

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA,
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 19, 2026

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, May 19, 2026 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; Maya P. Guy, Vice Chairwoman; Tinesha O. Allen (arrived 6:41 p.m.); Pamela Yeung; Darrell E. English; Crystal Vanuch (arrived 5:24 p.m.); Kecia S. Evans (arrived 5:06 p.m.).

Also in attendance were Bill Ashton, County Administrator; Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney; Sukhi Purewal, Deputy Clerk; various staff members; and other interested parties.

Dr. Yeung motioned, seconded by Ms. Guy, to allow remote participation of Supervisor Allen.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) English, Diggs, Guy, Yeung, Allen

No: (0)

Absent: (2) Evans, Vanuch

INVOCATION

Mr. English led the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Dr. Yeung led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

CHAIR REMARKS

Mr. Diggs said that it was with a heavy heart that he shared the passing of one of their longstanding employees, Mr. David Weaver. He said that Mr. Weaver had been with the County for over 15 years in the Development Services Department. He said that Mr. Weaver's big heart, compassion, and strong will were unmatched, complemented by his knowledge, loyalty, and hardworking characteristics. This was a reminder that Stafford County was more than an organization; it was a community of people who cared for and supported one another. He asked that everyone to keep Dave's family and County employees in their thoughts and prayers.

Mr. Diggs said that they had several public hearings on the agenda that had been of great interest to the public. He said that he wanted to thank everyone who took the time to speak and participate in this public process. He also thanked everyone who reached out to them directly or emailed them. He said that they partnered with the community to govern this great County, and

they appreciated their input. He asked that citizens be respectful tonight of the Board and the speakers. He asked that comments be directed to the Board as a whole. He reminded everyone to refrain from clapping, and if they had a sign, he asked that it did not block the view from behind it.

Mr. Diggs said that they had celebrated Volunteer Week a few weeks ago, and he would be remiss if he did not recognize their wonderful volunteers here at the Government Center campus. He said that their volunteers had been invaluable, manning reception desks, assisting with office tasks, working for the Sheriff's Office on road assistance response, and so much more. He said that last year, the group's 185 volunteers served a combined 42,441 hours, resulting in an incredible total savings of \$1,754,000 in full-time staff costs, including benefits. He said that they could not provide the breadth of services that they did without the support of their volunteers.

Mr. Diggs said that he would remind everyone to save the day for this year's Memorial Day Ceremony, which would be held at the Stafford Regional Airport this Friday, May 22 at 10:00 a.m. They were collaborating with CAF Rise Above to bring a mobile theater and a P-51C Mustang to Stafford Airport to tell the story of the Tuskegee Airmen and the Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP). The historical exhibit, mobile theater, and airplane would be on display starting on Friday, May 22 through Memorial Day weekend to Monday, May 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily.

PRESENTATIONS

A PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING MAY 17-23, 2026, AS EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK IN STAFFORD COUNTY

Mr. Diggs presented the Proclamation Recognizing May 17-23, 2026 as Emergency Medical Services Week in Stafford County.

Emergency Medical Services personnel accepted the proclamation.

ADDITIONS - DELETIONS AND APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR AGENDA

Bill Ashton, County Administrator, said there were no additions or deletions to the regular agenda.

Mr. English motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to approve the regular agenda.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen, English

No: (0)

Absent: (1) Vanuch

WORK SESSION ITEMS

There were none.

CLOSED MEETING

There was none.

REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Yeung – stated that she would like to briefly discuss Sunflower Road and truckers that parked along the road at night. She said that there were homes planned to be built right across the street from the rezoning application they would be discussing today. She said that they needed to look at the corridor and see what could be done to address the urgent issues related to safety and quality of life there. She said that residents had been consistently complaining about the truckers parked there but neither the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) nor the Sheriff's Office had a clear plan to remedy the issue. She requested the Board to direct the County Administrator to work with VDOT, the Sheriff's Office, and County planners to produce an actionable plan that identified immediate enforcement and safety steps for truck parking, assessing traffic and safety risks along the corridor. She said that considering the nearby housing and elderly residents, they needed to take action.

Mr. English asked what the specific issues were.

Mr. Ashton said that 18-wheeler semi-trucks were parking for days at a time along Sunflower Road. He said that they also had trailers without the driver cab parked there, in addition to other cars parked there. He said that this was becoming a more frequent occurrence. He said that the current issue was that the County had the ability to regulate parking in residential areas, but not in a commercial area such as this. He said that the parking was not impeding traffic, and staff had visited the site to see if there were sightline issues and determined there were none.

Mr. English asked if it was considered a nuisance at this point.

Mr. Ashton said exactly.

Mr. English said that it sounded like the truckers were having a difficult time finding an appropriate place to park. He said that he had no issue with the County Administrator looking further into the situation.

Ms. Allen said that it sounded like the County Administrator and staff had already done their due diligence based on what Mr. Ashton had just stated. She said that she was not sure what else they could possibly do if they had already looked into the issue, the Sheriff's Office did not have any enforcement mechanism, and VDOT found them to not be in violation. She said that she did not know what kind of action plan staff could put together if they had already determined it was a nuisance rather than a safety issue. She said that she also was curious as to why all the truck drivers were parking and leaving their trucks in the Embrey Mill area unless they lived there. She said that she was unsure of what else the County could do in this situation and it may need to be addressed by the state.

Ms. Guy asked if Mr. Diggs could share his perspective on this, since he had visited the site with Dr. Yeung.

