in each direction, and a fast bus in the middle. He said that he had been invited to speak at the Regional Housing Forum convened by the Greater Washington Regional Commission last October, where he had gained a deeper understanding of the housing challenges and affordability issues in this region.

Mr. Schwartz said that he had been impressed by the commitment of people to addressing these challenges. He said that the work of Sam and her team in developing the action plan had highlighted the need for more affordable housing options, including flexible living spaces and senior housing. He said that one personal anecdote that illustrated the issue was when he had bought his first home in Alexandria, a condo that was four times his salary at the time. He said that when he checked it today, that same condo was now eight times the salary of one of his staff members who was the same age he was at the time.

Mr. Schwartz said that this highlighted the need for affordable housing options for young people. He would like to discuss some housing tools that could help address these challenges. He said that he thought continued workgroups and discussions on this topic would be beneficial, and he would be happy to come back and discuss them in more depth. He said that additionally, he would like to bring in some experts from the affordable housing development community.

Mr. Schwartz said that to address the issue of supply in walkable communities with transit and nearby access to jobs and services, they needed to provide a diversity of housing options, such as the missing middle. He said that accessory dwelling units, backyard cottages, apartments over garages, and small additions to houses could help. He said that reducing parking requirements in walkable zones was also crucial, as it could significantly reduce development costs. He said that form-based zoning could streamline the process while creating great design. Inclusionary zoning, as seen in Northern Virginia, could also be effective.

Mr. Schwartz said that a bill was passed this year that made inclusionary zoning legal statewide; however, the Governor vetoed it. He said that it would result in the ability for density bonuses that could be offered in return for affordable units in new development. He said that creating affordable housing trust funds was another strategy that could be explored. He said that this could create revenues that would help developers tap into other sources, including low-income housing tax credit deals.

Mr. Schwartz said that they had previously heard about maintenance assistance programs, including those for low-income homeowners. He said that additionally, existing affordable units could be purchased and used to create long-term committed affordable housing. He said that furthermore, using public or faith land for affordable housing was a popular approach, as seen in the example of the fire station.

Mr. Schwartz said that within this urban development area, he suspected that by analyzing the vacant land and parking lots, they could retrofit much of it to provide the needed housing in

walkable neighborhoods. He said that as a conclusion, it would become increasingly important to utilize connected local street grids to create communities that were the best they could be within the urban service area. He said that compact development had a higher tax yield per acre than more spread-out development, and it was better for the community.

Mr. Schwartz said that Urban3 was a firm that would be able to explain this in more detail. He said that to strengthen their land conservation zoning tools, they should focus on agriculture and forestal areas, as this would protect their water supplies and supported tourism. He said that housing in a walkable, accessible location was a key solution to transportation challenges and a tool for economic competitiveness, and it was essential for creating great places for people and their future, including their children's future and the types of communities they were trying to build.

Ms. Bohmke asked when and where the Regional Housing Assembly meetings were held.

Mr. Boyles said that the full membership met quarterly, but their regular executive committee meetings were held at 1:00 p.m. on the Second Wednesday of every month at the GWRC offices.

Ms. Bohmke asked if their group was familiar with the local Servants at Work (SAWS) program that built ramps for handicap accessibility.

Mr. Boyles said that yes, they worked with them and with 516. He said that they had also discussed the potential of hiring them as the construction workers if they were awarded CDBG funds, as they would be a much more cost-effective solution compared to bidding each job out to the private sector.

Ms. Gary said that she wanted to note that anyone could attend the Regional Housing Assembly meetings; they were open to the public and allowed for virtual participation as well. She asked Mr. Boyles when the Board could expect to receive recommendations from the Assembly.

Mr. Boyles said that they did not have a real-time schedule yet. He said that the strategic plan would help them to reprioritize, determine who would be in charge of the work, and establish a time frame for completion. He said that they were dependent on the local governments for reviewing the comprehensive plans, so as local governments began their process, the Housing Assembly had been asking to be able to join and provide input, rather than simply reviewing and waiting for the local government to make changes to their comprehensive plan when it was not due.

Ms. Gary said that she would be happy to support that initiative when they reached that point. She said that recently, she had joined the National Association of Counties (NACo) Veterans and Military Services Committee, and during their discussion last month, they touched on the Veterans Affairs Service Purchasing (VASP) program's impending sunset. She said that she was aware of this development and its potential impact on veterans and homelessness. She said that her understanding was that the federal administration had decided not to renew the program, which would result in its discontinuation.

Ms. Gary said that the VASP program previously helped approximately 17,000 veterans avoid losing their homes; however, the extent of this impact in their area was currently unknown. She said that the NACo committee had struggled to obtain relevant data, so it was unclear what effects this would have. She said that it was likely that tens of thousands of veterans would be affected, and the program's discontinuation may lead to increased homelessness among those who could not make loan payments.

Mr. Boyles said that he would follow up with Ms. Gary to make sure that he had all of that information.

Ms. Allen said that she often heard a fear of urbanization from their community. She asked if Mr. Boyles or Mr. Schwartz could elaborate on how they could achieve affordable housing and resource conservation.

Mr. Schwartz said that he came to this as conservationist; his group was founded by conservation organizations and they now partnered with a wide range of organizations, including affordable housing advocates, transit and bicycle pedestrian advocates, and those working with Social Services. He said that this was what Smart Growth really was – creating better communities for everyone, making them more walkable and compact, while also aligning with their conservation goals. He said that he was thrilled to see the work this County had done with Crow's Nest and the beautiful areas along the Potomac, which were among their top assets.

Mr. Schwartz said that they were a major draw for people who wanted to enjoy nature, and they also contributed to the County's appeal. He said that to the west and other areas, they had farms, forest lands, and other natural resources that needed to be protected to ensure a safe drinking water supply as well as the Rappahannock. He said that conservation of these areas was closely tied to creating more walkable communities and building compactly, which in turn allowed for the creation of green corridors, green spaces, public spaces, and parks that were essential for quality of life within those communities.

Ms. Allen said that she appreciated the explanation, which got to the point that she had tried to emphasize for a long time. She said that she did not want anyone to think that smart growth meant zero development at all, or that development would result in the degradation of their environment. She said that she agreed that smart growth would provide efficiency in their housing while protecting their resources.

Mr. Schwartz said that it ultimately depended on where they grew and where they developed.

Ms. Allen asked if Mr. Boyles could speak to the significance of affordable housing and economic development. She said that often, people failed to recognize that a key factor in having a strong economic sector was having diversified housing options, including workforce and affordable housing. She said that it was not simply about down-zoning or building large homes; rather, it was about being smart and concentrating workforce housing in areas that the community could sustain that type of development.

Mr. Boyles said that he would like to reiterate that one of the measures to create affordable development and allow for density was how they started with land use. He said that if local governments would designate areas as suitable for higher density housing, they could put the infrastructure in place there and the higher density could promote more affordable housing. He said that it began to fail when local governments designated growth areas and higher-density land use areas but continued to deny housing to come in.

Mr. Boyles said that Albemarle County was a prime example – they had designated 5% only of their entire County land mass to development; that 5% was supposed to accommodate the vast majority of their growth, but it faltered when developers came in and were denied the higher-density developments for any number of reasons. He said that having the political will of staying with the plan was crucial for the success of it.

Mr. Boyles said that economic development was certainly important, and Ms. Allen had hit on the key point of needing people to live closer to their jobs. He said that many people who created the quality of life they enjoyed were not high-income workers, but rather those in the service industries, tourism, and public sector workers. He said that unfortunately, when they had to live further away, they were more likely to look for jobs closer to their home to reduce their travel time. He said that it was essential to have a diverse range of housing options for all workers. He said that the industry at all levels would attest that happy workers were closer to their jobs; that was what made a successful business.

Mr. Boyles said that tax breaks, resources, and transportation were all important, but it was the workforce that ultimately made or broke a company. He said that if they could not have workers close to their jobs and have the necessary amenities, they were missing out on a significant advantage. He said that he certainly could not imagine anyone who said, "The enjoyable part of my work was driving from here to northern Virginia or the Pentagon every day." He said that he firmly believed they would likely choose somewhere in Stafford County if possible. He said that he believed this was the important aspect of their local economy.

Ms. Allen asked if Mr. Boyles had seen anything that exemplified that if denser housing was denied in a development area, it would result in sprawling by-right developments further away from the development area.

Mr. Boyles said that that most definitely had been observed. He said that they had discussed this in a meeting earlier today that with a high quality of life like theirs in this region and Stafford, especially, people wanted to be there. He said that he had had the opportunity to live in many places within the Mid-Atlantic and Deep South. He often joked that he could easily solve their housing problem: if they did not fund the police, roads, or schools, nobody would want to live there.

Mr. Boyles said that in their region, every single one of those areas was of high quality, which meant people were coming; there was very little they could do. He said that he grew up in the Hilton Head Island, South Carolina area, and despite efforts to keep businesses and the island from becoming what it was today, the demand was too high to keep it from happening. He said that the only place he knew where a Walmart did not have a freestanding sign was Hilton Head Island, and

yet it was still there, having been in business for 40 years. He said that people were coming, no matter what. He said that if they could not find higher-density options, they would move to the next level, where they could.

Ms. Allen said that that would exacerbate the existing traffic and transportation challenges they faced. She said that she would like to also inquire about senior housing, as it is often overlooked in discussions about affordability in this area.

Mr. Boyles said that he believed senior housing was included in every conversation, just as workforce housing was. He said that it was just another component, but he acknowledged that there were a lot more seniors now, so it was of high demand, but was being equally considered in terms of their housing needs.

Mr. English said that he wanted to note that the \$83,000 income that was mentioned at the beginning of Mr. Boyles' presentation did not take into consideration the taxes taken out of that salary.

Mr. Boyles said that yes, that was correct.

Mr. English said that rent was market-driven, so he wondered if there was a way they could give tax breaks to encourage affordable housing.

Mr. Boyles said that he agreed that any type of tax legislation would likely work, and during yesterday's Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) meeting, it was discussed how Stafford was facing challenges with disabled veteran tax relief. He said that the indirect tax consequences also needed to be considered, as the money had to be made up elsewhere. He said that that could be going towards housing.

Dr. Yeung said that she wanted to acknowledge her fellow Board members' dedication to housing issues in their community, as they served on a number of related committees and other community initiatives. She said that she would like to hear the next steps as soon as possible, because the presentation clearly depicted how housing, land use, and transportation were interconnected and how they impacted household budgets, their tax base, and regional competitiveness. She said that the work of the Regional Housing Assembly was essential, especially as the County was working to update its comprehensive plan. She said that she was looking forward to discussing specific strategies to accommodate their County's housing needs in their comprehensive plan.

Ms. Gary said that the Board of Supervisors had discussed making a commitment to dealing with their housing issues, so she would like to request that they discuss that in a work session soon. She said that they needed to review their updated information and plan how to continue the work being done previously by the Board's ad hoc Affordable Housing Committee. She said that it was essential the Board make housing improvements a priority, as the community had clearly communicated to the Board that it was important.

PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS BY DEPARTMENTS

ITEM 1. PLANNING AND ZONING; DISCUSS INITIATION OF AND ENTERING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION (DCR) REGARDING TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ON COUNTY-OWNED PROPERTY IN CROW'S NEST HARBOR

Mike Zuraf, Director of Planning and Zoning, said that he would provide the update on this item. He said that this proposal involved considering the initiation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to allow trails to be constructed by DCR across County-owned parcels within lots in Crow's Nest Harbor, within Crow's Nest. He said that the Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve was jointly owned by DCR and Stafford County and covered over 3,000 acres. He said that approximately half of this land was co-owned by DCR and the County, while 183 acres was owned by the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT), and the remainder was solely owned by DCR.

Mr. Zuraf said that the preserve currently had two access points: a primary public access point on Raven Road, which provided access to a small parking lot via a 1.6-mile gravel road; and a second point of access off Brook Road, featuring a 20-car parking area, a peer and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible canoe and kayak launch facility, and a mile of shoreline birding and nature trail offering views of Accokeek Creek. He said that within the preserve lay the 353-lot subdivision known as Crow's Nest Harbor, which was platted in the 1970s.

Mr. Zuraf said that the County owned 305 of the lots and the unimproved road right-of-way, while NVCT owned 24 of the lots and the remaining 24 lots were privately owned. He said that previously, the Board had authorized the County parcels to be dedicated to DCR for joint ownership, which would occur over several phases as funding became available to DCR and they completed required due diligence. He said that the initial focus for improvements and land acquisition was within Section A, which was highlighted in yellow on the map.

Mr. Zuraf said that DCR had received American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to construct a parking lot on a parcel they owned and on an adjacent County-owned parcel located on Raven Road. He said that the conveyance of the single County-owned lot was in process, allowing the parking lot construction to begin this summer. He said that the ARPA funds would also support the construction of approximately 2.5 miles of new trail proposed to connect the new parking lot within with the existing interior parking lot. He said that that trail was shown on the map with the purple line. He said that due to the need to utilize the ARPA funds before they expired at the end of the year, the County and DCR proposed an MOU that would permit construction of the trails by DCR on the County-owned lots.

Mr. Zuraf said that the trails would be natural surface and would have minimal impacts. He said that the trails would not be constructed across the platted rights of way until those rights of way were abandoned. He said that until that occurred, Section A would be dedicated as an addition to the preserve, and the trail would not be open to the public. He said that in summary, if the Board agreed to this concept of this MOU between the County and DCR, DCR would draft the MOU and bring it back to the Board at a later meeting for authorization.

Dr. Yeung asked if the trail had to be completed before it came under control of DCR.

Michael Lott, Northern Regional Supervisor with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. He said that currently, several processes were underway in parallel. He said that they had a Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF) grant that allowed them to conduct due diligence to convey Section A of Crow's Nest Harbor as co-owned with DCR and the County. He said that however, this was expected to occur sometime in the spring of 2026.

Mr. Lott said that the ARPA funds had to be spent by December 31 of this year, so they were working to construct the parking lot and trail using those funds. He said that their goal was to complete the parking lot and trail this year, with the hope that the survey of Section A of Crow's Nest Harbor would be completed concurrently. He said that this survey would also identify sections of road that needed to be vacated to facilitate the trail construction.

Mr. Lott said that they aimed to complete this process by early spring, allowing them to finalize the road vacations and complete the trail. He said that if everything proceeded smoothly, he anticipated the trail and parking lot would be completed this year, conveyed to DCR in early 2026, and open to the public in spring or summer 2026.

Dr. Yeung asked if the MOU gave Stafford more power in shaping the conservation of this recreation area and helped with state funding.

Mr. Lott said that the partnership between DCR, NVCT, and the County had been incredible and essential to the protection of the peninsula at Crow's Nest. He said that he had no reason to believe this would change in the future. He said that DCR had a goal of purchasing the rest of the privately-owned lots in Crow's Nest Harbor in conjunction with NVCT and the County, as well as additional land surrounding the preserve, so this partnership would help them to move forward in that work.

Ms. Gary said that although the trails were being discussed now because they wanted to utilize ARPA funding, the intent to make the trails had been an ongoing consideration for a number of years now.

Mr. Lott said that yes, they met in the winter of 2023, to discuss the proposal for 305 additional lots at Crow's Nest. He said that much of this was driven by the events of 2020 and 2021, during the pandemic, when visitation to their facility increased by 400%, and they were forced to turn people away at the gate.

Mr. Lott said that even though visitation has decreased to more reasonable levels, they still turn people away on weekends and particularly on nice winter days, when people tend to enjoy the area when there were less bugs. He said that this project had been in the planning stages for four or five years, aimed at addressing the growing demand for outdoor activities and hiking at Crow's Nest.

Ms. Gary said that she knew people were eager for this project to be completed, and she was incredibly grateful to DCR for providing trails in Stafford County.

Mr. Diggs said there was consensus from the Board to move forward with drafting and reviewing the MOU.

PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER ADOPTING A RESOLUTION TO REQUEST WESTLAKE DEVELOPMENT, LLC CONVEY PROFFERED LAND TO THE COUNTY AND TO EXPRESS THE BOARD'S INTENT TO CONVEY LAND TO THE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE HARTWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REPLACEMENT PROJECT; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-178

Mike Zuraf, Director of Planning and Zoning, said that this item was for the Board's consideration of approval of a resolution requesting Westlake Development to convey the proffered 65-acre parcel of land to the County in support of the Hartwood Elementary School replacement project to be constructed on the conveyed land, with the ultimate conveyance to the School Board. He said that the conveyance was to occur within 60 days of approval of the resolution.

Mr. Zuraf said that there was an existing Vulcan easement was located on this 65-acre site. He said that the resolution requested the property owner relocate the easement at no expense to the County, as outlined in the current proffers. He said that if the property owner was unable to relocate the Vulcan easement, the resolution requested conveyance of a separate 55-acre parcel to the Board, in accordance with the proffers. He said that the provided image illustrated the location of the proffered 65-acre parcel within the Westlake development and the backup optional 55-acre parcel in relation to the existing Hartwood Elementary School.

Mr. Zuraf said that for background, the Westlake development had been rezoned in 1989 with proffers, covering over 1,000 acres with a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial zoning districts. He said that the proffers originally required the dedication of the 55-acre public site for school and park uses, as seen in the southwest corner of the residential portion of the development. He said that in 2006, the proffers were amended, relocating the public land dedication to the larger 65-acre parcel, located along the entrance road, Brigade Boulevard, heading towards the residential area. He said that the proffer specified that the land could be used for a public school park, office, library, or other public use.

Mr. Zuraf said that provided was the plat of the 65-acre parcel, showing the location of the Vulcan easement. He said that the residential portion of the project was currently under development, with road and utility infrastructure, construction, and site grading ongoing, including the construction of Brigade Boulevard, the primary access road adjacent to the proffered 65-acre parcel. He said that the Vulcan easement crossed the 65-acre site and continued south to property approved for a future quarry. He said that the original 55-acre proffered site was now planned for later phases of the residential portion of the Westlake development. He said that approval of Resolution R25-178 would initiate the land acquisition process.

Ms. Bohmke said that throughout all these years, she had never realized there were two Westlake sites. She said that she was under the impression that the proffered site was not a very good site for a school. She asked if the other 55-acre site would be better suited for a school.

Mr. Zuraf said that the 55-acre site was outlined on the plat map. He said that there was a drainage channel that bisected that area, although he did not believe the drainage channel was an intermittent

stream and did not have stream buffers. He said that the topography did not seem too extreme in this area.

Ms. Bohmke said that she was concerned that if the topography was not flat enough, they would have to spend a lot more money to level the site. She asked if they had the ability to negotiate with Westlake and indicate a preferred site for the school location.