Mr. Diggs said that his view was similar to Ms. Allen's. He said that the County was limited to what they could do, particularly because this was a commercial area and the County did not have any kind of tool to address it. He said that they were parking in parking spaces; they were not parking randomly. He said that there were no sightline issues, and the Sheriff was checking to ensure the trucks were properly tagged and that they were not abandoned. He said that in terms of putting something in place to disallow truckers from parking there, the County did not have a mechanism. He said that it had been over a year of this happening and they had not been able to identify a solution.

Dr. Yeung said that she remained concerned that there were sightline issues when exiting the Embrey Mill mall, which could cause a traffic accident. She said that the project manager of Embrey Mill was also asking for the County's assistance on this issue. She said that she thought there was more they could do, but they needed to put in the time and effort to work with VDOT.

Mr. Diggs said that VDOT had responded to the issue by offering to put up no parking signs for trucks, but had emphasized that it was unenforceable. He said that having the signs up could put County officials in an unclear position and trying to enforce it could violate someone's rights.

Ms. Guy asked if there was something wrong with the trucks parked there, they could do something.

Mr. Diggs said that yes, over the past year, several actions had been taken to address violations.

Ms. Guy asked if VDOT was unable to enforce the parking or was choosing not to.

Mr. Diggs said that it was the law.

Ms. Guy said that in that case, the County asking for VDOT to do something would not help.

Mr. Diggs said that VDOT had looked into it from all angles and could not do anything. He said that staff was still looking into it at this time to see what could be done.

Ms. Guy said that it would be great if staff could present an actionable plan, and she did not see anything wrong with them continuing to look for solutions. She said that however, at this point they could do nothing.

Ms. Allen said that she would like to suggest that the background information and options to address this issue be included as part of the VDOT Quarterly Report.

Mr. Ashton said that Mr. Counsell had confirmed they could bring back VDOT to discuss this with the Board.

Mr. Diggs said that he thought the bigger question here had been raised by Mr. English, which was where the truck drivers could park. He said that they had limited options in general, so perhaps the County could consider creating spaces where they could park in order to alleviate the situation on Sunflower Road.

Dr. Yeung said that they could park at Stafford Marketplace, as they had been.

Mr. Diggs said that that would just be pushing them from one commercial area to another.

Dr. Yeung said that she understood, but where they were currently there was not enough room for the traffic around the mall and the area residents. She said that with more residential development planned, it would become dangerous in the future.

Ms. Evans asked why the trucks were not parked at a truck stop where they should be. She said that even if the truckers lived in the area, they should not be parking in a neighborhood. She said that they were heavy, commercial vehicles that typically had their own designated parking areas. She said that she was confused about why they were parking here in the first place and why they were even having this conversation.

Mr. Diggs said that what was crucial was that they did things legally and the right way. He said that he did not disagree with the points raised, but there was not a tool or a mechanism to prevent truck parking in commercial areas unless, and until they could say that there were no commercial parking areas anywhere in the County.

Mr. Ashton said that it would have to be a County-wide ban on truck parking; they could not target any one area.

Mr. Diggs said that it could also affect businesses. He said that the constituents near Stafford Marketplace did not want the trucks parking there, either. He said that he wanted to solve the issue, and right now they did not have a tool to do it. He said that perhaps talking with state representatives and creating some new type of solution was possible. He said that staff had been looking at it and continued to do so, and Dr. Yeung had their support.

Ms. Allen – stated that the Board had previously discussed with their Transportation staff the Route 1 corridor in the Widewater area that were targeted for safety improvements due to the frequency of traffic accidents and high traffic volume. She said that she would like the Board to support installing a traffic signal at Route 1 and Potomac Hills, and to direct staff to bring this issue to VDOT when they had their next meeting. She said that the matter would then come back to the Board if VDOT agreed and provided options for funding that traffic light.

Mr. Diggs said that there was consensus from the Board to support the request for a traffic light at Route 1 and Potomac Hills and to communicate that to VDOT.

Ms. Vanuch – thanked their staff in Capital Projects. She said that at the last Board meeting, she had mentioned the Lake Arrowhead subdivision and the dilapidated road. She said that the County had made significant efforts to address this issue, and she was pleased to say that the work was completed on time and looked phenomenal. She said that she would like to extend her sincere thanks Mr. Ashton for his collaboration with Mr. Toigo and staff. She said that she had received numerous positive comments from the residents, and she was grateful for the hard work of their staff. She said that she also wanted to thank her colleagues for the special exceptions made to the service district.

Mr. English – thanked everyone, including Mr. Diggs, who participated in the bike ride to Chesapeake in honor of fallen law enforcement officers. He said that he had a meeting with Clark Patton residents last night and discussed their wells, and he hoped they could reach a

conclusion. He said that he was invited to Mount Olive Baptist Church for their 206th anniversary celebration. He said that a church member had donated over \$200,000 to help pay off the church's mortgage, so they celebrated by burning the mortgage papers. He said that the attendees were enthusiastic and supportive, and it was clear that they were deeply moved by the gesture. He said that he appreciated them inviting him to attend their event.

Mr. English said that another matter he would like to bring up is the redistricting process that took place last month in April. He said that unfortunately, it was a costly endeavor for Stafford County, with a total expense of \$130,000. He said that he was requesting that they send a letter to the state to seek reimbursement for this amount.

Ms. Vanuch said that she supported Mr. English's request. She said that she believed that they should consider pursuing legal action against the state for forcing them into something the County knew was illegal in the first place, then spending taxpayer dollars on it. She said that they absolutely should be seeking all reimbursement.

Mr. Ashton said that to clarify, he had spoken with the Treasurer about reimbursement and they would be receiving some form of reimbursement. He said that they may not be fully reimbursed, but they would not know the details until about mid-June.

Ms. Evans – stated that she had the opportunity to attend the Economic Development Authority (EDA) Business Awards last Wednesday, where she gave a speech about small businesses and discuss their role as partners with them. She said that she would like to thank staff for that experience as well as their business partners. She said that she would also like to congratulate the Business of the Year winner, Kristal King, for her business Glam Room.

Mr. Diggs – wished Vice Chair Guy an early Happy Birthday, which was at the end of this month.

RECESS

The Board recessed at 5:32 p.m. and reconvened at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

Mr. Diggs read the rules of procedure for public comment.

1. Karen Fox, Hartwood District, said that her family had lived beside the current Stafford Airport property since 1877, nearly 150 years. She said that they had been there long before that airport existed. She said that families living near this airport were expected to trust that spreading biosolids, sewage sludge, near their homes was safe. She said that this was not acceptable. She said that without independent testing and public transparency, the airport had used biosolids from waste treatment facilities on its property for decades.

Ms. Fox said that recently, another application was spread there again. She said that the concern with this practice was the per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), often called forever chemicals. She said that according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), PFAS were linked to cancer, immune system damage, developmental problems, liver

damage, and drinking water contamination. She said that these chemicals did not fully break down, and wastewater treatment did not fully remove them. She said that as a result, they could remain in the material being spread on the land. She said that much of this had begun before PFAS contamination was widely understood the way it was today.

Ms. Fox said that science changes, and standards evolved. She said that the government had a responsibility to reassess old practices when risks became clearer. She said that this airport was not isolated farmland; it was surrounded by homes, wells, streams, and families. She said that her grandmother had died of bladder cancer, her mother had died of breast cancer, and her uncle's wife was now a breast cancer survivor, all of whom had lived on the property and been diagnosed after the use of this bio-sludge.

Ms. Fox said that however, when chemicals were linked to cancer and spread near their homes, families had the right to ask and demand testing. She said that the use of these biosolids at Stafford Airport was well-documented and should not be allowed. She said that once contamination entered the groundwater or surrounding ecosystems, the damage lasted for generations. She said that her family had lived here for generations and she wanted to be around here for a lot longer.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Mr. Diggs read the rules of procedure for public hearings.

ITEM 1. PARKS AND RECREATION; CONSIDER AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A LEASE WITH THE PATAWOMECK INDIAN TRIBE OF VIRGINIA, INC. FOR 6.5 ACRES OF COUNTY-OWNED PROPERTY NEAR AQUIA LANDING PARK ON TAX MAP PARCEL NO. 41-6; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-117

Patch Corkman, Director of Parks and Recreation, said that he would present the proposed lease agreement between Stafford County and the Patowomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia for the County-owned parcel near the Aquia Landing Park. He said that the County originally entered into the lease with the Tribe in 2015. He said that in March 2025, the agreement expired, and since that time, Parks and Recreation staff had maintained the parcel. He said that the proposed lease included an initial five-year term with two additional five-year renewals.

Mr. Corkman said that the use of the property was limited to cultural, educational, and community purposes only. He said that commercial use was prohibited under the agreement, and burial and interment were not permitted on the premises. He said that under the agreement, the Tribe was responsible for maintenance, operations, and insurance associated with the property. He said that the County retained ownership of both the land and any future improvements. He said that the agreement also maintained County oversight of any future improvements or modifications to ensure appropriate stewardship of the property. He said that finally, the County retained the ability to terminate the lease within 30 days' notice in the event of a need to sell the property.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing.

1. David Jett said that he was a tribal citizen of the Patawomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia, as well as the Tribe's secretary. He said that as a child, he distinctly remembered his grandfather being referred to as a derogatory racist term towards American Indians in his presence. He said that this term, which was prominent in the South during the Jim Crow era, was unacceptable and hurtful. He said that he had also heard many times in his life the Jetts, Newtons, and Sullivans, his extended family, called that term.

Mr. Jett said that he was sharing this with the Board because not only did his family understand who they were, others recognized them as such and let them know what they thought of them, for better or for worse. He said that he acknowledged that many of the Supervisors may not have roots in the area, as it was not required to do a good job in their positions, but it put them at a disadvantage in terms of understanding the deep history of Stafford County. He said that all the Board could do was listen to the information presented before them.

Mr. Jett said that he was disturbed that despite the determinations from the Commonwealth of Virginia, the University of Mary Washington, College of William & Mary, and the Smithsonian Institute, a platform had been given to self-appointed experts. He said that the Board stood at a crossroads tonight. He said that he wanted to make it clear that the Potomac Indian Tribe of Virginia would get federal recognition. He said that it was not a question of if, but when, leading to the question of how this Board would be viewed in history. He said that there were a lot of tough issues facing the County, including one they would be addressing tonight, and he appreciated the work the Board did.

Mr. Jett said that the County had already been stronger and more suited to tackling these issues when they partnered with the Patawomeck people. He said that they had a great opportunity to continue that relationship, and he encouraged the Board to put aside all the nonsense and do the right thing for the people of Stafford County. He said that the Tribe wanted to partner with the County and continue working together for the foreseeable future.

2. Connie Hilker, Hartwood District, said that Patawomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia, Incorporated land lease renewal application. She said that she had been a researcher and genealogist for over 40 years. She said that her ancestors had been established in Stafford County from the early 1700s to the present, with each generation linked to the next through thorough research based on primary records. She said that if she could not prove it with primary records, it was not fact. She said that documents mattered when doing genealogy.