Mr. Ashton said that, in his conversations with the Superintendent, the 65-acre site appeared to be the more desirable location for the School Division. He said that now that the proffers were in, it seemed to be setting itself up to be one or the other. He said that the 65-acre site did have the Vulcan easement, which was a consideration. He said that it would undoubtedly be a challenge, and the 60-day timeline would certainly pose a challenge.

Mr. Ashton said that the superintendent was incentivized because Westlake had a plan to develop the 55-acre site, which would result in a financial loss for them. He said that therefore, he believed there was an incentive for them to complete this project. He said that one of the reasons this proposal was before the Board tonight was that the existing Hartwood elementary, this was not a new school, but rather a replacement for an old school that lacked public water and sewer; they used a well and septic system. He said that the goal was to replace the old school, put the new school on water and sewer, and open it in time for the fall.

Mr. Ashton said that when building schools, there were limited windows to open them, so it was essential to keep them on schedule to avoid delays. He said that the School Division was attempting to keep this project on schedule, which was one of the reasons it was being presented to them tonight. They were now wrestling with the proffers that were approved by a previous Board. He said that he believed the 65-acre site was the more desirable location, as it had a greater incentive for the developer to convey it; however, the Vulcan easement on the 65-acre site remained a wild card.

Ms. Bohmke said that she was concerned that the rushed timeline may result in uninformed decisions based on lacking information. She said that she believed they must be thoughtful and take their time in their decision-making regarding this land, especially because they still had the unknown factor of the easement. She said that she also had some other unanswered questions that she would like to ask the School Board about their processes and cost estimates.

Ms. Gary said that they were already behind in building the necessary schools for their children in the County, so she supported the School Division in proceeding with acquiring this proffered land.

PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

1. Jeff Eastland, Rock Hill District, said that he had stated this before, as he had driven around the County, spoken with residents, completed research, written emails and articles, and attended many Board meetings. He said that it was clear that the public lacked a thorough understanding of data centers, including who operated them, their purpose, how they functioned, who benefited, their lifespan, and the long-term consequences. He said that the

developers and their lawyers often struggled to answer questions or provide information, and the same was true for their Planning and Zoning Department.

Mr. Eastland said that this was partly due to the non-disclosure agreements and confidential agreements signed by data center companies, which limited what they disclosed. He said that these companies operated under a heavy veil of secrecy, claiming it was necessary to maintain a competitive business edge. He said that this year, a legislator had passed a bill that would have allowed localities to exert more robust regulatory oversight of data centers, but the Governor had vetoed it, citing it as too restrictive and bad for business.

Mr. Eastland said that the process was not truly democratic, but rather predetermined with a set outcome. He said that as they learned more, it became clear that data centers were holding Stafford hostage. He said that a resident had recently asked at a Planning Commission meeting, "Why were we at their mercy?" He said that this was because billionaires were consolidating their power and using government levers to do so. He said that they were pursuing artificial intelligence and cryptocurrency, two relatively new phenomena with uncertain futures.

Mr. Eastland said that he called it a scary mystery in a black box, as even the companies producing these technologies said they did not know where it was going or how it would end up. He said that he believed they were stepping into a quagmire, and these companies were in a hurry to get these centers approved before the public and local governments recognized the serious implications. He said that he was opposed to data centers because they were incompatible with healthy living, both for humans, animals, trees, and their ecosystems.

Mr. Eastland said that in their small County, with 280 square miles and a population of 168,000, was growing rapidly. He said that most of them were happy and healthy there, with natural resources and amenities like Crow's Nest and the Rappahannock. He said that they could either maintain their current lifestyle or have a large number of data centers, which would come at a significant cost and permanent damage; they could not have both.

2. Donald Squires, Hartwood District, said that every day counted in this endeavor, and every one of these people counted. He said that now, here they were, counting on the Board to protect the rights and health of their constituents. He said that he once worked at a facility where the U.S. Navy was testing a complex combat radar system that was still in use today. He said that the system directed microwaves at potential targets, and anyone on the deck in the vicinity of the system, when it was active, would be exposed to microwaves and potentially killed. He said that they did not hear microwaves, but definitely felt their effects in the form of heat.

Mr. Squires said that it was not difficult to find people in leadership positions spouting pseudoscience, such as claiming that data centers did not produce loud noises. He said that loudness was not the issue. He said that to clarify, unlike microwaves, low-frequency sound was produced 24/7 by hardware use at data centers. He said that it was not heard as loud noises, but rather felt by anyone in its path, and could cause damage to human beings that were in its path as the sound traveled up to 2.5 to 3 miles. He said that the human ear struggled to register sound waves with low frequencies, and they felt them more than they heard them.

Mr. Squires said that this type of noise had very particular characteristics and caused discomfort and long-term non-auditory effects. He said that the World Health Organization had produced guidelines for community noise, which evaluated the effects of low-frequency noise and determined that they were a powerful stressor. He said that body cavities such as the heart, head, stomach, and chest all exhibited symptoms negatively impacting cognitive functions, including attention, memory, and logical reasoning.

Mr. Squires said that annoyance, agitation, and distraction, as well as cognitive alterations, cardiovascular disease, sleep disorders, and high blood pressure, were all on the list. He said that detecting and measuring these inaudible noises, such as those produced by thunderstorms, tornadoes, explosions, and data centers, was challenging. He said that researchers at Georgia Tech's research institute were working to develop systems that could determine the source and degree of low-frequency noise local to a specific location, like a data center. He said that this meant that this type of sound could be measured and mitigated.

Mr. Squires said that however, current performance standards did not address this phenomenon, and he believed they were not sincerely adopted years ago. He said that they must now be updated to reflect new information. He said that this was what low-frequency sound was all about; they did not hear it, but it would affect human health across the age spectrum. He said that if these data centers were allowed to be situated less than a thousand feet from residences and schools via outdated guidelines and ordinances, the consequences would be severe. He said that if the Supervisors were part of making it happen, they would have blood on their hands.

3. Abby Carter, Falmouth District, said that she wanted to encourage all of the Supervisors to take the time to listen and learn about the harmful effects of data centers. She said that just two years ago, the data center industry was relatively new, and much was unknown about the massive negative effects it posed. She said that research was now showing that the harms outweighed the benefits. She said that through her review of studies, journal articles, and expert videos on water, noise, and other impacts, she had found that the consensus was clear: data centers were not compatible with any residential area.

Ms. Carter said that some had argued that property values would increase, but she believed this was largely driven by sales to data center developers looking to expand their footprint, rather than genuine increases in property values due to sales to new homeowners. She said that Stafford County needed to decide whether it would prioritize people or data centers. She said that based on discussions she had heard at the Planning and Zoning subcommittee meetings, several key issues stood out.

Ms. Carter said that firstly, setbacks were a major concern. She said that the subcommittee had discussed varying setbacks, from 360 feet to 1,000 feet, but even 1,000 feet seemed woefully inadequate given the new research and public statements from northern Virginia board members. She said that she believed Stafford's constituents would expect a minimum of 1,000 foot setbacks. She said that secondly, it had become clear that Stafford Utilities was uncertain about its ability to handle wastewater from closed-loop, purple-pipe facilities. She said that

these facilities used recycled water, but the systems still required flushing to maintain cooling efficiency.

Ms. Carter said that the flushed water contained chemicals, heavy metals, biocides, and other toxic substances. She asked if the Board knew for certain if the Utilities Department could handle those substances. She said that she requested the Board of Supervisors not to grandfather any data center applications into existing regulations. She said that if any of these 11 applications were to be approved and grandfathered, it would undermine the need for stronger regulations and the reasons they had asked the Planning and Zoning Commission to update them. She said that she requested that they please not give away the power they had to make informed decisions that benefit everyone in the County.

4. Eric Rudenshiold, Falmouth District, said that he was a 30-year resident of Stafford County. He said that he lived in an 1835 farmhouse, surrounded by three acres of Virginia clay, and unfortunately, he now resided on the downwind side of a data center located off Eskimo Hill Road. He said that if the speaker had not recently visited Eskimo Hill, he encouraged them to do so and to a few minutes to observe the changes that had taken place. He said that the clear-cutting of 500 acres of land had occurred. He said that the wastewater from these plants was a concern, and he was unsure of the treatment or disposal process.

Mr. Rudenshiold said that as a resident on a well, he was particularly concerned about the possibility of that water returning into the ground. He said that he believed it was unlikely that they could stop this data center, but he was alarmed by the fact that more were being planned in the County. He said that as a long-term resident and taxpayer, he was deeply concerned about the potential impact on their health, particularly the low-frequency noise pollution that was now affecting his home as well as near a proposed school site.

Mr. Rudenshiold said that he feared that they had become trapped in an ill-conceived plan that was not fully understood at the time it was made. He said that he lived in area zoned A-1 Agricultural, but their area had transitioned from agricultural to residential land use, so they were more densely populated than ever before. He said that the presence of an industrial center like this in the midst of their community was a significant concern. He said that he pitied the residents who had recently purchased homes on the opposite side of the road from this center.

Mr. Rudenshiold said that he also worried about the rest of the County, as more data centers were being proposed. He said that he firmly believed that they should be advocating for data centers to be located in other counties with fewer residents, as he did not believe there were any significant tax advantages for Stafford; in fact, he believed there were numerous disadvantages for all of them who lived there.

5. Elena Prokos, Rock Hill District, said that she had been attending these work sessions of the Planning Commission, and she must admit that she had more questions than answers; however, she had been impressed by the research most of the members had been doing, their expertise, and their desire to learn about the facts. She said that they had heard the citizens, and she felt grateful for that. She said that however, there were numbers and specifics that concerned her.

Ms. Prokos said that if a company applicant was willing to adhere to their strictest and most limiting performance standards, then those were the only companies she should consider. She said that residents, Mother Nature, and data centers were not compatible with each other. She said that she found 1,000 feet to be an unacceptable distance from residents. She said that she strongly believed that they should keep data centers away from schools, heavily forested areas, open land, and residences.

Ms. Prokos said that high-frequency and low-frequency noise, continued security lighting, and the need to minimize these effects on neighborhoods were all valid reasons to keep data centers away. She said that she suggested placing them in areas with existing lighting, rather than near residents. She said that she applauded the discussion of prohibiting water use and disposal from the Potomac, Rappahannock, and Accokeek Creek. She said that she would like to see both Aquia and Potomac Creek included on the list of prohibited water usage. She said that regarding electricity, transmission lines, and substations, she would like to know where they would be located.

Ms. Prokos asked if substations would be on the applicant's property, near the edge of the boundary, or outside the data center. She asked what measures could be taken to prevent runoff from affecting residences and wildlife during the construction phase. She said that this subject was complex, and she did not intend to downplay its significance. She said that she begged the Board to tighten these performance standards and not allow for grandfathering of applicants that had not yet been approved. She said that she did not see the downside to losing applicants when two data centers had already been approved and 11 pending applications. She said that her last question was whether it was possible to limit the number of data centers approved and only approve a specific number and size of center.

6. Kevin French, George Washington District, said that he had attended several Planning Commission subcommittee meetings, and he was thoroughly impressed with the dedication and hard work of the individuals involved in this effort. He said that they were working under a tight timeline, and it was clear they were aware of the challenges ahead. He said that staff had been doing an outstanding job in responding to their requests for information, handling a significant volume of research requests and innovative ideas that emerged from each meeting.

Mr. French said that however, it was also apparent that staff was feeling overwhelmed by the scope of the work involved. He said that this gave him concern about their ability to succeed within the current timeline. He said that he was concerned about the potential for rushing this effort and the importance of allocating sufficient resources and time to complete it to the best of their abilities. He said that he believed it was crucial that the Planning Commission took a thoughtful and deliberate approach to this project. He said that he was also concerned about the public comment and input process for the draft product the Board would review. He said that he was looking forward to hearing more information about how this process would work.

Mr. French said that while he had been impressed with the staff's responsiveness and the subcommittee's engagement, he must be blunt: they lacked the deep expertise and experience necessary to effectively navigate the complexities of data center standards, operations, and compliance. He said that they were all out of their depth in terms of dealing with a multi-

billion-dollar industry that was highly sophisticated and had built more data centers than they could imagine. He said that they needed to exercise caution and ensure that they were providing the right standards for development and managing the code compliance that followed.

Mr. French said that they had a world-class team, and while they may have among the top 10% of staff and expertise on the Planning Commission and Board, they were still far from the level of expertise possessed by the developers and operators of data centers. He said that they needed to seek additional help with this. He said that in terms of specific recommendations, he believed more was better. He said that they should specify larger setbacks, more buffers, and more restrictive covenants or restrictions on noise, light, and runoff. He said that they would find willing investors to properly develop the County.

7. Lou, Hartwood District, said that they should conduct more studies to ensure they considered the setbacks of 1,000 feet or more due to the size of the proposed three-story buildings. He said that with that 90-foot height, additional standoff was necessary between the data center and property boundaries. He said that he believed they needed to be cautious and deliberate in their approach, avoiding a rush to judgment or potential failure. He said that it would be helpful to have an enlightened discussion and he encouraged them to carefully consider the issues at hand.
8. Molly Denham, Hartwood District, said that she wanted to thank the Board for the housing presentations this evening. She said that she was sure they were aware that she had been visibly enthusiastic throughout the presentations, as both speakers effectively addressed the concerns she had been advocating for over the past year and a half. She said that she looked forward to seeing how the Board planned to incorporate this information into future plans for Stafford County.

Ms. Denham said that she wanted to make it clear that affordable housing did not necessarily mean subpar government housing, although she knew from experience that those types of housing developments were not always the worst option. She said that she did not want this to be a one-time conversation; she hoped the Board could continue this discussion and work towards developing a plan for reasonable, cost-effective housing.

Ms. Denham said that as someone who had been vocal about this issue, she would be closely following the County's progress. She said that she appreciated the presentations and hoped the Supervisors had taken diligent notes, as she had. She said that she planned to continue attending these meetings and advocate for a reasonably priced and sustainable community that her daughter could call home when she became an adult. She said that on a separate note, she was glad he had waited for the schools, and she kindly requested that they allow the School Board to do their job, as they were simply seeking reassurance from the Board. She said that the Westlake property was not a new topic and they were simply trying to make progress.

9. Tristan Heinz, Hartwood District, said that he wanted to read a statement from his neighbor, Carrie Sobolik, who was unable to be at tonight's meeting. He said that that Ms. Sobolik wrote, "Please do not allow any data center applications to be grandfathered under the outdated 2023 performance standards. When those standards were created, Stafford and all of northern

Virginia were just beginning to understand the impacts of data centers. Since then, residents across the region had reported how serious those impacts can be, including noise, water, and energy consumption, heat, and land use.

“That was why they were revising the standards now, because they did not get them right the first time and more information has come forth. Using outdated regulations to approve new data centers was like building a modern skyscraper using blueprints from the 1950s. The world has changed, and those plans no longer fit today's reality. When that skyscraper was a data center placed in the middle of a community, it was the residents who bore the consequences in noise, water, and energy strain, health risks, and the total alteration of community character.

“Allowing older applications to slip through under outdated rules undermines this entire process, creating a loophole big enough to swallow every protection they were trying to put in place. That was not progress; it was repeating past mistakes. I am not asking you to stop development; I am asking you to do it responsibly, with updated standards that reflect what they now know. Communities across Virginia are already living with the consequences of unchecked data center growth, constant low-frequency noise, massive resource use, and irreversible neighborhood changes.

“I appreciate your attention, thoughtfulness, and recent vote to prioritize data-driven policy. Now, I ask you to listen to your constituents and hold any project not under construction before May 20 to the new standards. Our rules must keep up with modern changes, not old information. Stafford has the opportunity to lead in balancing data center development with community protection. Let's build for the future, and as Supervisor Diggs had said on May 20, let us get it right this time.”

Mr. Heinz said that he would also like to remind the Board that just as he was reading Ms. Sobolik's statement because she could not join them today, his fellow neighbors and friends were all here representing their friends and family who could not be here today, either, whether it was due to work, childcare, transportation, illness, or any other major life events that took their immediate attention. He said that the number of people trying to speak to the Board were greater than those directly in front of them this evening.

10. Connie Peebles Barrow, Rock Hill District, said that she wanted to thank the Board for the opportunity that they provided for the Planning Commission to have the subcommittee on data centers. She said that she had attended the last two meetings of that subcommittee and found it to be extremely beneficial, yet also eye-opening about the serious gaps in information. She said that today, she would like to respectfully request that the Board of Supervisors not allow grandfathering of data centers that are currently in the process from application to yet not approved.

Ms. Barrow said that based on their previous discussions, she understood that nine data centers had been applied for but not yet approved, and an additional two had been submitted within two weeks of the subcommittee's meeting. She said that she had heard through the grapevine that five more data centers had not yet submitted their applications. She said that this created a sense of urgency, as these data centers were banking on their decision to allow

grandfathering. She said that it was unclear whose interests would be taken into account, and it appeared that the process was being driven by the interests of those involved, rather than the needs of the community.

Ms. Barrow said that if grandfathering was allowed, it would undermine the effectiveness of the updated standards, which were necessary to ensure that these data centers met the required standards. She said that she was also concerned about the non-disclosure agreements and their potential impact on revenue forecasts. She said that the current revenue projections were unverifiable, so it was unclear what the actual revenue would be. She said that this was a critical issue that required careful consideration.

11. Lillian Swain, George Washington District, said that she was concerned about whether the economic benefits of data centers truly outweighed the detrimental impacts of them. She said that an economic analysis by the State Corporation for Economic Development and the Commissioner of Revenue found that 1 million square feet of data centers would generate an estimated annual revenue of \$18.5 million.

Ms. Swain said that the JLARC study stated that most of the revenue from data centers was realized during the construction phase, primarily through the employment of construction workers and the purchase of construction materials. She asked where the \$18.5 million went after the construction was done. She said that citizens deserved an answer to that question.

12. Don Hall, George Washington District, said that he was a lifetime resident of Stafford County. He said that his primary concerns revolved around rezoning, specifically A-1 to M-2. He said that he was unclear as to why any A-1 to M-2 rezoning was necessary, given the presence of four or five data centers already being built. He said that with the tighter regulations that would likely be implemented, he believed the subcommittee had made a good start in developing regulations for the M-2 zoning. He said that however, he failed to see the need for regulations on A-1, which should not be rezoned, as the comprehensive plan was designed to protect this type of area.

Mr. Hall said that as a lifetime resident, he felt there was no one there to protect them because most of the people here were transplants from other areas, including a majority of the Board members. He said that they were making these rules without really knowing what it meant; if it got too crowded in Stafford, they would just move again to another state or retire and go to Florida like those before them. He said that he felt those making the rules did not truly represent the local residents of Stafford.

Mr. Hall said that furthermore, he was concerned about the electric substations required to power the data centers and the impacts those would have on the bills of ratepayers. He asked why the citizens were being penalized for these small gains. He said that also, he wondered whether the demands of the data centers would require more fire stations and more Utilities staff for their water treatment plants. He said that every action had a reaction, so they had a lot to consider from that perspective. He said that he agreed that the subcommittee had done a great job of coming up with some ideas, so he hoped the Board would listen to them.

13. Caitlin Coogan Miller, Hartwood District, said that she was present to urge the Board to adopt three critical performance standards for data centers. She said that first, they should require a 1,000-foot setback from homes. She said that a 1,000-foot setback from families was not only reasonable, but essential, and the public had consistently requested this. She said that data center campuses were heavy industrial uses, massive in scale, constantly in operation, and harmful to health.

Ms. Miller said that as a clear warning, they should consider the Great Oaks community in Prince William County, where four Amazon data centers were built 600 feet from homes. She said that the result was relentless noise pollution that escalated into a public crisis, prompting police calls, picketing, City Council intervention, 15 meetings with Amazon executives, and \$30 million in attempted remediation over two years, none of which had fully resolved the residents' concerns. She said that this would be an expensive issue.

Ms. Miller said that second, they should require a 300-foot buffer of mature forest between data centers and homes. She said that mature forest was the single best protection they can provide residents. She said that they should not allow berms within this buffer distance, as they benefit developers, not residents. She said that berms allow developers to achieve grading, water runoff, and site design goals, but they required the clear cutting of mature forest and cause heavy construction near homes.

Ms. Miller said that third and finally, they should not grandfather existing applications or the five in the pipeline for review. She said that they all agreed that the current 100-foot setbacks were a serious mistake, especially given the scale of today's hyperscale data centers and their substations. She said that grandfathering existing applications would cause incredible harm to Stafford families, plummet property values, deplete wells, and trigger lawsuits.

Ms. Miller said that she could not imagine raising her child 100 feet from a data center, and she was confident the Supervisors would agree. She said that truthfully, they did not get the standards right the first time, which was why improved standards should be applied to all applications.

14. Rick McGregor, Aquia District, said that he shared concerns about the data centers, but he had another concern. He said that there were a lot of good people in the Patowomeck Tribe who had done a lot of good things. He said that he knew this because many of them were his cousins; some still spoke to him. He said that in the beginning, he was encouraged to join the tribe and later was scolded for refusing to join. He said that there were too many questions about their legitimacy.

Mr. McGregor said that he did not harbor hatred, but he was angry at the tribal leadership for deceiving their members and others. He said that the Virginia Council on Indians (VCI), established by the General Assembly to determine which groups qualified as Virginia tribes, had made it clear that the Patowomeck Tribe did not qualify in 1998. He said that despite this, the General Assembly granted state recognition to the group, with Delegate Howell's support and without the support of VCI.

Mr. McGregor said that this decision was detrimental to Virginia tribes, who soon after refused to participate in future proceedings and ultimately leading to the dissolution of the VCI. He said that the General Assembly's actions demonstrated a lack of respect for genuine Native Americans and delegitimized the VCI. He asked why the Assembly would disregard the findings of their own experts, including Native Americans. He said that Resolution 150 stated that Dr. W. L. Deyo and other scholars amassed documentation proving this group to be descendants of Patawomeck. He asked if the Assembly disallowed the findings of the VCI in favor of these scholars. He said that W.L. Deyo was not actually a doctor, and the other scholars were unnamed, which further underscored the issue of credibility in this case.

Mr. McGregor said that Jerrilyn would read from an actual VCI document in a moment. He said that there were many questions that cast doubt on the Patawomecks' legitimacy. He said that if one truly cared about genuine Native Americans, he implored the County to seek the truth. He said that requesting their records was essential, and he applauded those who were doing so. He said that they believed their records should be required before proceeding with any further support of this group, and they asked that any records submitted by this group be evaluated by the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs.

15. Jerrilyn Eby McGregor, Rock Hill District, said that in February 1998, the Virginia Council on Indians sent a memorandum to Chief Robert Green, but apparently, he never shared this with his members. She said that the Council wrote, "After careful thought and research, including both the indigenous and anthropological aspects of the case, we have concluded that the petitioner's documents have not shown sufficient evidence of the existence of a tribal community to justify recognition as an Indian tribe by the Commonwealth."

"In particular, we note the following: 1. No persons in the Patawomeck group in the 1920s through 1950s were harassed by the state's Vital Statistics Bureau. Dr. Plecker's 1943 circular listing suspicious surnames county by county does not list anyone from Stafford or King George. Additionally, the U.S. Census schedules that Dr. Plecker had access to, 1790 through 1860, list the Patawomeck's ancestors as white. The petitioners have submitted no federal, state, or county documents indicating that their ancestors ever claimed an Indian identity publicly, nor have they presented documentation to show a close in-group relationship that would set their ancestors apart from neighbors who did not have Indian descent, a necessary condition for the existence of a tribe.

"2. Only one of the three anthropologists working with Powhatan-descended tribes before 1940 mentioned Potomac Indians in his field notes, that being Frank Speck, who spent one night in Luther James Newton's house, wrote in 1928 that there was a possibly Potomac-descended group that ought to be checked out. In 1940, Speck placed graduate students with several groups that are now recognized, but he never sent a student to look at any group in Stafford or King George. 3. The first two anthropologists queried the reservated Pamunkeys and Mattaponi's about non-reservation Powhatan-descended groups in Virginia. The Pamunkey and Mattaponi knew about several others, but they made no mention of any group in Stafford or King George.

“4. Indian committee members, who include Mattaponi Chickahominy and Eastern Chickahominy, did not hear anything about a Potomac group from their elders as they were growing up, which indicated that the current petitioners were out of touch, even in the 1920s, when Frank Speck was encouraging regional get-togethers in Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware.”

16. Cade Hildreth, Hartwood District, said that he wanted to reiterate the concerns that several people had expressed regarding data centers. He said that he agreed the Board should support 1,000-foot setbacks, 300 feet of forested buffer, and not allow grandfathering of pending applications. He said that today, he wanted to focus on tax and monetary concerns related to these facilities. He said that as they may be aware, but the public may not, data centers in Stafford County had benefited from three major tax benefits.

Mr. Hildreth said that firstly, they were exempt from a computer and peripherals tax rate of \$1.25 per \$100 of equipment, which was significantly lower than neighboring counties such as Prince William, Loudoun, and Fairfax. He said that this rate was 77% lower than what they charged other businesses in this County for tangible personal property tax. He said that unfortunately, this outdated rate was a result of a 2018 Memorandum of Understanding, which was now obsolete in the rapidly changing world of technology.

Mr. Hildreth said that secondly, data centers benefited from a generous depreciation schedule that reduced their tax liability. He said that this schedule allowed data centers to claim a 50% reduction in the first year, effectively making them pay only \$0.625 per \$100 of equipment. He said that this reduction continued each year, resulting in a significant decrease in tax liability. He said that thirdly, data centers were eligible for a tax rebate program called the Technology Zone Incentive Package, which was in Section 23A-6 of the Municipal Code of Stafford.

Mr. Hildreth said that this program provided substantial tax rebates, with a 70% reduction for the first two years, followed by 50% reductions for the next two years, and finally 30% off for the fifth year. He said that this rebate was stacked with the other benefits, resulting in a substantial reduction in tax liability. He said that however, these benefits did not appear to be reflected in the tax projections provided by developers, such as the Crane's Corner project. He said that the fiscal impact statement he had reviewed excluded the Technology Zone Incentive Package, and several project assumptions were problematic.

Mr. Hildreth said that furthermore, without knowledge of the end user, it was impossible to validate these projections. He said that additionally, data centers in Virginia received sales and tax use exemptions on equipment purchases, which would result in significant tax savings. He said that finally, real estate tax assessments could provide some revenue, but major operators like Microsoft and Amazon were suing neighboring counties to reduce these valuations, raising questions about the stability of this revenue and the costs associated with collecting and fighting these legal battles. He said that given these concerns, he was deeply troubled by the revenue projections being presented.

17. Kristen Maxson, Falmouth District, stated that Virginia closed meetings shall have their substance reasonably identified in the open meetings, as stated in Section B. She said that Stafford County agendas often failed to clearly define their substance, making it difficult for the public to follow. She stated that the non-disclosure concerns were causing significant harm to Stafford County, and the public was speaking out about this issue.

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Ms. Maxson said that closed meetings were intended for special, strict meetings, not for discussing individual agendas. She said that on this Friday's agenda, there were 288 megabytes and 1,357 pages, which was to be posted on the Friday prior to the hearing. She said that on Monday, the agenda had 307 megabytes and 1,536 pages, with an additional 179 pages. She said that this was in direct conflict with the County's bylaws and fair public hearing practices, leading to unchecked processes and unfair practices by the authorities. She said that the lack of balance and accountability was leading to negative consequences, including inequality and resource depletion.

Ms. Maxson said that according to the 2025 Virginia House Bill, closed meetings were required to have seven-day notice, and failure to do so required a new notice. She said that House Bill 2660 also called for shortening plat and site plans, as the current mega plans were too extensive. She emphasized that it was essential to organize procedures in a clear, sequential order, which the current applications and signatures did not follow. She said that it was crucial to provide ease of reference with plans, as many of the applications lacked this clarity. She said that the process timelines were also not clearly outlined, which was a significant issue. She said that they needed to get organized.

18. Eric Schrader, George Washington District, said that he would like to begin by expressing his gratitude to the Planning Commission for its ongoing work to strengthen performance standards for data centers. He said that this was a step in the right direction. He said that he was here tonight to express his deep concern, along with many of his neighbors, that the Board may choose to grandfather current incoming data center applications under outdated, inadequate standards. He said that upon closer inspection, the current standards were riddled with loopholes.

Mr. Schrader said that the current standards favored developers, leaving residents, their neighborhoods, and their environment unprotected. He said that allowing any new application to proceed under these outdated rules undermined the very work the Planning Commission was doing to strengthen regulations. He said that it made no sense to acknowledge the need for stronger regulations and then allow major projects to bypass them. He said that if the standards were not good enough to guide future development, they should not be good enough to approve current applications either.

Mr. Schrader said that the public urged the Board to not grandfather any unapproved applications. He said that he also continued to support key measures that reflected the level of protection Stafford residents deserved. He said that specifically, they advocated for at least 1,000-foot setbacks from residential properties, as anything less put families and homes at risk. He said that they also supported at least 300-foot vegetative buffers that were mature and preserved, rather than the currently proposed 100-foot buffers. He said that these buffers were crucial for screening noise, light, and visual pollution.

Mr. Schrader said that again, there should be a clear and responsible rejection of any projects should be approved under standards in the process of being reviewed and revised for good reason. He said that he strongly opposed any proposal to rezone agricultural land to heavy industrial, particularly in areas along the Rappahannock River. He said that these lands served as vital green space, natural habitat, and agricultural buffer. He said that converting them to industrial use was short-sighted and incompatible with the long-term health of the river, the surrounding watershed, and the rural character of their County. He said that once that land was gone, it was gone forever.

Mr. Schrader said that as technology advanced, land-based data centers may soon become obsolete. He said that the options for sea-based and even space-based data centers were growing, and it would be a reality within 10 years. He asked if they wanted to sacrifice the permanent beauty and safety of their community for something of short-lived value. He said that they had the opportunity right now to set the tone for how Stafford handled growth, stewardship, and responsibility. He said that he urged the Board to prioritize the needs of residents and their environment over rushed industrial development.

19. Melina Kessler, Garrisonville District, said that she had lived in Stafford since 1990 and had seen many changes, including the rise and fall of the Aquia Town Center, and the closure of Gargoyle's Coffee. She said that she understood that one of the main reasons to support data centers was revenue, but Stafford County was one of the wealthiest counties in the United States. She asked if they needed to generate that much more revenue. She said that she was echoing the sentiments of the gentleman before her and the constituents who would come after her.

Ms. Kessler said that she would like to know how much their electricity bill would increase with these data centers. She said that they had the opportunity to do this right. She said that personally, she was fine with no data centers being built, but she realized they may have reached a point of no return. She said that therefore, she was asking that they did not grandfather in current applicants until the Planning Commission set stricter regulations. She would also like to reintroduce the conditional use permit requirement and eliminate the by-right zoning for data centers. She said that furthermore, she, along with others who had spoken before her, would like to request a minimum setback of at least 1,000 feet from any residential area.

20. Vicki Lindberg, George Washington District, said that she lived right next to the beautiful Rappahannock River, and she would like to see it remain that way. She said that like many others here this evening, she was here to ask the Board not to grandfather in those existing data

centers. She said that the reasons were similar to what they had already heard, but she would like to elaborate. She said that specifically, she wanted to quote something that was mentioned in one of the pending situations' impact statement.

Ms. Lindberg said that it stated that this project had been designed to minimize its visual impact on surrounding neighbors. She said that however, she found it difficult to believe that this could be true, given the proximity of the neighbors, which were between 160 and 800 feet away. She said that those two statements could not be reconciled. She said that unlike others here, she would like to request that the setbacks be at least 1,000 feet for the heavily wooded areas; 300 feet was not enough. She said that in her woods, she could currently could not see the hill line from her backyard, but six months from now, she would be able to see it clearly because the woods were vastly different in spring and summer than they were in winter.

Ms. Lindberg said that furthermore, she was concerned about the revenue calculations, which had been discussed several times tonight. She said that she would like to see the details behind these calculations, particularly in light of some of the points raised tonight. She said that she was very concerned that the income generated by this project may not be as substantial as claimed. She said that she understood that it was appealing to offset their budget deficits, but she urged them to consider the potential risks. She said that additionally, she would like to address the decibel levels.

Ms. Lindberg said that according to the Public Health Association and the World Health Organization, decibel levels alone were insufficient to measure the damage caused by noise. She said that the noise pattern, duration, and frequency of exposure also played a significant role in its impact on health. She said that it could adversely affect blood pressure, heart disease, general stress, and sleep disorders, with children being the most at risk. She said that she appreciated the Board taking on this work and she wanted to give her encouragement.

21. Maria Morin Zaluski, George Washington District, said that although there was nothing on tonight's agenda directly tied to data centers, she was there because this issue was not going away, and neither were any of the people speaking about them. She said that when she and her husband built their forever home here, they relied on the promise of zoning. She said that now, that promise felt broken. She said that they never signed up to live beside substations, generators, and constant industrial noise, and they continued to request that the Board reject any effort to rezone agricultural land for heavy industrial use.

Ms. Zaluski said that zoning existed for a reason; it was the framework that guided how communities grew, and people planned their lives around it. She said that data centers did not belong next to homes, schools, and endangered rivers. She said that they already knew the risks that came with data centers, including environmental harm, falling property values, higher energy costs, and loss of community character. She said that however, they were only beginning to understand the health impacts, particularly from constant low-frequency noise emitted by data centers and their substations.

Ms. Zaluski said that ow-frequency noise was like radiation; it accumulated and caused damage silently. She said that emerging research on vibroacoustic disease showed serious

health effects from prolonged exposure. She said that if they did not yet fully understand the risks, the only responsible approach was to err on the side of caution. She said that for properly cited plans, their constituents were asking for basic common sense protections. She said that a minimum setback of 1,000 feet from any residential area was recommended.

Ms. Zaluski said that she would like to see a 2,000-foot setback from the Rappahannock River and its tributaries to protect their waterways and wildlife. She said that strict enforceable standards for noise, screening, energy use, and environmental impact, not just at approval, but in perpetuity, were also requested. She said that if developers stood to profit from building there, they should be held to ongoing standards to protect those who lived there. She said that short setbacks did not work, as evidenced in Great Oak, data centers were 600 feet from homes, and residents suffered for years from loud, disruptive noise even after Amazon spent \$40 million in mitigation. She said that if 600 feet was not enough there, it would not be enough here.

Ms. Zaluski said that settling for less guaranteed the same problems, lawsuits, and regrets down the road. She said that she would also like to urge one of the Supervisors who voted against the conditional use permit process in March to bring it back for a vote. She said that if these projects were truly beneficial, there should be no objection to additional oversight. She asked what the harm was in giving the public a seat at the table. She said that she would close by saying this: it was easy to say that the public was misinformed; it was harder to look them in the eye and explain why these projects were good for them. She said that so far, they had not heard that. She said that the Supervisors were charged to represent them, their constituents. She requested them to stand together in this fight, and to protect their land, protect their health, and protect their home.

22. Jagwinder Singh, George Washington District, said that she was a local community college professor and substitute teacher. She said that her father designed the County seal behind the dais, and she was from the Unicorn Farm on Brook Road, which was part of the George Washington District. She said that she heard a lot about Crow's Nest earlier tonight, and the Board may not remember her, but she was an original member of the real Save Crow's Nest organization. She said that it was nearly 20 years ago, when she was 19 years old, and she led their youth outreach program.

Ms. Singh said that despite attempts at shady contracting and business conflicts from former County Supervisors, such as Paul Milde, the tireless efforts of local citizens, community pressure, and cooperation from local government ultimately preserved more than 3,000 acres of virgin Virginia forest. She said that after college, she left the region and lived all over the world a decade. She said that she chose to return to Stafford County, Virginia, her hometown. She said that when people around the world asked her what made her County special, she consistently replied that it was its natural beauty.

Ms. Singh said that she was perplexed as to why this County seemed determined to destroy itself. She said that what could be an oasis of old Virginia beauty was rapidly declining into suburban sprawl. She said that the old adage, "don't Fairfax Fredericksburg," seemed to be coming to a worse fate. She said that a worrying hellscape of electricity-sucking, habitat-

destroying, residential- and farmland-eating development was unfolding in a County where lifelong residents were being priced out of home ownership, water wasting, soulless, lifeless monuments to technocratic end times.

Ms. Singh said that instead of focusing short-term gains for a select few at the expense of long-term pain for the many, the citizens of this County were begging the Board of Supervisors to protect their natural spaces and focus on making Stafford more livable, environmentally friendly, and affordable for the real people who truly made this place thrive, not just carpetbagging corporations. She said that she sincerely requested the Board, especially after hearing so many people proudly talk about Crow's Nest tonight, to leave a legacy like Crow's Nest, one that served the public and natural good, and not one of data centers, the soul-sucking bricks of progress at all costs.