Ms. Hilker said that she believed it was best to give credit to individuals who made thoughtful decisions, considering the information available at the time. She said that when it came to the status of the group petitioning the Board today, she had thoroughly examined the available evidence and found no proof to support their claim to be direct descendants of the original Native Americans of Stafford County. She said that no land records, church records, or school records had been found to connect the current group known as the Patawomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia to the original Native Americans in Stafford County.

Ms. Hilker said that they had been asked to blindly accept a secret group of Indians in the White Oak area for more than 200 years, and that local, state, and federal benefits must be

awarded to these individuals based on two centuries of family lore. She said that last year, the PITV group was directed by the Board to provide documents to support the claim of legitimacy and continuity as an Indian tribe, and this should have been a simple request. She said that they had repeatedly claimed to possess proof of their Native American heritage and status, but it did not exist. She said that in the past, benefits and resources had been granted to the PITV group based on the assumption that their claims were accurate. However, when asked to provide evidence, they had failed to do so. She said that based on documents and research that had been provided, every member of this Board knew better. She said that she hoped they would put an end to this and honor the rich, accurate history of Stafford. She asked the Board to unanimously vote to deny the lease renewal.

3. Alane Callander, Falmouth District, said that the lease of this land to the Tribe was a win-win for Stafford. She said that the Tribe would maintain and improve the area at no cost to the County, and they would continue to educate the public about their culture. She said that although she had grown up in central and northern Illinois, she had vivid memories of educational opportunities regarding Native Americans. She said that she was grateful for those opportunities, and she thought it was wonderful that residents of Stafford, including their children, were taught about Native American life here.

Ms. Callander said that she was aware that there was concern about verifying the authenticity of the Patawomeck tribe. She said that personally, she knew a woman whose ancestry with the tribe was documented on her Ancestry account. She said that her mother's family was from Stafford, near White Oak. She said that she was descended from Pocahontas and her first husband. She said that their marriage was documented by the secretary of the Fort at Jamestown. She said that when the Europeans arrived in the early 1600s, many tribes were dismantled and not allowed to officially reorganize until the 1900s.

Ms. Callander said that many of their records were destroyed by the Europeans or by the historic wars that ravaged Virginia particularly hard. She said that despite this destruction, these tribes, including the Patawomeck, still knew who they were. She said that native relatives still met together to honor the culture of their ancestors. She said that today, with new discoveries being made in DNA research, it was clear that the descendants of the Patawomeck Tribe were still alive and honoring their ancestors. She said that they were continuing to educate the public about the first people to inhabit Stafford County.

Ms. Callander said that she believed that they could all agree that North America was inhabited by tribes when Europeans landed on the shores in the 1600s. She said that although great effort had been made to document life back then, she thought it was okay if they did not know everything that had happened, and if records going forward from the 1600s were not totally complete and verified. She said that they could still honor and celebrate the Patawomeck Tribe.

4. Kristin Maxson, Falmouth District said that she would like to address the general comments, which were closed far too early and left many people unable to participate. She said that regarding the subject item, Exhibit A, a map of the lease premises for Aquia Landing Park was empty on page 20 of the agenda. She said that Aquia Landing had two identical tax map entries of 41-6, both unique parcels in size with 32 acres as double. She said that parcels

were to be unique in identification. She said that the hearing was for 6.5 acres as the tip of the boundary.

Ms. Maxson said that it stated that the County retained the right to terminate the lease within 30 days' notice to allow sale of the property. She said that this property was a park and selling outright may be questionable, since it was built after 1900, on page 9 of 3,496 pages in today's packet. She said that the May 2, 2025 meeting minutes concerning the Aquia landing topic was quoted and the statements were questionable. She said that the definition of devolve was to delegate or pass on to another. She said the currently, the Parks and Recreation section was corrupted on the County website. She asked how this impacted this public hearing item.

Ms. Maxson said that on April 20, 2026, the agenda for Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee was posted on January 20, 2026. She said that this was a timestamp, meaning a clock was off. She asked how this impacted the automation of future agendas and how it related to R26-117. She said that there had been public statements from Commissioners that this property had nothing to do with burials. She said that they could request money from the Smithsonian for burial grounds. She said that the federal administration had proposed cutting over \$5 million from tribal support, including the Smithsonian.

5. Rick MacGregor, Aquia District, said that the state claimed that they were Indians. He said that approximately 30 years ago, they were informed that proof had been found that the Patawomecks still existed. He said that initially, many people supported them because they believed in their existence. He said that in 2010, the state stated that they had abundant proof, but he and Mrs. MacGregor were not convinced. He said that in February 2023, they submitted 57 pages of documented research to this Board, indicating that someone had lied about the Patawomecks, and they were providing this information again.

Mr. MacGregor said that their concerns were ignored, and subsequent emails were ignored, so on May 20 of last year, they came to see the Board. He said that that evening, this Board took a rare step and asked for the proof that the Tribe claimed to have. He said that however, after months of waiting and no proof, the Board changed its mind, and he asked why. He said that he and his wife had provided hundreds of records proving that the Tribe was actually white. He said that however, the state claimed that Dr. W.L. Deyo and other scholars spent decades amassing abundant family, church, land, and other records of proof. He said that Dr. Deyo was not a doctor, either.

Mr. MacGregor asked where the records were. He asked why the Virginia Council on Indians (VCI) did not accept all that proof in 1998. He said that in 2024, doctors Daniel Moretti-Langholz and Buck Woodard of William & Mary wrote a letter to Abigail Spanberger stating that the Patawomeck application to the Virginia Council on Indians was tabled without prejudice. He said that they also noted that the people of White Oak had been studied by anthropologists, ethno-historians, and sociologists for over 100 years. He said that however, this contradicted the official VCI document he had, which stated that the petitioner's documents were insufficient to justify recognition.