23. Denise Cooper Waters, Hartwood District, said that her husband and she moved to Stafford in 1983 to escape the sprawl of Fairfax County, drawn by Stafford's quaint, small-town charm. She said that they purchased a 7.5 -acre parcel of beautiful land, zoned A-1 rural residential, and subdivided it to build their current neighbor's house and their own home. She said that the joy of living in such a peaceful area, surrounded by gorgeous woodlands and wildlife, was perfect for raising their family in privacy. She said that it never occurred to her, and she still found it hard to believe, that Stafford County would consider approving M-2 heavy industrial for a data center in the middle of A-1 residential.

Ms. Waters said that recently, hearing the heavy equipment destroying the property along Kelsey Road was deafening and stressful, and she worried about residents having to endure the noise and destruction of M-2 zoning for data center construction, which could last from three to six years, plus the numerous negative impacts of data centers, including the diminished quality of life once the buildings were complete.

Ms. Waters said that she had repeatedly heard statements that data centers were a good source of tax revenue, but the energy-intensive facilities operating 24/7 were expected to consume up to 12% of total U.S. electricity demand by 2028, leading to substantial costs to upgrade and expand the electric grid, which would result in higher electricity bills and incremental annual increases for residential and small-business consumers. She said that she did not want to pay more for electricity to run a data center.

Ms. Waters said that she was concerned about the potential environmental impact, including the enormous use of water and the risk of drying up their lakes and rivers, and the potential to ruin their wells during construction. She said that she was also worried about the negative effects on her mental and physical well-being due to generator noise, low-frequency noise, 24/7 lights, and other factors that cause undue stress. She said that these were all reasons why residents did not want data centers near their homes.

Ms. Waters said that she urged the Board to take the time to consider the lessons learned from Prince William residents, who had expressed significant concerns and frustration regarding the proliferation of data centers in the area, including noise pollution, environmental impact, loss of agricultural land, impacts on historic sites, increased property taxes, health concerns, and

lack of transparency and community input. She said that she requested the Board to not allow these mistakes and other issues to seep into Stafford County. She said that they needed stronger protections regarding data center regulations to ensure updated standards that were currently being revised.

Ms. Waters said that grandfathering existing applications would be inadequate and irresponsible without updated standards. She said that she requested the Board to please support meaningful protections for residents with no loopholes. She said that residents requested 1,000-foot setbacks or more from residential properties and 300-foot mature, preserved, vegetative buffers were necessary. She said that in closing, she would quote an excerpt from the JLARC, which stated that industrial uses and residential uses should not be zoned next to each other.

24. Ross Bellman, Aquia District, said that he would like to briefly state that his own concerns had been eloquently expressed by previous speakers, so he wanted to echo those sentiments. He said that Ms. Zaluski's comments were especially relevant.
25. Erin Cinzero, Hartwood District, said that she agreed with everything her fellow residents had said to the Board with univocity, and she hoped the Board would take their concerns seriously. She said that she wanted to focus on one urgent request from each of the Supervisors. She asked the Board to please listen to their concerns as constituents. She said that they had given developers the courtesy of one-on-one meetings, toured their hand-picked pet data centers, and heard their highly-polished pitches.

Ms. Cinzero asked why they would not give their own constituents who had voted them into office and put their hopes in them the same degree of credence and accord. She said that the public had invested countless hours in understanding what was at stake, far more than the Supervisors had done or been asked to do. She said that she could promise them that if she could find a way to feel neutral or positive about this issue, she would gladly invest her time in a thousand other things.

Ms. Cinzero said that the sheer persistence and depth of community engagement they had seen should be the Board's sign and symbol to take this seriously and hear and heed them. She said that they were not just worried; they were deeply, substantively concerned. She said that yet, in the face of that, she had heard some on this Board repeatedly dismiss their concerns as misinformation, a word that was thrown around far too casually and never with specific backup about what the misinformation was.

Ms. Cinzero said that if there was something they were saying that was misinformed, she welcomed the Supervisors to stipulate for them what it was and correct it. She said that from where they stood, they were doing the work; they were reading JLARC, peer-reviewed studies, talking to legislators in other municipalities and residents in other districts, researching impacts, and attending meetings. She said that they were doing everything they could to understand and advocate.

Ms. Cinzero said that they were not a mob of idiots who needed the Board to set them straight. She said that they were engineers, linemen, pastors, planners, legal professionals, land developers, real estate agents, chemists, teachers, PhDs, and scholars. She said that they were parents, and were informed, invested residents. She said that the Supervisors were elected to represent them, not the developers. She requested the Board to please treat their concerns and their credibility with the same respect and seriousness that they afforded those who stood to profit from these projects.

26. Bart Randall, Garrisonville District, said that there had been a significant amount of discussion about data centers. He said that he would like to see a clear plan from the Board to address data centers. He said that right now, it seemed like they were at the mercy of whatever decision was made on a given day. He said that they had a 20-year plan for Stafford County, and they should be able to apply the same level of planning to data centers.

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Mr. Randall said that they must specify what was the purpose of data centers, and they should be able to use that to achieve their goals. He said that he would like to see a plan that outlined the mitigation steps they would take. He said that there was no reason to clear-cut 500 acres. He said that the data center developers could survey the land, mark out the building area, and leave the surrounding trees intact. He said that this was a more involved process, but it was possible. He said that instead, the County was giving them carte blanche to clear-cut 500 acres with little repercussions.

Mr. Randall said that when they imposed a 300-foot mature tree setback, they would not bring in new, mature trees, but instead would plant saplings that would be mature in ten years. He said that he appreciated the professionals here discussing smart growth, and he hoped the Board would listen to their recommendations. He said that they should not have to reinvent the wheel when it came to affordable housing. He said that they were well aware of the steps needed to address affordable housing, they had had the professionals present, and he believed their expertise should be prioritized in their decision-making process.

Mr. Randall said that one issue he would like to bring up was the construction of Hartwood Elementary. He said that they had to build the school, and the reason the Board was seeing the plan was because there still remained a level of distrust between the School Board and the Board of Supervisors. He said that finally, he wanted to emphasize that they did not have a County Planner, and he would respectfully request that they hire one.

PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS BY DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

ITEM 2. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER ADOPTING A RESOLUTION TO REQUEST WESTLAKE DEVELOPMENT LLC CONVEY PROFFERED LAND TO THE

COUNTY AND TO EXPRESS THE BOARD'S INTENT TO CONVEY LAND TO THE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE HARTWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REPLACEMENT PROJECT; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-178

Dr. Yeung said that to reiterate, she had stated her position at the beginning of the meeting, and she would not vote in favor of this proposal due to the lack of proper notice, a work session, and transparency. She said that she had not seen the actual plan, and they were being asked to vote on a comprehensive plan that did not exist in its current form. She said that she was concerned that they were moving forward with a premature and process-deficient proposal without adequate information. She said that she was troubled by the inequity that Embrey Mill, a fully built-out development, still lacked a school, and she would not be ignored on this issue.

Ms. Allen said that Mr. Towery from the School Division was present and could answer questions from the Board. She asked if he could provide some context regarding the timeline of when the Board agreed to proceed with the Hartwood rebuild.

Jason Towery, Chief Facilities Officer for Stafford County Public Schools, said that the Westlake site had been proposed for the Hartwood rebuild in the school's Capital Improvement Plan for the past two years. He said that in April or May of this year, the Board of Supervisors formally adjusted the timeline to deliver the project by 2028.

Ms. Allen said that the Board had been aware Hartwood would be rebuilt, and he had mentioned it two years ago, specifically referencing the Westlake property as the potential site. She asked if there had been anything that occurred in the past two years that prompted the School Division to work on acquiring this property to begin engineering the rebuild.

Mr. Towery said that they had been in regular contact with Pleasants for the past six months to a year to ensure they understood their construction timeline. He said that as Mr. Zuraf had mentioned earlier, Pleasants had developed a significant amount of infrastructure, including water and sewer systems. He said that they had had conversations with them to confirm their timeline.

Mr. Towery said that he would like to revisit something Mr. Ashton had pointed out earlier, specifically the 60-day time frame in the proffers. He said that there was a bit of a chicken-and-egg situation with the Vulcan easement. He said that they had had robust conversations with the developer, who had indicated they were ready to proffer the land and transfer ownership; however, they were currently working through the easement situation with Vulcan, which involved permitting wetland impacts for the new entrance.

Mr. Towery said that at this point, if the Board were to request the 60-day deadline, it would likely pose a challenge for the developer to meet it, potentially leading them to use the 55-acre site. He said that the request from the School Board last week was essentially a vote of confidence from the Board of Supervisors to confirm that Westlake was the chosen site for Hartwood Elementary. He said that they had discussed this with County staff, and both Schools and County staff believed they could continue working together over the next three to six months to finalize the location of the elementary and any other amenities the County may want, and then they planned to make a formal request to proceed with the 65-acre site.

Ms. Allen said that she had heard concern that the development of the school may be done in such a way that left the remaining land unusable for County parks, fire station, or other facilities.

Mr. Towery said that that would not be in good faith or align with their intent. He said that their conversations with staff had been focused on collaboration, and he believed that having a vote of confidence from the Boards would be beneficial. He said that this would allow them to continue collaborating with their team on the design work, moving forward. He said that as they approved the design contract for this project, it would provide time for them to work with the architect and site civil engineer to address some of the concerns and elements, and then they could likely revisit this Board later this year or fall, with a specific plan in hand, having collaborated with their staff to identify a suitable solution.

Ms. Allen said that was her point, which was to emphasize that this was not just a random decision, but rather a collaborative process where both the County and the Schools would have a say in the matter. She said that they would have to agree to the placement.

Mr. Ashton said that to clarify, the land was being proffered to be conveyed to the County, and as a result, this body would then need to transfer ownership to the schools. He said that before that transfer occurred, they would work with them to determine the necessary steps.

Ms. Allen said that she wanted to clarify that the schools were being as transparent as possible and they would not be dictating the plans without the input of County staff. She said that her point was that the plan would be agreeable to both the County and the School Division. She asked if there was a timeline for when they had to acquire the 65-acre parcel or the 55-acre parcel. She asked how they initiated that.

Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney, said that there were no time limits specified in the proffers. She said that ultimately, the proffers stated that when the Board requested it, the property should be conveyed to the County within 60 days. She said that they understood that the process would likely take a little longer, but there was no development requirement prior to initiating the request.

Mr. English asked Mr. Towery how many acres were required for the elementary school.

Mr. Towery said that the County's comprehensive plan indicated a minimum of 20, which he believed was a reasonable number. He said that the original proffer stated up to 35, but they would likely fall somewhere in between.

Mr. English said that he was very supportive of this rebuild. He said that the current conditions at Hartwood Elementary were indicative of the fact that it should have been rebuilt a long time ago, and he was eager to get started on this project.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to adopt Proposed Resolution R25-178.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary

No: (1) Yeung

Absent: (1) Vanuch

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ITEM 3. SHERIFF; CONSIDER AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND REORDAIN PORTIONS OF STAFFORD COUNTY CODE CHAPTER 15, "MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC" TO ESTABLISH A TRAFFIC SIGNAL ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM IMPOSING MONETARY PENALTIES ON OPERATORS OF MOTOR VEHICLES WHO FAIL TO COMPLY WITH TRAFFIC LIGHT SIGNALS AND TO PLACE AND OPERATE PHOTO SPEED MONITORING DEVICES IN SCHOOL CROSSING AND HIGHWAY WORK ZONES TO IMPOSE MONETARY PENALTIES ON OPERATORS OF MOTOR VEHICLES WHO HAVE A VEHICLE SPEED VIOLATION; PROPOSED ORDINANCE O25-13

Major Jason Dembowski, Stafford County Sheriff's Office, and he would be discussing Proposed Ordinance O25-13, the speed camera and traffic signal initiative. He said that this information had been presented previously, and the Sheriff's Office was now seeking passage of the amendment to the Motor Vehicle Code. He said that to briefly summarize, they were proposing this initiative to enhance safety. He said that their primary focus was on reducing speeding in school zones, as they currently lacked the resources to monitor every zone daily. He said that to address this, they planned to utilize technology to ensure their school zones were safe through speed monitoring.

Major Dembowski said that this would involve a phased implementation, with an intensive educational campaign preceding the issuance of citations or summons for speeding. He said that the language for the traffic signal program was included in the ordinance, as the state code required a County ordinance for photo speed monitoring, but not for traffic signals. He said that historically, they had mirrored the state code for ease and transparency. He said that they had conducted a modified study for this initiative, focusing on six schools: Drew Middle, Stafford Middle, Colonial Forge High, North Stafford High, Stafford Elementary, and Brooke Point High. He said that the study involved two phases, with data collected over five days, from morning to afternoon, while the active school zones were in operation.

Major Dembowski said that the results showed significant speeding violations, with 18,000 and 11,000 violations recorded during that week alone in certain zones. He said that the proposed ordinance would enforce speed limits exceeding 10 miles per hour, and would be monitored by fixed or mobile cameras. He said that they planned to use fixed cameras at certain school zones and rotate them to other zones, requiring an educational and advertisement campaign for 30 days prior to each camera relocation. He said that they would also examine any summonses issued. He said that the maximum civil penalty for speeding was \$100, which did not result in DMV points or insurance impact.

Major Dembowski said that additionally, warning signage was required within a 1,000-foot radius, as mandated by the code. He said that they were also required to report annually to the state police on their issued summonses. He said that the red light camera program allowed for one camera per 10,000 residents. He said that they could technically install 17 cameras, but they would likely focus on school zone areas. He said that several schools already had traffic lights in these zones, and red light violations were a concern. He said that however, they were prioritizing the speed component

first. He said that the camera did capture violators with two photos: one before entering the intersection and one after exiting.

Major Dembowski said that it was essential to note that every camera required a deputy to review the violation and verify its validity before issuing a summons. He said that the maximum civil penalty for red light violations was \$50, with no insurance or DMV points consequences, and this required a County ordinance. He said that their implementation process involved purchasing and evaluating vendors to determine the best impact and cost. He said that they would initiate a contract Request for Proposal (RFP) process to determine the most suitable vendor. He said that they would conduct studies to identify the most impactful school zones and consider the feasibility of relocating or moving cameras to other areas. He said that if the ordinance was adopted, they anticipated a six- to eight-month timeline before implementing cameras in school zones.

Dr. Yeung said that she was generally supportive of this initiative, but had a few clarifying questions. She asked if implementing these enforcement measures could be adequately handled by the current staff of the Sheriff's Office.

Major Dembowski said that it was anticipated that they would need additional staff to sustain this work over time; however, they could begin the implementation with their current staff.

Dr. Yeung asked if the \$50 and \$100 fines were high enough to cover the costs of the cameras and technology.

Major Dembowski said that the fines were controlled by state code, so those proposed amounts were the maximum allowed. He said that their main goal was to make the school zones safer. He said that they were too early in the process to determine whether they could achieve cost neutrality yet; they were currently assessing the best vendor to implement this initiative in Stafford County.

Mr. English asked if they would be able to expand this program to other roads in the County if it was proven to be successful in school zones.

Major Dembowski said that the speed enforcement cameras were written only for school zones and work zones. He said that traffic signal cameras could be used at intersections within the County, but speed enforcement cameras were limited to school zones and work zones.

Ms. Allen asked if it would be possible to consider including red-light cameras on roads that had high incidences of accidents in the County.

Major Dembowski said that yes, there was definitely potential for that, and the ordinance would allow for one camera for every 10,000 residents, which would cover approximately 17 intersections, based on their current population numbers. He said that however, they would need to consider staffing and growth, as it would require a deputy to review every violation at each intersection.

Ms. Allen said that she would be interested in installing red-light cameras at the intersections they knew to be of issue, and believed it would be worth staffing additional deputies if they could prevent accidents from happening.

Major Dembowski said that yes, they could definitely look at that as they continued to grow.

Ms. Allen asked if there was a particular reason they were choosing mobile cameras rather than stationary ones.

Major Dembowski said that they could use either, but what they were trying to determine was the most cost-effective and efficient solution for their agency, taking into account the costs and the benefits of deploying these units. He said that since they were stationary once installed, and the mobile units offered the advantage of allowing them to relocate them to different school zones periodically, which could be beneficial for addressing another school zone that required attention.

Ms. Allen asked if these costs would be included in the upcoming budget request from the Sheriff Department.

Major Dembowski said that it would likely be included in the FY27 budget.

Ms. Allen asked if they had looked into the staffing needs for handling this initiative.

Major Dembowski said that it would likely require a full-time position as they program continued, but they could begin implementation with their current staff. He said that the additional position was likely to be included in the FY27 budget. He said that however, they required the ordinance before beginning any of this work.

Ms. Allen said that she wanted to ensure the Sheriff's Office had the resources to execute the work and to ensure they all knew the budgetary implications of doing it. She said that it was worthwhile but she wanted to make sure they had all the necessary information.

Major Dembowski said that it would be a phased rollout so they were not overwhelmed and stayed mindful of their costs.

Ms. Gary said that she wanted to clarify that this initiative was not meant to generate revenue from the fines; it was meant to deter people from speeding on their roads. She said that she would like to see updated projections as soon as possible so they knew the fiscal impacts and staffing needs to support this, understanding that the fines would not cover the costs of this effort. She said that she was generally supportive but wanted to ensure they kept the costs in mind. She said that the numbers of violations were concerning, and she was curious about whether people would get fines in each school zone.

Major Dembowski said that his understanding was that for each camera, it was a separate offense.

Ms. Bohmke said that she was aware that the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) had supported this type of program for a few years, and she was interested in what other jurisdictions found that encouraged their local Sheriff's Department to move forward with it.

Major Dembowski said that they had found that once these programs had been established in a locality, there was demonstrated compliance and community acceptance. He said that a lot of their surrounding jurisdictions had them and found them useful.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing and the matter rested with the Board.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to adopt Proposed Ordinance O25-13.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Yeung

No: (0)

Absent: (1) Vanuch

ITEM 4. DEVELOPMENT SERVICES; CONSIDER AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND REORDAIN THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FEE SCHEDULE TO ESTABLISH A FEE FOR REVIEW SERVICES FOR LOW VOLTAGE WIRING PLANS AND TO AUTHORIZE A REFUND OF FEES PAID; PROPOSED ORDINANCE O25-16

Paul Santay, Director of Development Services, said that he was presenting a public hearing to amend and reordain the Development Services fee schedule that had been approved by the Board in September 2024. He said that as he had mentioned to the Board in May, the fee schedule had omitted a specific fee for low voltage wiring, which had had a significant impact. He said that since November 1, 2024, approximately 12 commercial building permit applications had been affected by this issue.