Mr. MacGregor said that the document also mentioned that Speck had spent one night at Luther Newton's house. He said that they stated that they had helped with the state recognition, but they did not mention anything about the records of proof; instead, they urged a fake tribe to sue them. He said that the recent Spanberger and Vindman federal bills claimed that there were no records due to fires, war, and racism. He said that this was not the same as what the state had previously asserted, and there was no hardship that had occurred to the Tribe since 2010. He said that the records of proof they said they had not and did not exist, and this Tribe was a fraud. He said that if the Board gave them this lease, they would be enabling them. He said that when this fraud was exposed, it would not look good. He said that he was offering \$20,000 to anyone who could produce the family, land, and church records.

6. Jerrilyn Eby MacGregor, Rock Hill District, said that some may not know the truth about the Patawomecks. She said that someone they trusted told them they were Indians and they did not question it. She said that since January, she had submitted to this Board over 600 census, birth, marriage, death, masonic, draft, and court records pertaining to the PITV members. She said that these spanned over 300 years, but were only a sampling of the thousands available. She said that records did not lie; they proved unequivocally these families had been white for centuries. She said that they were not Indians.

Ms. MacGregor asked why the Tribe's upper management had allowed them to refute their legitimacy when they could have shamed them into silence by producing the records they themselves had told the General Assembly that they had in 2010. She said that they could not because those records did not exist. She said that this was why last May, when the Board made the lease contingent upon seeing the records, the Board never received them. She said that it was a reasonable request until January when the Board suddenly decided they did not need records. She said that their impending federal recognition bill stated that they had no records due to the Civil War, courthouse fires, and 20th century racism. She said that it was only 16 years ago when they told the General Assembly they had amassed family, church, and land records proving they were Indians.

Ms. MacGregor said that they lied and they had no records then or now. She said that since January, she had submitted the genealogical lineages of seven PITV members. She said that Charlie Payne said he was a proud Patawomeck, so he was the eighth. She said that over 130 birth, marriage, death, census, draft, and court records proved his family had been white since at least the 1680s. She asked why they could not find any Indian records. She said that she believed the Board already knew the answer. She said that she challenged the Board to ask former Tribe historian, William Deyo, for the records proving the PITV were Indians, as stated in Resolution 150. She said that Mr. MacGregor was offering a \$20,000 reward for these records, but Mr. Deyo could not produce them.

7. Karen Fox, Hartwood District, said that she would like to speak in support of the Patawomeck Tribe and the lease agreement with Stafford County. She said that Pocahontas was her own 12th great-grandmother, but for much of her life she was skeptical of that claim. She said that like many families in Virginia, stories about ancestry were passed down through generations, without research or any formal documentation. She said that those family stories changed how she thought about oral history. She said that too often was that

tradition treated as less credible because it was not written down in official capacity and without a government document.

Ms. Fox said that indigenous communities preserved their history through oral tradition, long before courthouses, deeds, census records, or formal archives ever existed. She said that Patawomeck people did not suddenly become part of history when colonial governments took over the land. She said that tribal identity kept them together, and oral tradition was the only way the history survived. She said that this deserved respect. She said that supporting the lease was not only about land or government agreements, it was about acknowledging and preserving an important part of Stafford's history. She said that history was not always perfectly documented on paper, and that oral tradition could carry historical truth. She said that the Patawomeck Tribe represented a living connection to the earliest history of this region. She said that she encouraged the Board to continue supporting the Patawomeck Tribe and to remember that oral history was the bridge between the past and the present.

8. Charlie Payne, representing the Patawomeck Indian Tribe and was joined by the Chief and other Tribe members this evening. He said that he would not be discussing recognition of descendency, as that issue had been resolved by the General Assembly in 2010 and therefore not germane to tonight's item. He said that what was before the Board was the opportunity for a partnership with one of Stafford County's oldest community organizations. He said that the County and the Tribe had been partnered since the 1990s, celebrating their common histories.

Mr. Payne said that the Tribe members were all upstanding citizens of the County and simply wanted to celebrate their history. He said that they were a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that had been working with the community for many years. He said that the issue tonight was a lease renewal for a prior lease that expired last year. He said that in the new lease, there were certain terms and conditions included at the request of the Board, including no burial activities on site, to establish a shorter lease term, and 30 days' notice to the tenant in the event of a sale. He said that all of these stipulations were included in the lease to ensure flexibility for the County and the opportunity for his client to lease the space and celebrate the Tribe and its history. He said that they greatly appreciated the Board's leadership and opportunity provided this evening to celebrate the Patawomeck Tribe in Stafford County.

Mr. Diggs closed the public hearing.

Mr. Diggs motioned, seconded by Ms. Evans, to approve proposed Resolution R26-117.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Diggs, English, Evans, Guy

No: (2) Vanuch, Yeung

ITEM 2. CAPITAL PROJECTS TRANSPORTATION; CONSIDER AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND REORDAIN STAFFORD COUNTY CODE SEC. 15-56, "DESIGNATION OF RESTRICTED PARKING AREAS," TO INCLUDE CERTAIN STREETS WITHIN LIBERTY KNOLLS SUBDIVISION; PROPOSED ORDINANCE O26-18

Bryon Counsell, Chief Engineer, said that this item allowed the County to regulate residential parking. He said that the County had done this a number of times throughout the County, typically in neighborhoods with Homeowners Associations (HOA). He said that in these cases, the HOAs organized and submitted a letter requesting this designation. He said that his presentation provided a brief history of the Code and the process that enabled this item to move forward to the Board. He said that just a few weeks ago, the Board had authorized a public hearing on this matter. He said that if approved, it would establish designated parking areas in Liberty Knolls on the streets, as outlined in the provided exhibit.