Mr. Santay said that low voltage wiring included communication lines, network lines, security, and fire line systems, which carried a low voltage load compared to typical electrical wiring. He said that the plan review for low voltage wiring was less detailed and less time-consuming than the electrical review, which involved more attention to detail due to its life safety factor and the review of wire sizing, transformers, electrical panels, and other components.

Mr. Santay said that due to the structure of the current fee schedule, staff could only calculate and charge a review fee for low voltage wiring, which was based solely on square footage. He said that this could result in a significant fee for large commercial plans. He said that the ordinance presented tonight also requested reimbursement of the overage in the fee. He said that therefore, they were requesting that the fee be reimbursed to the applicant, minus the \$70 base fee, which would be the new low voltage wiring fee for plan review. He said that he was happy to answer any questions and looked forward to the Board's consideration of O25-16.

Dr. Yeung asked what the total number of applications and the total amount to be refunded.

Mr. Santay said that the impact was approximately 12 applications, totaling \$68,000 in fees that would need to be reimbursed, minus the \$70 base fee for those applications.

Dr. Yeung asked how staff determined that the fees had been significantly higher.

Mr. Santay said that two of the impacted projects, High School Number Six and Elementary School 18, were affected by the significant increase in the fee. He said that the contractors for those projects contacted them immediately upon noticing the increase, as they were familiar with typical cost recovery fees in surrounding jurisdictions and other local governments. He said that they recognized that the fee increase was not typical of local government cost recovery practices. He said that given this, staff believed it was best to bring this matter forward to the Board for consideration of a change. He said that they had previously discussed the need to review and update the fee schedule every couple of years, as they had in September when it was approved; however, this particular situation was considered to be more important.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to adopt Proposed Ordinance O25-16.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Yeung

No: (0)

Absent: (1) Vanuch

ITEM 5. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER A ZONING RECLASSIFICATION REQUEST, WITH PROFFERS, FROM THE A-1, AGRICULTURAL ZONING DISTRICT TO THE UD-4, URBAN DEVELOPMENT MIXED USE VILLAGE CENTER ZONING DISTRICT ON TAX MAP PARCEL NOS. 39-8, 39-8B, 39-16C, 39-16F, AND 39-16G (PROJECT KNOWN AS ATTAIN AT STAFFORD); PROPOSED ORDINANCE O25-11 (APPROVE); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-108 (DENY)

Amy Taylor, Engineering Specialist, said that she would present information on this request for a zoning reclassification for the Attain at Stafford project. She said that this was a request to rezone 24.273 acres from A-1 Agricultural to UD-4 Urban Development Mixed Use Village Center, allowing for a mixed-use development with commercial and office uses and up to 300 multifamily dwelling units. She said that this rezoning would affect Tax Map Parcels (TMP) 39-8, 39-8B, 39-16C, 39-16F, and 39-16G, all located in the Falmouth Election District.

Ms. Taylor said that the applicant, BRG Stafford, LLC, would be represented this evening by Charlie Payne with Hirschler. She said that the subject parcel, located along the east side of Richmond Highway, approximately 125 feet south of Hospital Center Boulevard, situated along the west side of Old Potomac Church Road. She said that it was also located west of Tax Map Parcel 39-71A, which was currently under development as a data center use, known as the Old Potomac Church Data Center project. She said that the subject property was currently zoned A-1 agricultural, as shown in light green, and surrounding zoning districts include a mix of A-1 agricultural, B-2 urban commercial, B-3 office, and UD urban development zoned properties.

Ms. Taylor said that the property has been zoned A-1 since at least 1978, and there were no existing proffers for any of the subject parcels. She said that there were existing conditions, and as shown, the majority of the property was currently vacant and undeveloped, with the exception of one single-family home, a single-family dwelling, and an outbuilding located in the southern portion of the property. She said that a short section of sidewalk currently exists along the northern portion of the site's frontage on Richmond Highway, located in the public right-of-way.

Ms. Taylor said that the site was densely wooded, with rolling terrain throughout much of the property. She said that the southwest portion of the site was encumbered by a critical resource protection area, which encompassed much of this parcel. She said that the property was generally bounded by Richmond Highway to the west and Old Potomac Church Road to the east, and was surrounded by several undeveloped commercial properties to the north and south, including the recently approved Arbors at Stafford, an age-restricted multifamily development.

Ms. Taylor said that the general surrounding uses include Stafford Hospital to the north, a restaurant and a roller skating facility to the west, various commercial and multifamily residential uses to the south, and several single-family homes and a data center to the east. She said that provided were a few of the street views of the site. She said that the images on the left depicted views of the property as seen from Richmond Highway, and the image on the right depicted a view of the property as seen from Old Potomac Church Road. She said that as noted in the staff report, the UD Urban Development District required the submission of a master plan, which included elements such as pedestrian sheds, street network hierarchy, and building elevations.

Ms. Taylor said that the provided master plan depicted the site layout of the proposed mixed-use development, which would include up to 300 multifamily units and approximately 57,000 square feet of office and commercial space. She said that the proposed layout consisted of two four-story residential buildings, featuring a mix of one- and two-bedroom dwelling units. She said that the total number of two-bedroom units would not exceed 204, and no three-bedroom units were proposed.

Ms. Taylor said that residential buildings would be located in the northeastern portion of the site, while commercial buildings would be situated in the western portion of the property, along Richmond Highway. She said that an 8,000-square-foot clubhouse was proposed, to be integrated into multifamily building number two. She said that it would feature various amenities, including a fitness center, an outdoor swimming pool, a dog park, two pickleball courts, and two eight-unit garages.

Ms. Taylor said that the proposed layout will provide approximately 25% open space, exceeding the 5% minimum required within the UD-4 District, and open space areas would be equally dispersed throughout the development. She said that the southwestern portion of the property was protected by a critical resource area, and no development was proposed within this area, which would be retained as open space. She said that access to the property would be provided via a limited access entrance on Richmond Highway, and a network of streets was proposed throughout the site, including an interparcel connection to abutting properties to the south, which would provide secondary access to South Campus Boulevard.

Ms. Taylor said that on-street parking was proposed throughout the site, and sidewalk would be extended along the site's frontage along Richmond Highway, with the exception of the undeveloped portion to the south. She said that no direct access or pedestrian accommodations were proposed along Old Potomac Church Road due to steep slopes along the eastern portion of the site, and landscape buffers are proposed along Richmond Highway, Old Potomac Church Road, and along the southern property line where adjacent to the proposed age-restricted housing. She said that the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map (FLUM) identified this site as being within the Courthouse Targeted Development Area (TDA).

Ms. Taylor said that the more detailed land use concept for the courthouse TDA designated this property for mixed-use development, including commercial and residential purposes, as shown in purple. She said that the Comprehensive Plan emphasized targeted development areas where significant development or redevelopment was expected to occur, and specifically recommended concentrated urban or higher-density suburban development. She said that the plan also established a goal of accommodating 50% of projected population growth within TDAs and recommended a total of 3,190 additional multifamily units and 5.5 million square feet of commercial development within the Courthouse TDA.

Ms. Taylor said that multifamily residential dwelling units were recommended at a density of 11 to 14 units per acre; however, the proposed gross density of 14.97 units per acre for this project slightly exceeded density recommendations within TDAs. She said that the staff report evaluated public facility impacts and other factors associated with this project. She said that in that regard, a transportation impact analysis (TIA) was submitted with the application, which evaluated several intersections and overall impacts to the transportation network. She said that the study was based on 300 multifamily dwelling units, approximately 38,000 square feet of general office, and approximately 19,000 square feet of commercial and retail uses, all of which would generate approximately 2,935 vehicle trips per day.

Ms. Taylor said that existing operational deficiencies were noted under both 2027 no-build and build conditions. She said that however, the study concluded that the additional impact noted under 2027 build conditions was negligible and did not further degrade the level of service of the overall transportation network. She said that this was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan policy for impacted intersections and road segments, where achieving a level of service C was not practical given existing transportation deficiencies. She said that VDOT had also reviewed this TIA and has concurred with the findings. She said that however, while the project would not negatively impact the overall transportation network, the applicant was proffering multiple transportation improvements as recommended by the TIA.

Ms. Taylor said that in regards to utilities, no impacts were noted, and the applicant would be responsible for any necessary water and sewer connections and upgrades to serve the project. She said that additionally, County schools would be impacted with 300 additional homes, which would generate approximately 48 school-aged children. She said that the provided table summarized the attendance zones and capacities for schools in this area, and as shown, both Stafford Elementary and Brooke Point High Schools currently exceed 90% capacity, which was the basis for determining whether deficits existed.

Ms. Taylor said that it should be noted that since both schools currently had no available capacity, additional students generated by this development would exacerbate the existing deficits at the elementary and high school levels. She said that the applicant estimated that the proposed development would generate approximately 48 students based on reduced student generation factors, which were derived from a five-year historical average for comparable developments owned and operated by the applicant. She said that staff noted that the student generation factors utilized were lower than those recommended by the schools for multifamily dwelling units.

Ms. Taylor said that the displayed upper table showed a comparison of the standard student generation factors for multifamily versus the reduced student generation factors utilized by the applicant. She said that however, the applicant had suggested that the standard student generation factor provided by schools was too high for modern multifamily developments and believed that their student generation factors were both adequate and consistent with actual student generation from the nearby Abberly Waterstone multifamily development.

Ms. Taylor said that in consideration of the information provided and in comparison to actual student generation from several multifamily communities for the 2024-2025 school year, staff believed the reduced student generation factors may be acceptable. She said that based on the proposed lower student generation factor, staff believed the impacts to County schools would be adequately mitigated with proffered monetary contributions towards new school facilities totaling approximately \$2.3 million. She said that this included \$1 million paid prior to issuance of an occupancy permit for the first multifamily unit, and the remaining \$1.3 million paid in the amount of \$4,463.65 per unit, also prior to occupancy permit for each unit.

Ms. Taylor said that no impacts to parks and recreation identified, and the applicant was also proffering several recreational amenities as part of the development. She said that public safety impacts would be mitigated with monetary contributions towards a new Fire and Rescue facility. She said that additionally, the general design and character of the proposed buildings were consistent with the Neighborhood Development Standards (NDS) Plans architectural design guidelines. She said that a provided summary outlined the overall proposed proffers by the applicant.

Ms. Taylor said that these proffers would ultimately require development in general accordance with the master plan, limit development to no more than 300 multifamily units, prohibit multiple uses that would otherwise be permitted by right, require the architectural design and features of the multifamily building to be in substantial accordance with the Attain at Town Center development, and would require the commercial buildings and garages to use materials that were complementary to the multifamily buildings. She said that proffers would also require monetary contributions totaling \$2.3 million for schools, again with the \$1 million payable prior to issuance of the occupancy permit for the first multifamily unit, and the remaining \$1.3 million payable per unit.

Ms. Taylor said that the total contributions towards schools would be \$7,796.98 per unit. She said that a monetary contribution towards public safety would also be required, with a total contribution of \$508,000 based on approximately \$1,694 per unit. She said that multiple transportation improvements would also be required, including primary and secondary access, construction of

turn lanes, right-of-way dedication along Richmond Highway and Old Potomac Church Road, and a limitation on the total number of vehicle trips permitted. She said that all proposed amenities must also be constructed prior to issuance of the occupancy permit for the 150th unit.

Ms. Taylor said that additionally, monetary contributions would be required towards construction of sidewalk along Richmond Highway and Old Potomac Church Road or other general transportation improvements in the surrounding area. She said that other proffers would also require disclosure regarding the site's proximity to a data center campus and would exclude construction of any three-bedroom units. She said that several positive aspects of the application included the proposed commercial and residential land uses, which were consistent with the comprehensive plan recommendations and the general pattern of development within the surrounding area. She said that the development was in compliance with the transportation plan policies and provided multiple transportation improvements, including right-of-way dedication and monetary contributions towards various transportation improvements.

Ms. Taylor said that proffers would also ensure that the development was consistent with what was envisioned in the application. She said that monetary contributions would also mitigate both school and public safety impacts, and the general architectural design of the building was consistent with the NDS Plan. She said that however, staff found that negative aspects associated with the application included the proposed density exceeding Comp Plan recommendations for this location, inadequate pedestrian accessibility along abutting roadways, and the proposed student generation ratio being less than that recommended by schools for multifamily residential dwellings.

Ms. Taylor said that although the proposal was not fully consistent with the Comp Plan land use recommendations as it pertained to density for multifamily dwelling units, the proposed uses were compatible with the existing residential development in the surrounding area and supported the recommendations for higher density residential development as well as the total number of multifamily units and desired square footage of commercial development within the Courthouse TDA. She said that since no three-bedroom units were proposed, staff believed that the reduced student generation factors may be acceptable in this case and that the proffered monetary contributions would adequately mitigate the proposed impacts to schools.

Ms. Taylor said that based on this information, staff was generally supportive of the project and recommended approval of the application with proffers pursuant to Ordinance O25-11. She said that at its meeting on April 23, the Planning Commission voted 5-2 to recommend approval of the application.

Ms. Bohmke asked for the reasons why the two Planning Commission members voted against this proposal.

Ms. Taylor said that she did not recall the specific reasons why they voted against the proposal.

Ms. Bohmke said that one of the negative aspects of the project was that they did not provide pedestrian connections around the property, but she thought it was important to note that there were some steep slopes that made it difficult to do that.

Ms. Taylor said that staff had not evaluated the specific grades in the area, and they may change as the property was developed, but there was a significant drop-off of the grade at the road. She said that she saw this in person when she put out the public hearing notice signs along the property. She said that the applicant had indicated that due to those observed topography issues, it was not practical to provide sidewalk in that location.

Ms. Bohmke asked if there was an inter-parcel connection between this property and Arbors at Stafford.

Ms. Taylor said that that was correct. She said that staff had worked with both projects to ensure the parcels had connectivity.

Ms. Bohmke asked if Commissioner Shelton had looked at the 911 equipment aspects of this development.

Ms. Taylor said that she was unsure if Commissioner Shelton had evaluated Fire Rescue response time and equipment, but he did evaluate the sprinkler system at the Attain at Town Center facility and was supportive of the structure.

Mr. Diggs asked if the applicant had a presentation.

Charlie Payne, representing the applicant, said that regarding the developer, Bonaventure Development, they had a 25-year track record as a multi-family expert with 22 total projects. He said that they could see those projects listed on the right of the slide, including some in the area, such as the Attain at Spotsylvania County, which this project was modeled after. He said that this project was located in the old Sears of the Spotsylvania Mall and was one of the fastest leased-up apartment projects in Bonaventure's history, indicating strong demand for this type of product in the area.

Mr. Payne said that Bonaventure had developed over 4,447 total units with a billion-dollar investment, and they were partnering with the property owner to develop the commercial component of the project. He said that the Board would see in this presentation that Bonaventure would develop 300 multi-family units, they were also building the infrastructure for the entire project, and the commercial part of the project would be developed by Powell Associates.

Mr. Payne said that as staff had noted, the project spanned several parcels, covering over 24 acres, and was located within the Courthouse Targeted Development Area, directly across from Hospital Center Boulevard. He said that the hospital was on the northern end, and the Board had recently approved the Arbors, which was southeast of this location, and the Abberly, which was south of here, with 288 units approved in 2013. He said that Richmond Highway was to the immediate west and Old Potomac Church Road was to the east. He said that this project was also located in the Highway Corridor Overlay District and within the Courthouse Small Area Plan.

Mr. Payne said that the area plan, in place since 2016, recommended they build 3,192 multifamily units over the next 20 years. He said that this type of project would help achieve that plan's goal

of providing high-density residential development and a sense of place in this area. He said that this project was limited to one and two-bedroom units; there were no three-bedroom units available. He said that in comparison, Abberly had 288 units, including six three-bedroom units. He said that the commercial outparcels were planned to range from 20,000 to 50,000 square feet, with the potential to build up to 57,000 square feet. He said that to date, there was no commercial user, but they planned to build the necessary infrastructure and have the commercial pads ready.

Mr. Payne said that they hoped that the increased density and central location would encourage more commercial investment. He said that Burns Corner was experiencing growth, and several restaurants were opening across the street. He said that they had spoken with the hospital, and they had provided a letter of support for the project, as it would provide housing for their employees. He said that he believed this was a unique opportunity for the County to encourage growth in the courthouse area. He said that with their proposed design, they were showing at least a minimum of 25% open space, likely above that, and they had proffered several amenities.

Mr. Payne said that the buildings were situated east to west, with Old Potomac Church Road to the north, Richmond Highway to the west, and the south campus to the south. The building to the south featured a clubhouse area, a pool, and open space for grilling and socializing in the plaza, surrounded by residential uses. He said that the building to the north also contained units.

He said that to the east, the commercial buildings would have access only off Route 1, with access to the south campus as a secondary access point. He said that there was no access off Hospital Center Boulevard or Old Potomac Church Road due to a steep slope that started at the intersection and dropped quickly, with an 11% grade drop. He said that they were building a significant retaining wall in this location, roughly 20 feet tall. He said that the amenities were located towards the southern end, including pickleball courts, two eight-car garage locations, and other amenities in building two.

Ms. Bohmke said that she was concerned the garages would not be enough for all of the proposed units.

Mr. Payne said that they would consider it; the proposal was the minimum they felt was necessary. He said that he would like to note that the layout of this site, as outlined under the UD zoning ordinance, required a street grid pattern with both parallel and angled parking on the site. He said that regarding the cash proffers, he would like to clarify that the total amount was over \$2.8 million, with approximately \$9,500 per unit. He said that of this, schools received the majority, with over \$2.3 million. He said that typically, proffers were paid once a certificate of occupancy permit was issued for each unit; however, Stafford's unique approach was to issue a certificate for the entire building and the multi-family units simultaneously.

Mr. Payne said that this meant that as soon as the first unit was issued a certificate of occupancy, the County would receive the \$1 million proffer upfront. He said that this allowed the County to receive the funds sooner and the remaining \$1.39 million would be paid as each unit was issued a certificate of occupancy, which typically occurred quickly once the building was completed. He said that in terms of public safety, they were proffering over \$508,000, which would also be paid

at the issuance of each certificate of occupancy. He said that furthermore, they were proffering approximately \$80,000 for offsite improvements, including roads and sidewalks.

Mr. Payne would like to discuss how they determined the student generation number for this development. He said that as staff had noted, they were using historical data from some of their previous projects. He said that their data showed approximately 0.139 students per unit; the County's estimate was around 0.5 students per unit, which was based on legacy apartment complexes. He said that their data was based on similar projects that his client owned and operated. He said that they had developed a number based on this historical data. He said that notably, 39% of the student generation in an apartment complex was generated by three-bedroom units.