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. Evans, to approve proposed Ordinance O26-18.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen, English, Vanuch
No: (0)

ITEM 3. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW A PUBLIC FACILITY UTILITY, SPECIFICALLY AN ELECTRICAL SUBSTATION, IN THE M-1, LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICT, ON A PORTION OF TAX MAP PARCEL NO. 37-30 (PROJECT KNOWN AS VANTAGE VA41 SUBSTATION); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-156 (APPROVAL); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-157 (DENIAL)

Emilie Wolfson, Staff Project Manager, said that she would present the staff report for this conditional use permit (CUP) for an electric substation. She said that the applicant, Vantage Data Centers, was represented by Amanda Williams and Aaron Frank of Cooley LLP. She said that the applicant was seeking a conditional use permit for a 15.62-acre portion of Tax Map Parcel (TMP) 3730 in the Hartwood District. She said that the subject property, located east of the intersection of Centreport Parkway and Mountain View Road, was zoned M-1 Light Industrial and situated in the Airport Impact Overlay District.

Ms. Wolfson said that it was adjacent to M-1 uses to the north, east, and west, and to the south, it was adjacent to R-2, but the portion of the parcel subject to the CUP was adjacent to the by-right data center currently under site plan review. She said that regarding existing conditions of the site, the applicant was currently developing a by-right data center on the property and planned to construct a substation on the 15.6-acre portion of the property. She said that the site had been graded, and existing vegetation had been removed.

Ms. Wolfson said that the property was located within the Central Stafford Targeted Development Area (TDA) and was identified as Business and Industry. She said that the TDA was envisioned as a major employment center due to its proximity to Stafford Regional Airport and major transportation corridors. She said that the site plan anticipated a substation and was consistent with standard data center infrastructure needs.

Ms. Wolfson said that the applicant proposed an electrical equipment substation, approximately 2,000 square feet of gross floor area, which would be the substation control building. She said that it would be enclosed by a 12-foot-tall security fence, with a 6-acre proposed substation pad area. She said that the entrance would be from Centreport Parkway, across from the Amazon Fulfillment Center, and a maximum height of 80 feet, along with a stormwater management pond situated on the southern portion of the site.

Ms. Wolfson said that a 15-foot-wide street buffer and an additional 15-foot-wide screening strip were proposed along Centreport Parkway to the north and east. She said that the proposed substation pad area would have a 40-foot building setback across the northeast property line. She said that the applicant was providing a Type C landscape buffer, 25 feet in width, and supplemented with a six-foot-tall opaque fence in this location.

Ms. Wolfson said that there would be a 15-foot building setback along the property line. She said that it was worth noting that the nearest residential property to the proposed substation would be approximately 1,900 feet to the southwest. She said that as for noise impacts, the substation was not expected to generate noise more than permitted levels, in accordance with the Stafford County Noise Ordinance.

Ms. Wolfson said that lighting impacts would be provided in accordance with Section 2887 of the Zoning Ordinance. She said that the project was expected to generate a minimum number of vehicle trips, primarily due to its maintenance needs, which was estimated to be four vehicles per day. She said that Utilities, Schools, Parks, and Recreation, as well as Fire and Rescue services, were not expected to be impacted. She said that the project was located within the first response area of Fire and Rescue Station 11.

Ms. Wolfson said that staff had reviewed the Electrical Utility Comprehensive Plan and found that the infrastructure alignment was mostly through industrial areas, and the substation was planned and zoned in an industrial location and not visible from residentially zoned properties. She said that she had included an image of the proposed transmission line alignment, as well as sections illustrating the substation location.

Ms. Wolfson said that staff had found that the substation was generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's land use recommendations and the development goals for the targeted development area. She said that several conditions had been imposed on the project, which included: substantial conformity with the Generalized Development Plan (GDP), a substation compound not exceeding six acres, a maximum height of 80 feet, restrictions on the storage of hazardous materials, landscape screening along the outside perimeter, notice requirements for decommissioning, and a specified time period for restoring the area to its natural state.

Ms. Wolfson said that in conclusion, there were several positive findings for this project. She said that the proposed expansion was consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, particularly in relation to the expansion of public utilities. She said that the proposal would allow for expansion related to a future data center, which supported future growth in the surrounding area. She said that the proposed electric substation use was surrounded by industrial uses.

Ms. Wolfson said that the proposed conditions would help mitigate negative impacts. She said that one notable negative aspect was that the substation was not immediately adjacent to the existing overhead power lines. She said that in conclusion, for consideration, staff was supportive of the project and recommended approval of the application CUP25156640 pursuant to Resolution R26-156. She said that on April 22, 2026, the Planning Commission had voted 7-0 to recommend approval, and at the same meeting, a concurrent Comprehensive Plan Compliance Review application had also been approved with the same vote.

Mr. Diggs asked if the applicant had a presentation.

Amanda Williams, Land Use Attorney with Cooley LLP, said that she was representing Vantage for this substation CUP application. She said that she would like to start by thanking Ms. Wolfson and staff for their hard work on this application, which they were grateful for their recommendation of approval. She said that they also appreciated the work of the Planning Commission and their recommendation of approval a few weeks ago.

Ms. Williams said that the site in question was a 15-acre portion of the approved Vantage Data Center campus in an industrial corridor off of Centreport Parkway. She said that it was a by-right data center development with an approved site plan, and it was well underway with construction, including the pad for the substation. She said that there was a groundbreaking ceremony held in November of last year. The site was zoned M-1 for industrial uses and is situated in the Central Stafford Targeted Development Area under the Comprehensive Plan, which calls for uses of this type.

Ms. Williams said that the aerial photograph included in her presentation illustrated the industrial nature of the area, with nearby approved uses such as the Amazon Fulfillment Center and an auto parts distribution center. As Ms. Wolfson mentioned, the closest residential site was approximately 1,900 feet away from the edge of the substation parcel, and about 2,800 feet away from the edge of the substation pad itself, or roughly eight football fields, and inclusive of significant tree buffers.

Ms. Williams said that they were requesting approval of just the conditional use permit for the substation use, prior to Dominion starting construction and energizing the substation. She said that the Comprehensive Plan compliance was approved by the Planning Commission in April. She said that Vantage would be granting an easement over the property to Dominion for the substation. The applicant had received a load letter from Dominion, which they provided to staff, and they had a connection date of August 2027.

Ms. Williams said that in addition to being consistent with its surroundings, the substation was consistent with the M-1 Zoning District and the Business and Industrial use designation under the Comprehensive Plan. She said that she would like to take a moment to walk through the site layout. There was the pad, the stormwater pond, and the landscape screening and street buffers that would be along the roadway. She said that they were not asking for any modifications or buffers as part of this request. She said that they had also prepared a cross-section in coordination with staff to give a sense of how this interacted with the roadway.

Ms. Williams said that notably, the cross-section highlighted the substation pad's proximity to the road, with a distance of approximately 50 feet, although it was set back further in other areas to about 275 feet. She said that in this location, the substation equipment was situated at a grade that ensured it remained below eye level for drivers on Centreport and users of the industrial campus across the street. She said that additionally, the 80-foot height limitation was relevant, as the ground-level equipment was well below this threshold.

Ms. Williams said that in conclusion, the substation was appropriately located and would not alter the character of this industrial area. She said that it would support the adjacent by-right and under-construction data centers, and they looked forward to the Board's approval of this request.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing. He asked if any members of the public wished to speak to this item.

1. [1:18:30 Speaker?] She said that she was a member of Tower Concerns. She said that over 20 years ago, they had successfully won over the State Corporation Commission (SCC) and convinced Dominion to bury the 230 kilovolt (kV) lines. She said that however, Tower Concerns was now facing a new challenge with the growth of data centers and high demands to increase the grid. She said that when the attorney visited Colonial Forge in March, he suggested that they pack Colonial Forge with three times the number of people they currently had. She said that as a result, Tower Concerns stopped its activities and began to impact highly affected neighborhoods, including Shelton's Run, Shelton's Wood, Shelton Knoll, Austin Ridge, Autumn Ridge, Winding Creek, Embrey Mill, Seven Lakes, Hunter's Pond, Poplar Estates, and extending to Jenny's Farm and Hartwood to Fauquier. She said that during the town hall meeting, their voices were silenced, and they were forced to email their questions when Dominion representatives were present. She said that this was a difficult experience, and she did not expect it to be so challenging. She said that they also discovered that Dominion had added another 230 kV line.

She said that the five miles that were initially buried, along with the two 230 kV lines, would now be replaced with a 500 kV and a 230 kV line. She said that to illustrate the issue, she would like to share an example of the Shelton's Run tot lot. She said that they had two 230 kV lines buried, generating 460 kilowatts at their feet. She said that there were also 100 kV and 230 kV lines above ground, totaling 1,190 kV. She said that no one should be near that, and they told Shelton's Run to move their tot lot. She said that however, at their meeting with Dominion, they showed a photo of the tot lot and playground equipment still there. She said that she asked Dominion how it was legal for them to do that, especially when they previously stated the tot lot should be moved. She said that they had three employees tell her that it was okay and that this was what it was going to look like, and that kids were safe to be underneath the lines.

2. Kristin Maxson, Falmouth District, said that the long-term land purchase history for this subject parcel was not publicly available. She said that land had been sliced up with the building of Centreport Parkway. She said that related to this, on June 27, 2024, two sums of \$41 million and another \$21 million. She said that the \$41 million tax map ID seemed to disappear from public view, likely amended to the golden rule. She said that the \$21 million likely went to another data center application. She said that the public could only guess,

because there was not much data there. She said that documents in the long-range external sharing did not reference the VA41 documents prior to March 11, 2026.

Ms. Maxson said that the application remained as of December 2025. She said that there were two copies of R26-156 in their agenda. She asked why this was needed and how many votes were necessary today. She said that the Vantage item for April 22, 2026 on agenda page 90, Vantage completed information for project and primary context form, including a project example description. She said that the conditional use permit was for a commercial tree stump grinding and mulch sales operation at the east side of Warrenton Road with 74.49 acres. She asked if this had anything to do with the Vantage Data Center or the substation. She said that this was an oddity. She said that sensitive information to a landowner included on tax maps like John Doe being used by VDOT in the past was questionable to the public as one code or another. She said that in today's agenda, pages 41 and 57 with Attachments 1-13, there was no Attachment 9. She said that also, transportation alignment was mislabeled as an attachment in the agenda. She said that Vantage VA4, also known as Melrod, Ordinance 25-29, was the project that had no name during the grandfathering hearing in 2024.

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

Mr. English motioned, seconded by Ms. Evans, to approve proposed Resolution R26-156.

Ms. Vanuch asked the applicant if the H-frames included in their presentation were part of the substation.

Ms. Williams said that yes, they were part of the substation.

Ms. Vanuch asked if the substation were to be denied, the H-frames would not be there.

Ms. Williams said yes.

Ms. Vanuch said that staff mentioned in their presentation that this substation was being built for future support of additional data centers in the area.