Mr. Payne said that therefore, when eliminating the three-bedroom units, the potential number of students was reduced. He said that this project was designed to attract young professionals, teachers, first responders, and government employees, rather than families. He said that the amenities also were meant to accommodate single people rather than families. He said that this was also similar to the Abberly complex, which was a good bellwether for this project. He said that Abberly had generated 28 students in 2024, so they felt their projection of 45 was an appropriate estimate. He said that they were still paying close to \$10,000 per unit, which was relatively high for a multifamily project.

Mr. Payne said that the proffers included half-profit enhanced architectural features, similar to those at the Attain at Town Center in Spotsylvania County. He said that he had slides to show them that. He said that they also included the recreational amenities, including a pool, clubhouse, fitness center, and two pickleball courts. He said that they would provide notice to residents regarding nearby data center use and ensure the project remained restricted to one and two bedrooms. He said that the existing structure would be removed and replaced with a new one.

Mr. Payne said that he would like to show them how their architectural features compared to those at the Attain at Town Center. He said that as they may recall, this project was one of the fastest leased-up projects in their history, with a 98% occupancy rate just a few months after opening. He said that initially, they had presented a different set of architectural features to staff, which was later refined to include the enhanced design elements. He said that he would like to show them an example of a similar project, the Hill at Spotsylvania County, which featured different architectural design patterns and materials. He said that the Affinity at Centerville Crossing in Virginia Beach had facades with different colors and materials. He said that this gave them a full picture of their architectural features and design elements.

Mr. Payne said that they previously discussed site access off of Route 1 in South Campus Boulevard. He said that the proposed transportation improvements would include access off of South Campus Boulevard, both an entrance and an exit at that location, as well as construction of an inbound 100-foot right-turn taper and a westbound approach on South Campus Boulevard. He said that right-of-way dedication was required on Richmond Highway and Old Potomac Church Road. He said that he believed the County was collecting a significant number of right-of-way proffers on Old Potomac Church Road from previous projects in the area.

Mr. Payne said that the construction of two concrete medians within the Richmond Highway corridor would prevent drivers from swerving and attempting to turn left onto Hospital Center Boulevard. He said that the project aimed to cap trips at 2,935 for all combined uses. He said that a picture of the proposed raised median was included. He said that this project was fiscally positive, and at full build-out, including commercial and residential components, it was estimated to net \$519,000 annually for the County. He said that a support letter from the hospital was also provided.

Dr. Yeung asked if they could put more brick facade on the building for better aesthetics in the area.

Ms. Bohmke said that she had previously discussed that point with Mr. Payne. She said that she had thought about it as well because this would be located in a central location in the County, so it should be aesthetically pleasing for the long-term.

JP Hyland said that in the past, when this issue had been a point of sensitivity on other projects, they had included a minimum percentage of brick across the project. He said that they had also focused on incorporating brick in a more visible location, where they could achieve an average of 25% brick throughout the entire project, but at main amenity area, it would have two stories of brick.

Dr. Yeung asked what the timing of the commercial developments was expected to be.

Mr. Payne said that it would be driven by the market, but they hoped the concentration of rooftops would drive that commercial market. He said that the infrastructure would be built so the commercial spaces were pad-ready, which was very appealing to commercial tenants. He said that they were focused on retail and restaurant commercial.

Dr. Yeung asked if they would consider discounts on rent prices for first responders, teachers, and hospital staff.

Dr. Yeung said that she felt that connectivity was an important aspect of this project as well.

Mr. English asked what the rents were in Spotsylvania.

Mr. Hyland said that the one-bedroom units were priced around \$1,900.

Mr. English said that with 300 apartments, he felt the estimates for school impacts and public safety impacts were inaccurate and lower than what was likely. He said that he could not support this development in this area because these additional residents would add too much pressure on their roads, schools, and emergency services.

Mr. Payne said that he understood the concern, but he would note that the way the schools estimated their impacts was based on legacy projects, and there had only been a few of those approved periodically. He said that with this specific model of development and eliminating three-bedroom apartments, he believed they were reducing the potential student generation. He said that

Abberly was a very similar project that did include three-bedroom units, and that development was generating 26 students.

Mr. English asked what the student generation was for the project in Spotsylvania.

Mr. Hyland said that it was included in their portfolio and was substantially similar to what they had provided to the Board.

Mr. Payne said that their provided estimate was 0.139 students per unit. He said that this development was designed to encourage single people and couples, rather than families, to reside here.

Mr. Diggs said that he was supportive of the project in general; however, he did have some concerns over how it would look because it would be located in such a prominent place in the County. He said that he would definitely support the 25% of brick facade so they knew it would look nice.

Ms. Allen said that the aesthetics of this project were important because they would benefit the County and the developer. She said that she agreed that stipulating materials such as the 25% brick were important considerations. She said that she would like to ask Ms. Taylor if there were any plans for widening Old Potomac Church Road, considering many new projects were coming online and giving proffers for transportation purposes. She asked how they planned to deal with the future traffic in that pocket.

Ms. Taylor said that at this time, Capital Improvements had not indicated any planned improvements to widen Old Potomac Church Road. She said that although they had expressed concerns regarding the need for right-of-way, pedestrian accommodation, and other necessary improvements, it was her understanding that there were currently no planned improvements for that area.

Ms. Allen said that she believed the County needed to address the issue of traffic congestion in the area as it related to the new developments.

Mr. Payne said that with the additional right-of-way dedicated from the Arbors, the data center project, and this project, he believed they were getting close to having all the necessary right-of-way in place to build a road to specifications, complete with sidewalk, curb, and gutter, and stormwater management. He said that this had been a significant challenge. He said that considering the topography, it did not make sense to have residents on Old Potomac with the existing layout. He said that they could already navigate to the corner through their network of sidewalks and the street grid system, which included sidewalks on private streets, allowing them to reach the crosswalk and access Burns Corner or downtown Stafford.

Ms. Allen said that she would support this project because it met the County's goals regarding mixed-use and denser development in this area. She said that she did have some concern regarding the impacts to schools, but she hoped that with the schools currently under construction they would

be able to accommodate this project. She said that overall, from a planning perspective, this project was essential in rebuilding this intersection that they had already identified for this purpose.

Mr. Payne said that to him, it was a balancing act to be fair to the developer while also accurately estimating the actual generation of school-aged kids or what was estimated to occur. He said that this was why they provided their history of everything they did, so that the County could see that their statements were accurate. He said that the best example of this was the Abberly project that had been in place since 2013, generating only 26 school-aged kids.

Mr. Payne said that regarding the aesthetics of the building, this project had a different layout and location than what was seen at the Spotsylvania Mall. He said that the mall was built in a parking lot, whereas this project would have landscaping on all sides, a street grid system, and open space areas for recreation and being outdoors. He said that these features would make it a distinct location, not very comparable to the mall. He said that the mall's attractiveness was largely due to its proximity to the interstate, allowing people to walk to nearby restaurants. He said that however, this project's unique location would automatically affect its aesthetics, making it a different entity altogether.

Ms. Allen said that her main concern was whether the building would be able to fit seamlessly into what the other components of a downtown area would be.

Ms. Gary said that she was supportive of this proposal because it would provide workforce housing and rooftops in an area they had identified as a priority for them. She said that she would like to see better numbers regarding the projected students; she felt their school staff had accurately projected them in the past and to see such different numbers was not reassuring. She said that she was aware of an existing easement that could connect this development to the Civil War Park. She said that if the developer of this project could facilitate better connectivity to provide trails and park access as a recreational amenity for residents, she would be eager to do so.

Mr. Payne said that he recalled that the data center nearby had proffered \$25,000 for an easement for a trail and signage.

Mr. Diggs said that he agreed they should explore the possibility.

Ms. Bohmke asked if there were any studio apartments at Abberly.

Mr. Payne said that he did not think so.

Ms. Bohmke asked if this was a tax credit project.

Mr. Payne said no.

Ms. Bohmke asked if they would be providing screening around the pickleball courts, which would protect from wind and dampen the noise of the pickleballs.

Mr. Hyland said that they had not planned it but they would consider it.

Ms. Bohmke asked what the rents would be in the 2-bedroom apartments.

Mr. Hyland said that they probably would start around \$2,200.

Ms. Bohmke said that she agreed with her colleagues; she would appreciate a 3% discount for public employees. She said that she thought it would be beneficial if they could maintain the 25% minimum for the bricks. She said that she wanted to bring up a concern regarding the intersection with the 7-Eleven, where people made all sorts of dangerous turns and maneuvers. She said that it would be ideal if they could have a left-hand turn off of Route 1, but unfortunately, that was not possible. She asked if the applicant had any plans to mitigate traffic issues at Route 1 and Hospital Center Boulevard.

Mr. Diggs said that this may be a question best answered by VDOT.

John Fairbanks, Fairbanks and Franklin, said that currently, there was no median at the intersection of Route 1. He said that as a result, drivers had the ability to go against traffic and make a left turn into the Taco Bell parking lot, which posed a risk. He said that to address this, they were installing two medians, which had been specifically requested by VDOT. He said that the medians served two purposes: they improved transportation for both northbound and southbound traffic, and they prevented drivers from making incorrect turns or crossing multiple lanes. He said that for instance, if someone was exiting the development, they would not be able to take a left on Hospital Center Boulevard. He said that the medians were designed to channel drivers into the correct direction, thereby discouraging unwanted movements at the intersection.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing.

1. Molly Denham, Hartwood District, said that she was glad that this public hearing came on the heels of the housing presentation that had been shared earlier, which provided some more context to She said that she appreciated Attain's interest in Stafford County, but she must express her concerns about the affordability of this project. She said that while she appreciated the interest in their County, she believed that they already had an abundance of overpriced housing options.

Ms. Denham said that for example, the apartments by Attain in Spotsylvania, which offered a one-bedroom, one-bath unit with 797 square feet of living space, cost \$1,731. She said that given the importance of location in real estate, she expected that this apartment would be even more expensive in Stafford County. She said that interestingly, the Spotsylvania price of this tiny living space was almost identical to the example provided by their friend from GWRC.

Ms. Denham said that using the 30% rule, this meant that a person would need to earn around \$86,000 per year to afford this apartment. She said that she questioned who would be able to afford this luxury living space, as it was not County employees who would be able to afford it. She said that in fact, many of their young single teachers, police, fire, or EMT professionals could not afford this type of housing. She said that she specified single people because there

was no way that 797 square feet was big enough for two people to live together and remain together.

Ms. Denham said that she did not believe that this project was designed to attract County employees, who simply did not earn enough to afford it. She said that instead, it was marketed as luxury living, which was not the type of cost-effective housing she was hoping to see in Stafford County. She said that when considering approval or disapproval, she hoped that they would ask who they envisioned living in this development. She said that she did not wish to encourage overpriced housing like this, and she hoped that some of them would reevaluate their decisions. She said that with the second bedroom, the apartments would cost \$2,200, the income required to afford it was \$90,000 per year.

2. Kristen Maxson, Falmouth District, said that she was the first property south of this property. She said that she was not included on the adjoining neighbors list, which was a disappointment and a faux pas. She said that this application from Attain lacked a project number and project name. She said that it was believed that the public hearing was incomplete due to the scope of the project. She said that the agent described the project as three-pronged in connection to this project. She said that perhaps this was the reason for the high cost.

Ms. Maxson said that there may be a public nondisclosure issue here, and it was questionable based on statements made by others. She said that the Spotsylvania Attain Project, located on Center Drive, showed no extra space close. She said that she provided three minutes of input on April 23, 2025, which could be found on page 775 of their packet today. She said that they could review that and see the additional information she could provide today.

Ms. Maxson said that on May 22, 2025, there was a signed proffer statement on page 329 of 1,536 pages, which was not included in the packet and was publicly unknown. She said that the support letter with Hirschler's logo, as stated by the agent today, was also not included in the packet, so the public was not familiar with it. She said that the application incorrectly denied adjoining property rights and failed to inform taxpayers in the area. She said that the application pages were inconsistent, and adjoining owners were inserted without proper notification.

Ms. Maxson said that this did not ensure that the public would be contacted during the life of the application. She said that they should see page 741 of 1,500 pages today. She said that the application affidavit's witness of the content was dated earlier than one co-owner's signature. She said that she would expect the opposite, on page 329. She said that the Attain density exceeded the comprehensive plan recommendation as proposed. She said that a management facility was proposed on page 755, but no information about it was provided.

Mr. Diggs closed the public hearing.

Mr. Payne said that he would like to confirm that they were willing to make the additional proffers requested, which included a minimum of 25% brick to be included in the facilities, a 3% discount for all Stafford County employees, \$10,000 towards parks, and the installation of a screen around

the pickleball courts. He said that they were prepared to draft these proffers in the evening, if that was acceptable to the Board.

Mr. Diggs said that there was consensus from the Board to include those additional proffers.

Ms. Bohmke said that she would like to confirm with Amy that the latest proffer statement she had was dated May 22, 2025.

Ms. Taylor said that that was correct.

Ms. Bohmke motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to adopt Proposed Ordinance O25-11 with the additional proffers: the applicant will construct the units using no less than 25% brick material; the applicant will provide a 3% discount on rental rates for all Stafford County employees; the applicant will pay the County \$10,000 towards Parks and Recreation upon receipt of the first certificate of occupancy permit; and the applicant will install a screen around the pickleball courts.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, Gary, Yeung

No: (1) English

Absent: (1) Vanuch

ITEM 6. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE, STAFFORD COUNTY CODE SEC. 28-25, "DEFINITIONS OF SPECIFIC TERMS," AND SEC. 28-35, "TABLE OF USES AND STANDARDS" TO MODIFY REGULATIONS RELATED TO CAMPGROUND USES; PROPOSED ORDINANCE O25-07

Brian Geouge, Principal Planner, said that he would present the proposed text amendment and ordinance amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, specifically Sections 28-25 and 28-35. He said that the amendments aimed to update definitions applicable to campgrounds and modify how campgrounds were permitted in the A-1 Agricultural District. He said that to provide some background, this issue had been first discussed at the Board's November 7, 2024 meeting, where the Board had asked staff to investigate further regulations for campground uses in the A1 District.

Mr. Geouge said that staff had conducted research, drafted an ordinance amendment, and presented it to the Board on February 18. He said that the Planning Commission had reviewed the amendment and formed a subcommittee, which had held two meetings and recommended some edits. He said that the Planning Commission had authorized a public hearing on April 9, which was then held on May 14. He said that the proposed amendments built upon the current regulations for campgrounds. He said that Section 28-25 defined key terms, including camping unit, campsite, travel trailer, and recreational vehicle. He said that Section 28-35 established campgrounds as a by-right use in the A-1 District on a minimum of 10 acres, with specific requirements for travel trailer and RV parks.

Mr. Geouge said that currently, there were no special regulations or County code requirements for campgrounds, although state code regulations, enforced by the Department of Health, outlined requirements such as plan content, permit requirements, inspections, and location regulations. He said that these regulations also included density limits, campsite size, water supply, sewage

disposal, and construction standards. He said that there were also specific regulations for primitive or temporary campgrounds. He said that the proposed amendments aimed to clarify and update these regulations to better align with the needs of campgrounds in the A-1 District. He said that staff had also studied other localities to see what they were doing on this matter; they had looked at Fauquier, Spotsylvania, Prince William, and James City.

Mr. Geouge said that they provided a matrix comparing the regulations of those localities, which was included as Attachment 6. He said that other localities studied had all required either a special exception, which would be through the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA), or a special use permit (SUP), also known as a conditional use permit (CUP) for campgrounds. He said that in general, campground definitions were broad, and some localities were more aligned with the definitions in state code. He said that of the localities researched, only Fauquier had special regulations for campgrounds.

Mr. Geouge said that staff had also looked at some existing developments in the region. He said that at Aquia Pines off of Route 1, there were 125 total campsites at that site, with a total site acreage of only 20 acres, resulting in about a density of six campsites per acre, compared to the maximum 20 per acre in state code. He said that recreational amenities included a multipurpose court, pool, and playground. He said that they had a paved entrance driveway and gravel circulation through the site. He said that the Washington, D.C. South KOA was geared more towards RVs and travel trailers; they had 76 sites for RVs, 16 tent sites, and also a clubhouse, pool, playground, and fishing pond, as well as a paved main access road and gravel travel ways.

Mr. Geouge said that the Rappahannock River Campground was geared more towards primitive or tent camping, with 60 sites, and also a wedding event venue. He said that staff's takeaway from this research was that the campgrounds could be quite varied; they accommodated different types of camping units or facilities. He said that they may have vastly different recreational amenities, lending themselves to individual evaluation, rather than a standard set of special regulations that could apply for all. He said that staff's general recommendations were that they did not believe special regulations were necessary.

Mr. Geouge said that if they were to be further regulated, the CUP process would be appropriate. He said that they reflected their ordinance amendments based on those findings from the report. He said that next, he would discuss the proposed code amendments. He said that this update pertained to the A-1 Agricultural Zoning District, specifically changing the way campgrounds were regulated. He said that the proposed changes would shift from a by-right approach to a CUP process, while maintaining the 10-acre minimum requirement. He said that it would also eliminate the need for a CUP for travel trailer and RV parks, instead incorporating these aspects into the overall campground definition.

Mr. Geouge said that furthermore, the proposed amendments would update the campground definition and related definitions to ensure clarity and consistency in capturing campground and related uses, such as recreational amenities. He said that the changes would clarify that campgrounds were intended for transient or temporary occupancy and establish a 14-night stay limitation, with no more than 14 nights within a 30-day period. He said that this edit was introduced by the subcommittee and was modeled after Virginia State Parks' regulations.

Mr. Geouge said that Proposed Ordinance O25-07, as outlined in Attachment 1, reflected these recommendations. He said that in conclusion, staff was recommending approval of O25-07, believing it would enable more effective evaluation of campgrounds and mitigation of impacts through conditions. On May 14, 2025, the Planning Commission voted 7-0 in favor of recommending approval. He said that he had a couple of final points: adoption of this ordinance would result in existing permitted campgrounds becoming legally non-conforming, requiring a conditional use permit if they were to expand in the future. He said that additionally, when this proposal was referred to the Planning Commission, the Board expressed a desire to protect pending applications, which was included in the referral resolution; however, they did not currently have a pending application for campgrounds.

Dr. Yeung asked if they would be informing the campgrounds and RV parks of the new rules.

Mr. Geouge said that informing them would be a good idea; staff could certainly do that. He said that the duration of stay regulation would go into effect for the existing uses, and if the campgrounds were to expand, they would need to apply for a conditional use permit.

Mr. Diggs said that the Board had previously discussed grandfathering in campgrounds in the context of these updated regulations, which he had referred to when discussing data centers. He said that specifically, he had noted how they had grandfathered some things but were considering not grandfathering others, and that had been misinterpreted as him saying they should grandfather in all data centers. He said that he wanted to clarify that with the passage of this ordinance, they would not be grandfathering in any campgrounds and they would all go through the CUP process.

Mr. Geouge said that that was correct; that was how the ordinance was currently written.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing.

1. Dane Kanazawa, 851 Bell Plains Road, said that he would be reading his daughter's statement about this issue to the Board. He said that Ms. Windsor Kanazawa's statement read, "Good evening, Chair and Members of the Board. There has been a lot of talk regarding building a campground in our area, and I know today you will vote on amending language in the County ordinance. I would like to focus on the issue of roads. Certain roads are not all fits for the abundance of RVs that a campground would bring in, whether that would be near a highly-populated area with dense traffic conditions, areas with limited space to maneuver and park in, or areas with narrow roads like Bell Plains.

"The combination of large vehicle size, tight turns, and low visibility you would get on roads such as the latter was simply dangerous. There are so many things to take into account when a campground is proposed, and many little things often get brushed to the side. What about the cyclists out there every day, or the neighbors trying to get their steps in, or Mr. Peter Green, who walks all the way downtown and back to check on his businesses? You have to pay attention to these things even when the people who live there sometimes find themselves stuck in a ditch because of a new pothole or because they underestimated the lack of shoulders on the side of a roadway.

“All of these things go unreported because neighbors down there actually help each other out, and when you add RVs with drivers who are new to the curves and hills and plain character of Bell Plains, well, it is not great. A conditional use permit will ensure that all these things are seen. It will ensure that the Board of Supervisors is appropriately allocating its resources and the things that go unnoticed will be noticed. I urge you to approve the amendment of the language and make it applicable to future and current proposals. By doing this, the Board of Supervisors will have greater oversight on potential road hazards that RVs present.”

2. Sarah Southworth said that she was here representing her entire family. She said that they grew up in Stafford County. She said that the Baileys resided on Little Creek Lane in Stafford, while the Haydens lived on Lawrence Lane in Stafford. She said that she and the Jett lived on Cove Harbor Drive at Potomac Creek. She said that she majored in mathematics and biology from Virginia Tech, with three degrees in health, which were community health, school health, and health education.

Ms. Southworth said that she also possessed a U.S. Coast Guard Master Class license, with extensive knowledge of East Coast waterways, and she was a Virginia Master Naturalist and a Virginia Master Gardener volunteer. She said that her family wholeheartedly supported amending the Zoning Ordinance concerning campgrounds, their types of camping accommodations, and requiring CUPs for campgrounds located in A-1 zoned parcels. She said that she believed the County should have more discretion and control in determining where these campgrounds were best located, with the goal of ensuring the well-being and safety of all constituents, County inhabitants, wildlife, and humans.

Ms. Southworth said that the proposed ordinance modifications offered a balanced protection for both property owners and the surrounding community by clarifying and simplifying the present code. She said that requiring a CUP for campgrounds in A-1 zoned areas would enable the County to thoroughly consider and research each proposed site. She said that given the difficulty in monitoring campground sites 24/7, campgrounds could pose a significant burden on law enforcement, first responders, and emergency personnel, all of which were crucial in determining safe locations for campgrounds.

Ms. Southworth said that a CUP will allow Stafford County to protect against significant traffic increases on County roads not constructed to handle this. She said that it would also safeguard against large campgrounds in areas known to have dwindling water supplies. She said that furthermore, a CUP would enable Stafford County to oversee A-1 zoned commercial campground development and ensure the protection and preservation of environmentally sensitive areas, important ecological sites, and rare, delicate, and irreplaceable ecosystems and habitats.

Ms. Southworth said that by clarifying the wording and intent of Stafford County's ordinances, they could go a long way in protecting these environmentally sensitive areas. She said that for this reason, she urged and implored the Board to implement these well-written and purposeful protective ordinance modifications immediately, without grandfathering any current applications.

3. Mark McCloud, Hartwood District, said that he owned the property where the proposed campground in the George Washington District was located. He said that ten years ago, a Board of Supervisors, sitting in these chairs, made thoughtful changes to the campground ordinance. He said that at that time, they recognized the importance of outdoor recreation and intentionally broadened the definition of a campground.

Mr. McCloud said that by-right campgrounds could include, but not limited to, travel trailers, cabins, pop-up campers, and tent camping. RV/travel trailer parks intended for long-term living were treated as a conditional use permit, while standard campgrounds with temporary stays were a by-right use. He said that the Board wanted to differentiate between a temporary stay campground and an RV/travel trailer park like other RV parks in the area, where people lived in them full-time.

Mr. McCloud said that this clarity stood for a decade until they submitted an application on November 29, 2023, which aligned with that very definition. He said that it was not until they exercised that by-right use that the County suddenly moved to change the ordinance. He said that campgrounds were not even a discussion point until they followed the rules and filed according to the existing ordinance. He said that now, nearly two years later, they were still waiting for a formal approval or denial. He said that the delay had gone on so long that their site plan had expired while they waited. He said that meanwhile, the ordinance was being rewritten, seemingly in response to one lawful application that did not fit someone's narrative.

Mr. McCloud said that they were even told that their campground could only be tents-only, with no travel trailers, cabins, or pop-ups, despite no such restriction existing in the ordinance. He said that they had offered a \$250,000 reward to anyone who could find language requiring tents-only, but it still had not been found because it did not exist. He said that changing the rules mid-profit process was not just unfair; it set a dangerous precedent for anyone trying to work with the County in good faith.

Mr. McCloud said that landowners, small business owners, and families trying to invest in this County should be able to trust the process. He said that the rules should not change simply because someone uses them. He said that he would remind them of a recent Board of Supervisors meeting. He said that when asked about the number of campgrounds on the horizon, the answer was one, which was theirs. He said that however, when asked about the number of data centers, the numbers kept changing. He said that yet, here they were today, changing an ordinance that a Board ten years ago made.

4. Joni Kanazawa, 851 Bell Plains Road, said that her family was very well-versed with the potential campground coming in. She said that she was surprised by how deeply she had become involved in understanding the intricacies of how a campground could affect the community and the environment. She said that she was requesting that Stafford County amend the code to require all future campgrounds to obtain a conditional use permit before building on agricultural-zoned property.

Ms. Kanazawa said that if this proposal was approved by the Board of Supervisors, she asked that it apply to all agricultural zone properties and not allow grandfathering as had been discussed. She said that in 2024, the developer was asked to clarify the type of camping unit that would be used and whether RVs would be allowed on the property. She said that unfortunately, this had led to a 15-month delay in the application approval process, primarily due to the developer's unwillingness to answer the County's repeated questions about the type of vehicle or structure that would be used at each campsite.

Ms. Kanazawa said that she strongly believed that all campgrounds should be reviewed on an individual, case-by-case basis. She said that it was crucial, as each campground was unique and could have a significant impact on the land, environment, and community. She said that she was particularly concerned about the proposed campground development along Bell Plains Road and urged the Board to prioritize the well-being of the community and the environment. Virginia Code 15.2-2283 mandated that zoning ordinances promote public health, safety, and environmental protection.

Ms. Kanazawa said that in light of this, the glaring deficiencies of Bell Plains Road, as mentioned in her daughter's statement would pose significant public safety hazards. She said that non-standard road width and insufficient width for safe two-lane travel were collision risks, especially with a potential of 150 9-foot-wide RVs. She said that the lack of shoulders and turnoffs, and no pull-around space should also be considered.

5. Tom Coen, George Washington District, said that it was nice to see so many familiar faces. He said that this was part of the County's efforts to update and modernize zoning categories and zoning qualifications, which they had been doing for many years. He said that the Planning Commission had also been working on this. He said that often, this was done in response to situations. He said that they had previously passed an ordinance for data centers, and now they were considering updating it as new information and technology became available.

Mr. Coen said that they should not forget that many of the ordinances in the Commonwealth of Virginia were based on laws written in Richmond, some of which were over 100 years old. He said that this was a normal practice. He said that in the past, campgrounds were viewed as family gathering places or retreats for organizations like the scouts or churches. He said that now, they were businesses that generated significant revenue. He said that clearly, times had changed, and these could now be considered commercial enterprises in agricultural districts. He said that making a CUP for this use was logical.

Mr. Coen said that one interesting point he would like to bring up was the transient occupancy tax. He said that it should now apply to these campgrounds, similar to hotels and other facilities. He said that this would require people staying at these campgrounds for multiple days to pay the tax, just like their hotels and other facilities did. He said that updating and modernizing ordinances was a normal practice for the County.

Mr. Coen said that by removing the grandfathering clause, this issue was resolved. He said that staff had mentioned this, and they further brought clarity to the campground business, which was now a legitimate business, not just a minor issue. He said that they had looked at A-1 to

adjust the requirements for businesses due to the changes in A-1 with the increase in homes. He said that this was a normal practice for the County, and he commended them for doing this and hoped they would approve it tonight.

Mr. Diggs closed the public hearing and the matter rested with the Board.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to adopt Proposed Ordinance O25-07.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, Gary, Yeung

No: (1) English

Absent: (1) Vanuch

ITEM 7. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER AN APPLICATION TO AMEND PROFFERED CONDITIONS ON TAX MAP PARCEL NO. 29-53B (PROJECT KNOWN AS RC24155562; EMBREY MILL PHASE 3A PROFFER AMENDMENT); PROPOSED ORDINANCE O25-15 (APPROVE); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-120 (DENY)

Mike Zuraf, Director of Planning and Zoning, said that his presentation would cover both of the two agenda items for the Embrey Mill Phase 3A Retirement Housing project. He said that the two requests included an amendment to the proffered conditions on the 65.5-acre property zoned PD-2 and a conditional use permit to allow retirement housing in the PD-2 Zoning District. He said that the applicant, NSA North, was represented by Clark Leming. He said that the project location was centered on the screen, highlighted in blue, and was situated north of Sunflower Drive, between Austin Ridge Drive and Mine Road.

Mr. Zuraf said that the next slide was depicting the generalized development plan (GDP). He said that the proposed layout consisted of 252 age-restricted townhouse units, located on the northern end of the site, with multiple access points from surrounding streets and an internal grid pattern of streets, including public and private streets. He said that the development included a clubhouse, pool, and pickleball courts, as well as a dog park on the southern end of the site, adjacent to the existing water tower.

Mr. Zuraf said that the internal street network was connected to the proposed commercial development, located along Sunflower Drive. He said that the development included approximately 100,000 square feet of floor area. He said that the proposed entrance to the residential area on Austin Ridge Drive aligns with the approved Westgate commercial project and future Austin Ridge commercial development to the east. He said that the Westgate project had proffers that required intersection improvements, and sidewalks existed along most of the surrounding roads.

Mr. Zuraf said that the sidewalks would be added along Austin Ridge Drive to complete the entire sidewalk network around the site. He said that the conservation easement in the lower corner would be preserved as open space. He said that the amendments to the proffers would be applied only to the area of Phase 3A, modifying the approved 252 units to classify all of them as retirement townhouse units. He said that the maximum amount of permitted commercial floor area would be reduced, and there would be proffering of the new generalized development plan.

Mr. Zuraf said that covenants would require age-restricted uses on the site, and there would be a commitment to providing community amenities as shown on the plan. He said that screening between the commercial and residential areas would consist of a row of evergreen trees. He said that architectural and design standards for the units are included, and there would be increased Fire and Rescue monetary contributions. He said that several proffers were being deleted, including previously completed improvements or standards that did not apply to this section of Embrey Mill. He said that the aerial view of the site showed the existing conditions.

Mr. Zuraf said that the site was currently vacant and undeveloped, portions of the site were previously cleared and graded, and the western half of the site remains forested, which included part of the conservation area. He said that the site surrounded a County-owned parcel with the water tank. He said that on the northern end of the site, off Shields Road, there were two wireless providers co-located on that tower. He said that to the north, the surrounding area was primarily residential. He said that to the east, there was vacant, undeveloped property, to the south was the now-developed Embrey Mill Town Center, and to the west was Embrey Mill Park. He said that also provided was the northwest street view from Austin Ridge Drive and Sunflower Drive.

Mr. Zuraf said that provided was a map with the area's current zoning districts. He said that they could see the PD-2 zoning, with surrounding PD-2 zoned land to the north and south, and PD-1 zoning within Austin Ridge to the east. He said that there was also B-2 Urban Commercial zoned land nearby. He said that when evaluating this request, staff considered the potential impacts, including transportation. He said that the existing road infrastructure was already in place and had been completed with the development of Embrey Mill. He said that the proposal would actually reduce potential traffic impacts from what was currently approved on this property.

Mr. Zuraf said that for utilities, the utilities already existed or had been installed around the site, and the applicant would be responsible for any necessary upgrades or connections for their portion of the project. He said that in terms of schools, this proposal would potentially reduce school impacts, as it would replace 152 commercial apartments with age-restricted units. He said that there would be no increase in park impacts, as the number of units would remain the same. He said that additionally, the proffers for Fire and Rescue services would be increased to mitigate any service-level deficits that might arise with this change in use to retirement housing.

Mr. Zuraf said that the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map identified a site in the Courthouse Targeted Development Area. He said that the land use concept for this targeted development area showed the site for mixed-use commercial and residential, as indicated in purple. He said that the plan established goals of accommodating 50% of projected population growth in the county within targeted development areas. He said that in the courthouse area, a total of 750 additional townhouse units and 5.5 million square feet of commercial development were recommended; this project helped to achieve that goal.

Mr. Zuraf said that the proposed density of 6.7 units per acre was within the recommended range of five to eight units per acre for townhouse residential units. He said that furthermore, an evaluation of the Comp Plan policies with bike and pedestrian plan facilities was necessary. He said that the area had excellent pedestrian networks in place, with sidewalks and trails present

around most of the site. He said that the applicant proposed to add sidewalk along Austin Ridge Drive to close the existing gap. He said that the applicant had also provided a series of senior housing design standards, which outlined specific site building and unit features proposed for the project.

Mr. Zuraf said that the general architectural design criteria included the use of brick, stone, or masonry at the base of the units. He said that there were no other specific design criteria, so staff would need more information to determine how the unit designs might conform with the architectural guidelines in the Neighborhood Design Standards Plan element of the Comp Plan. He said that moving on to the conditional use permit, the intent of requiring a conditional use permit for this use was to ensure that the development occurred in a manner that minimized negative impacts on residents in or adjacent to the site, aligning with the main purpose of zoning, which was to promote health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the County.

Mr. Zuraf said that this proposal did convert 152 commercial apartments to retirement units, the site met many of the location standards in the senior housing guidelines in the Comp Plan, and as it was located within the targeted development area, it met the recommended distances to shopping, hospitals, and County parks, and was situated within a planned residential development with adequate pedestrian accommodations. He said that the conditions for development aligned with the senior housing guidelines prepared by the applicant, which required individual units to have safe and convenient front entryways, internal access doors and halls, and met dimension recommendations. He said that the guidelines also included universal design features that promoted aging in place.

Mr. Zuraf said that the conditions for this project limited the development to a maximum of 252 townhouse retirement units as shown on the GDP, and the site development must adhere to the senior housing guidelines documents submitted by the applicant. He said that overall, the staff evaluation found several positive aspects of the proposal. He said that the proposed residential and commercial uses were consistent with the land use recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan, and the use was consistent with the surrounding area's residential and commercial patterns of development.

Mr. Zuraf said that the development reduced projected transportation and school impacts, and monetary contributions would be increased to mitigate public safety impacts. He said that the project met many of the senior housing guidelines, and proffers ensured that the development would be consistent with the applicant's vision. He said that the pedestrian network was adequate, and the senior housing guidelines would help mitigate potential negative impacts for residents.

Mr. Zuraf said that there was one negative aspect recorded by staff regarding consistency with the architectural design guidelines, which would require more detailed building illustrations. He said that staff recommended approval of both the zoning reclassification application and conditional use permit. He said that on May 14, 2025, the Planning Commission voted 6-1 in favor of recommending approval of both applications.

Mr. Diggs asked if the applicant had a presentation.

Clark Leming, Leming and Healy, said that for clarification, the Planning Commission's votes on this matter were 6-0, with one absence, on the zoning reclassification, and 5-1, with one absence, on the conditional use permit. He said that he wanted to note that while this was considering one specific project, it actually was part of the larger Embrey Mill development and would be the last piece of that 30-year development project. He said that the 252 units were the remainder of units planned for the entire development, so that was where that number originated from. He said that in addition to the senior residential units, there would be 500,000 square feet of commercial space in the area, hopefully for a grocery store anchor.

Ms. Bohmke asked if apartments were required by state code to have a sprinkler system, but that townhomes did not require sprinkler systems.

Mr. Leming said that that was correct.

Ms. Bohmke asked if the developer would be offering sprinkler systems for these proposed homes.

Mr. Leming said that they were an option made available to the homeowner when the unit was built.

Dr. Yeung said that she hoped the grocery store would be a high quality one. She said that she appreciated the new restaurants being brought into the area because of the development occurring here. She said that Austin Ridge had a no through trucks prohibition, and she would like to see that prohibition extended to Sunflower Drive as well. She said that additionally, she appreciated the connectivity of the sidewalks that would happen with this development, but she was wondering if they could do anything about the other road.

Mr. Leming said that they could investigate some way to address it.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing and the matter rested with the Board.

Dr. Yeung motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to adopt Proposed Ordinance O25-15.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, Gary, Yeung

No: (1) English

Absent: (1) Vanuch

ITEM 8. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) TO ALLOW RETIREMENT HOUSING IN THE PD-2, PLANNED DEVELOPMENT 2 ZONING DISTRICT ON TAX MAP PARCEL NO. 29-53B (PROJECT KNOWN AS CUP24155563; EMBREY MILL PHASE 3A RETIREMENT HOUSING); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-121 (APPROVE); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-122 (DENY)

Dr. Yeung motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-121.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, Gary, Yeung

No: (1) English

Absent: (1) Vanuch

ITEM 9. UTILITIES; CONSIDER AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND REORDAIN STAFFORD COUNTY CODE, CHAPTER 25, SEC. 25-3, "VIOLATIONS OF CHAPTER GENERALLY – NOTICE" AND ARTICLE II, DIVISION 2, "WATER SUPPLY EMERGENCY ORDINANCE," TO UPDATE PROVISIONS TO PROTECT THE COUNTY'S WATER SUPPLY AND TO ADOPT THE DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PLAN; PROPOSED ORDINANCE O25-01

John Brindle, Environmental Compliance Manager, said that he was here tonight to discuss the drought management plan again with the Board. He said that to provide some background, Stafford County relied on its two freshwater reservoirs, Smith Lake and Lake Mooney, which were stream-fed and heavily dependent on rainfall. He said that although they had a robust supply, it was vulnerable to drought. He said that in 2023, the Mooney permit was issued, triggering a state requirement to develop the Drought Management Plan, in addition to more frequent withdrawals from the Rappahannock River for the Mooney Reservoir.

Mr. Brindle said that to provide a brief overview of drought conditions, in 2023, the Rappahannock River experienced historically low flows during their development process. He said that since then, they had seen various levels of drought advisories declared by DEQ in 2023, 2024, and 2025, primarily due to regional groundwater levels. He said that this was the basis of the drought management plan that had not changed. He said that the plan was structured around two out of three trigger levels, based on the DEQ drought advisory stage and reservoir elevation levels, which were based on usable days of supply in the reservoir.

Mr. Brindle said that even with the advisories issued in the last three years, they would not have had to implement any restrictions on Stafford County. He said that provided was the standard structure of the plan, which had been the subject of some discussion. He said that to clarify, the drought restrictions were implemented in the following order: commercial voluntary, followed by residential voluntary, any mandatory restrictions would be applied to commercial users before residential users, and in the event of a drought emergency, which had not occurred in Stafford County, water supply usage would be limited to public health and human consumption.

Mr. Brindle said that in a previous presentation, the Board had requested that they revisit the enforcement and penalties section of the drought plan and code. He said that staff had made several changes, including splitting the penalties between residential and commercial users, removing the criminal penalty, and adding a heavy monetary penalty for high-volume violations. He said that the penalty section of the code included a \$100 fine for residential users, \$1,000 per violation per day for commercial users, and \$1 per gallon for high-volume users.

Mr. Diggs asked how data centers were addressed in this ordinance.

Mr. Brindle said that data centers would be considered a commercial user.

Dr. Yeung asked if reimbursements would be given to users if it was determined that they were not at fault for a broken pipe.

Mr. Brindle said that he believed they had provisions for reimbursement for leaks, specifically related to volume charges. He said that if the issue was known, they would not apply the penalty to the user.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing.

1. Kristen Maxson, Falmouth District, said that Utility Commissions had no current future events listed in Stafford County's Agenda after May 13, 2025. She said that the calendar appeared to be empty when it came to utility commissions, but it was packed with specific details. She said that currently, they were dealing with pressure zone upgrades and significant runoff, which was related to a \$6.23 million project. She said that the hearing for this project had initially been posted in the summer of 2024, but it had been rescheduled to June 11, 2025, a year later.

Ms. Maxson said that if one drove towards Fredericksburg, one could see the water was brown from runoff. She said that then, when one examined the waterways using GIS, one could see the old waterways and how they had been altered by the diversion of terracing in areas with big subdivisions and buildings. She said that the comparison highlighted the discrepancy between the past and present water conditions. She said that unfortunately, they had experienced roads washing away in Virginia this month, and the water problem was a pressing concern. She said that the Utilities Commission was currently closed to the public, and there were no commissioners meeting or posting agendas. She said that as a result, the public could only discuss water and data center issues in limited sections of the agendas, which belittled the real issue at hand.

Mr. Diggs closed the public hearing.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to adopt Proposed Ordinance O25-01.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Yeung

No: (0)

Absent: (1) Vanuch

ITEM 10. FINANCE; CONSIDER AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM REVENUE BONDS OF STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA BY PUBLIC SALE FOR UPGRADES TO THE SMITH LAKE WATER TREATMENT FACILITY; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-104

Ms. Allen said that she would like to update the agenda and have the record reflect that Little Falls Run was not located in the Griffis-Widewater District.

Randy Helwig, Finance Director, said that his presentation would cover items 10 and 11, providing an overview of two water and sewer projects. He said that he would provide a project and funding

overview, followed by answers to any questions the Board may have. He said that this matter covered the Smith Lake Water Treatment Facility upgrades, which included several major improvements, such as electric motor control, chemical storage and systems, instrumentation, solids handling, finished water pumps, replacing the boiler system, emergency generator, and overhauling the HVAC systems in the treatment rooms.

Mr. Helwig said that for the Little Falls Run facility, the upgrades included concrete repair to process units, affluent filter upgrades, filter upgrades, sludge storage system improvements, biological treatment, and chemical system improvements, as well as replacing the ultraviolet disinfection system, relocating the control building and lab, and modifying the central drain pump station. He said that the Utilities Fund would require a rating to acquire debt funding; they would be presenting to two of the three rating agencies and expected to receive a rating between AA and AAA.

Mr. Helwig said that funding sources for the Smith Lake Water Treatment Facility included Water and Sewer System Revenue Bonds through the VRA, Proposed Resolution R25-104, and for Little Falls, it was through the Virginia Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund. He said that additionally, they will be using a lease revenue bond for both projects. He said that for the Smith Lake facility, they would borrow \$25 million, for which the estimated annual debt service was \$1.6 million, with an interest rate of 4.75%. He said that for the Little Falls Run facility, they would borrow \$33 million, for which there the estimated annual debt service was \$1.9 million, with an interest rate of 3.85%.

Mr. Helwig said that previously, Little Falls was approved in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for \$30 million in the revolving loan fund, so this proposal would increase that amount by \$3 million. He said that the interest rate was currently volatile, with the U.S. having been downgraded from a AAA. He said that they were expecting a 4.75% interest rate on the revenue bonds and a slightly lesser rate through the Virginia program. He said that the schedule for the projects is as follows: tonight was the public hearing, June 25 was the rating agency call for the Smith Lake facility, July 25 they will receive the ratings, August 4 was the bond sale, and August 19 was the closing and receiving of the bond proceeds.

Mr. Helwig said that for Little Falls, they were still working with the DEQ and the VRA on the commitment letter to increase the previously approved \$26 million to \$33 million. He said that they expected a commitment letter from Virginia Resources Authority (VRA) in the fall, finalized terms, and then in December they would attempt to close and receive the bond proceeds.

Ms. Bohmke asked if these were 20-year or 30-year bonds.

Mr. Helwig said that they would be 30-year bonds.

Ms. Bohmke asked if all of this information was already projected in the Utilities budget.

Mr. Helwig said yes.

Ms. Bohmke said that it seemed like a big increase in debt.

Mr. Helwig said that actually, the Utilities debt had come down; about 10 years ago it was at \$100 million and after paying that off, they would be at \$68.2 million at the end of June.

Ms. Allen asked if there would be any increases in utilities bills because of these projects.

Mr. Helwig said that he would not expect any increases because the purpose of borrowing was to leverage their cash reserves.

Chris Edwards, Chief Operating Officer, said that they had anticipated borrowing for Little Falls two years ago and Smith Lake this year, which was actually less than anticipated. He said that as a result, the borrowing costs were already factored into the 6.5% rate increase.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing.

1. Kristin Maxson, Falmouth District, said that it would be really helpful if there was a display of the actual resolution and ordinance while people were present and while the Board was voting. She said that the one-pager did not accurately reflect the contents of the packet. She said that what they had here appeared to be a vague reference to wastewater and a master indenture, but it was unclear what that entailed. She said that she recalled watching a work session where someone explained the process to a colleague, using hand gestures to demonstrate how it worked.

Ms. Maxson said that essentially, it seemed like money was being transferred for various projects, rather than focusing on the Little Falls run wastewater project. She said that they also saw numerous other projects popping up, each requiring water. She said that she was puzzled as to why this information was not being disclosed to the public. She understood that certain aspects of the project required non-disclosure, but it was misleading to imply that Little Falls run wastewater was the primary concern. She said that instead, they should discuss the utilities needs for these projects.

Ms. Maxson said that what she had observed today was that housing was being built without adequate infrastructure, and the project simply stated "Little Falls Run Water." She said that furthermore, she had seen presentations about data centers and water usage, but the information was not being shared with the public due to non-disclosure. She said that the lack of transparency was concerning, especially as an adjoining neighbor who was not contacted in regards to a project that would put stress on their systems. She said that it was essential to be truthful with the citizens, particularly when it came to matters like this.

Mr. Diggs closed the public hearing.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-104.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Yeung

No: (0)

Absent: (1) Vanuch

ITEM 11. FINANCE; CONSIDER AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM REVENUE BONDS OF STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA TO THE VIRGINIA RESOURCES AUTHORITY FOR UPGRADES TO THE LITTLE FALLS RUN WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-123

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-123.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Yeung

No: (0)

Absent: (1) Vanuch

CLOSED MEETING

At 10:46 p.m., Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to authorize closed meeting.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Yeung

No: (0)

Absent: (1) Vanuch

Resolution CM25-09 reads as follows:

A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE CLOSED MEETING

WHEREAS, the Board desires to hold a Closed Meeting for discussion and consideration of specific appointees of the Board; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(1) such discussions may occur in Closed Meeting;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Stafford County Board of Supervisors on this the 17th day of June, 2025, that it be and hereby does authorize discussion of the above matters in Closed Meeting.

CERTIFY CLOSED MEETING

At 10:54 p.m., Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Bohmke, to certify closed meeting.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Yeung

No: (0)

Absent: (1) Vanuch

Resolution CM25-09 (C) reads as follows:

**A RESOLUTION TO CERTIFY THE ACTIONS OF THE
STAFFORD COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS IN A CLOSED
MEETING ON JUNE 17, 2025**

WHEREAS, the Board has on this the 17th day of June, 2025, adjourned into a Closed Meeting in accordance with a formal vote of the Board and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act provides for certification that such Closed Meeting was conducted in conformity with the law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Stafford County Board of Supervisors does hereby certify, on this the 17th day of June, 2025, that to the best of each member's knowledge (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the Motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened, were heard, discussed, or considered by the Board.

REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Yeung – extended her gratitude to Senator Kaine for the Stafford Regional Airport Authority grant funding in the amount of \$152,950. She said that she had the opportunity to attend several regional meetings, including the Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) Convention, the Coalition of High Growth Communities in Williamsburg, the VACo Region 7 Gathering, Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO), and a stakeholder recognition event in the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust.

Dr. Yeung said that these experiences provided valuable insights into regional transportation planning, smart growth strategies, and environmental conservation. She said that through these interactions, she gained a deeper understanding of the issues and priorities that shaped their community, which enabled her to make informed, balanced decisions that reflected the needs and values of their residents.

Ms. Allen – informed the public that their next Board meeting had been canceled and therefore their next scheduled meeting would take place on July 1. She said that she also wanted to wish everyone a Happy Juneteenth.

Ms. Bohmke – reported that at the FAMPO meeting on Monday night, they voted on the river crossing option, which was designated as Option C. She said that although it was not a specific Option C, it incorporated various routes to reach that option. She said that only one member of Spotsylvania County voted against it, and they were absent one of their three FAMPO representatives.

Ms. Bohmke said that she would also like to express her gratitude to the North Stafford Rotary Club for the beautiful flags displayed outside and for the ceremony this morning. She said that she would also like to extend her congratulations Black Horse, the company that won the \$1,500 award for their work with their veterans. She said that their recognition was truly wonderful. She said

that she would also like to take a moment to acknowledge their volunteer firefighters, who continued to make significant contributions to the County. She said that she would like to extend her special thanks to the public safety personnel, particularly the volunteers, for their dedication and service.

Ms. Gary – thanked everyone who attended her walk and talk at Government Island last Saturday. She said that it was lovely to take a stroll and chat with everyone, and she enjoyed meeting new people from across the County. She said that they would be hosting another event, so she asked everyone to please keep an eye out for that information. She said that she also wanted to thank the residents in the Brooke area for reaching out to her about transportation issues this morning. She said that a big thank you was due to VDOT for promptly addressing the issue.

Ms. Gary said that a lot had been discussed earlier in the meeting, and she wanted to assure everyone that they truly listened to the public and took notes throughout their meetings. She said that unfortunately, sometimes it was difficult to capture everything at the end of the day. She said that they had the video recording to share, and she hoped people would take the time to re-watch and listen to the concerns of everyone, as well as the Board members responses.

Ms. Gary said that there had been some comments made about supervisors who may not be familiar with the area, and she would like to address that. She said that as a lifelong Virginian with six of her seven children who had attended Stafford County Public Schools, she could attest to her deep roots in the community. She said that she was not going anywhere, and she was just as invested in their local policies as everyone else. She said that she would also like to clarify a point about pseudoscience in her previous comments regarding data centers.

Ms. Gary said that what she was referring to was actually called an informant account, which was a valuable tool for gathering data. She said that as listened to and shared stories from all stakeholders, she was looking forward to continuing to review the issues surrounding data centers and working together to create better policy.

Mr. Diggs – stated that the Supervisors had had the opportunity to participate in various events in the County recently. He said that he wished to address some comments that were made and he wished they had a chance to respond earlier in the meeting. He said that unfortunately, this forum did not provide that opportunity, so they quietly listened to all resident concerns. He said that he wanted to push back a bit and clarify some points. He said that one resident had mentioned that the members of the public worked harder than the Supervisors did.

Mr. Diggs said that the public may not see it during these meetings, but each Board member worked very hard, and some of them even had multiple jobs outside of their Board work. He said that it was essential to be mindful of what they said and how they said it, as it could be dangerous to assume things about people. He said that he wanted to reiterate once again that a lot of the information shared on Facebook was not accurate and could create panic in the community. He said that he wished to assure the public that the Supervisors were committed to providing accurate information and engaging with the community.

Mr. Diggs said that he wanted to invite everyone to his upcoming town hall meeting on June 26 at Stafford High School, where they would be discussing data centers and other relevant topics. He said that experts and representatives from various agencies would be present to provide information and answer questions. He said that this meeting was intended to be a listening session, not a debate, and he hoped it would help address some of the concerns and misconceptions in the community. He said that his goal was to listen to everyone's concerns and answer their questions, because it was the Board's job to serve everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned its meeting at 11:04 p.m.

A copy, teste:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Ashton", written over a horizontal line.

William H. Ashton, II
County Administrator

Public Comment Form

COMPLETE

#146

CREATED

 PUBLIC
Jun 16th 2025, 1:34:37 pm

IP ADDRESS

 108.48.234.53

* Name

Jennifer Gallahan

* Address

16 Ringgold Road
Falmouth
Virginia
22405
United States

* Email

jgall58@yahoo.com

Election District

George Washington

* Topic (please see the Public Hearings page for specific topics coming up)

5. Planning and Zoning; Consider Amending the Zoning Ordinance, Stafford County Code Sec. 28-25, "Definitions of Specific Terms," and Sec. 28-35, "Table of Uses and Standards" to Modify Regulations Related to Campground Uses

*** Online Comments:**

My name is Jennifer Newton Gallahan. I live at 16 Ringgold Road, Falmouth, VA 22405. I am a co-owner of Belle Plains fishing shore which is about ¼ acre. If the proposed Crow's Nest campground gets approved our family property will be in danger of more trespassers destroying our property. A few years ago we had a problem with a trespasser that Mr. Tom Coen helped us with. Some of the hazards that travel trailers and motorhomes will encounter are the overhead power/phone line hanging across Belle Plains road with vines growing across it that swoops down and can snag the top of a motorhome or camper. The same place where this overhead line hangs low is also a spot where the road floods with heavy rains, so there are two hazards right in one section of the main road going to the campground. There are several areas en route that have very low hanging trees, making a canopy of limbs that would snag the top of an RV.

If a camper misses the driveway to the campground, there is nowhere for them to turn around at the end of the road where our property is located. On the right side is the Belle Plains Boat Club with a locked gate, the middle driveway is our property, and on the left is a private driveway. There is no "circle" for a turn around, the road just ends. If a camper were to get stuck in the road, trying to turn around, our watermen can't get to their boats to fish for the day, or cannot get out to offload their catch. For them, that means a day's wages lost. Fishing is their job, that's the way they make their living.

My family has been camping all over the United States for 40 years, I am not against campgrounds, just a campground at Belle Plains. If I were a camper headed to the campground with my family and saw all those NO CAMPGROUND signs, I'd be afraid to spend the night there.

Before making your decision, I urge you all to drive down Belle Plains Road to see first hand what we are talking about. Even better would be if you could take a boat ride to see Big Marsh and the proposed campground property, turn the engine off and sit for a few minutes listening to the peacefulness of nature that surrounds you in that cove, which will be ruined by the pollution, noise and activity of a campground, not to mention the irrevocable destruction of the natural resources.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Public Comment Form

COMPLETE

#147

CREATED

PUBLIC
Jun 16th 2025, 4:19:14 pm

IP ADDRESS

71.57.222.6

* Name

Jo Ann Newton Meredith

* Address

9510 Quiet Woods Lane
Partlow
VA
22534
United States

* Email

attherivah55@gmail.com

Election District

* Topic (please see the Public Hearings page for specific topics coming up)

Campground Belle Plains Road

* Online Comments:

I am one of the owners of the property at the end of Belle Plains Road. The property has been in the Newton family since the 1900's and it is a small fishing shore for our family, who are still commercial watermen. This has been our family's little piece of heaven ever since I can remember. Our father's and grandfather's were watermen. the "crek" has been respected by our family for many generations. We have seen how the "crek" has changed over the years through over use and development. The people that live in the area now respect the water and all that surrounds it. With the construction and the production of a "campground" would totally destroy the area called "Big Marsh". Big Marsh has about 2 feet of water and the rest is mud. Lilly pads galore! Enticing all types of wildlife, heron rookery, resting area for pelicans, turtles, all kinds of fish, including shad. The bass boaters have already torn up the lilly pads, which might not ever grow back. Once the marsh is gone it will never grow back. Lets talk traffic! The roads are very narrow going down Belle Plains road, and let say these campers miss their turn off - where are they going to turn around at? Our property. There is not turn around spot except on our property! What happens when the campers get stuck, our watermen cannot get in or out and yet again we have trespassers on our property! So it the county going to make a turn around for the campers or put up a gate on ours?

I really think the country should not "Grandfather" anything in. This idea of grandfathering this land is to make peace with upcoming lawsuits; but you are not taking into account the people that have lived there and make their living in that area all these years who are the foundation of that are, farming and watermen and who voted for you. This campground and all the environmental issues that it will bring will cause great damage to "crek" and the wetlands in that area. If only you treated this area like you treat Crows Nest.