Ms. Williams said that she believed that was referring to the data centers currently being built at this location.

Ms. Wolfson said that yes, she was referring to Vantage Data Center, which was adjacent to this property.

Ms. Vanuch asked if this substation was not contributing to additional data center growth in the area.

Ms. Wolfson said that it would contribute directly to Vantage.

Ms. Vanuch asked if additional data centers could utilize this substation.

Ms. Williams said that the three Vantage data centers adjacent to it, which had a site plan approved and were under construction, would utilize the substation. She said that the substation did not have capacity for future connections.

Ms. Vanuch asked staff how many sites around this parcel were zoned for by-right data center development.

Ms. Wolfson said that there were several M-1 zonings, but she was unsure of any M-2 zonings in the area.

Dr. Yeung asked if the substation would only be held to the general Stafford County Noise Ordinance and would not be subject to data center noise regulations.

Ms. Wolfson said that yes, the data center ordinance was specific to data centers and did not apply to substations. She said that the substation must be compliant with the current Zoning Ordinance and Noise Ordinance.

Mr. Diggs called the vote on the motion to approve proposed Resolution R26-156.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Allen, Diggs, English, Evans, Guy, Yeung

No: (1) Vanuch

ITEM 4. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER A PROPOSED ZONING RECLASSIFICATION WITH PROFFERS, FROM THE B-2, URBAN COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT TO THE B-1, CONVENIENCE COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT ON TAX MAP PARCEL NOS. 29-60C, 20-60D, 29-50E, 29-60F, 29-60G (PORTION), AND 29-ROW (PROJECT KNOWN AS BUC-EE'S OF STAFFORD); PROPOSED ORDINANCE O26-17 (APPROVAL); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-130 (DENIAL)

Mr. Diggs said that Agenda Items 4, 5, and 6 were all related to this proposed development, and the Board would be taking separate votes on each. He said that however, there would be a single staff presentation and one public hearing.

Mike Zuraf, Director of Planning and Zoning, said that he would be providing the staff presentation on these three items. He said that there were three requests for the Board's consideration. He said that the first was a reclassification to rezone 38 acres from B-2 Urban Commercial to B-1 Convenience Commercial zoning. He said that the second was a conditional use permit for vehicle fuel sales, high-intensity commercial retail, and a comprehensive sign plan. He said that the third was a vacation of dedicated public right-of-way within the limits of this project, which would allow for the development of a Buc-ee's travel center.

Mr. Zuraf said that the subject parcels and parcels were located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Courthouse Road and Austin Ridge Drive, off of Exit 140. He said that the proposal consisted of multiple parcels, including a portion of right-of-way that was the former alignment of Austin Ridge Drive. He said that the current B-2 zoning was shaded in pink on the

provided zoning map. He said that surrounding zoning districts included B-2 to the north, south, and east, and PD-2 Planned Development to zoning to the west, where Embrey Mill was located.

Mr. Zuraf said that the B-2 zoning was part of three different zoning actions from 2003, 2015, and 2020. He said that there were three different sets of proffers that applied to this collection of properties. He said that approval of this rezoning would replace those proffers with one single set of proffers in this specific area. He said that the site was currently undeveloped, with a mix of trees and underbrush. He said that it had previously been rough graded and included several stormwater basins. He said that the topography was gradual across the site, sloping downward from west to east.

Mr. Zuraf said that there was a drainage channel with wetlands that bisected the site in the vicinity of Sunflower Drive. He said that the surrounding area included single-family residential and undeveloped areas to the north, undeveloped planned commercial projects to the east and south, Embrey Mill commercial uses to the west, and to the northwest were age-restricted townhome units that were previously approved. He said that he had provided street views of the property from Austin Ridge Drive.

Mr. Zuraf said that the general development plan depicted site layout of the proposed travel center, which consisted of a single-story building, 74,000 square feet in size, located in the center of the site. He said that the building would include 120 fuel pumps on the west side of the site, parallel with Austin Ridge Drive. He said that there were five access points proposed, including one via a direct separated access ramp and lane off of southbound Interstate 95, two direct access points off of Austin Ridge Drive, and two access points off of a newly constructed public road on the north end of the site.

Mr. Zuraf said that parking areas were proposed on the north and south side of the proposed building, including dedicated bus and recreational vehicle (RV) spaces on the north end of the site. He said that the existing shared use trail along Courthouse Road would be reconstructed with the road improvements proposed to maintain that trail connection. He said that sidewalks would also be constructed along Austin Ridge Drive and into and through the site. He said that standard buffers and parking lot landscaping that must conform to zoning standards would be included. He said that these proffers also included requirements for additional evergreen screening along the north side of the property.

Mr. Zuraf said that the applicant had provided several proffers that outlined the requirements for the site's development, including buildings and signage, in accordance with the general development plan, building elevations, and signage plan. He said that it required the additional evergreen screening, as well as access and modifications that may be necessary under future approvals. He said that the project was contingent on receiving other transportation approvals, and the applicant must provide a construction mitigation plan.

Mr. Zuraf said that proffers also included commitments to several transportation improvements, such as lane improvements and intersection controls along Austin Ridge Drive, including a third dedicated left turn lane, the southbound Exit 140 would include a separated median and slip lanes for ingress to the site, and westbound Courthouse Road would receive an additional lane improvement through the intersection with Austin Ridge Drive. He said that there would also be

widening of the I-95 northbound ramp and constructing a new road to provide access into and out of the proposed project. He said that the applicant was committing to other potential transportation improvements regarding a separate traffic study, as well as vacating the right-of-way that bisects the site.

Mr. Zuraf said that since the Planning Commission hearing, the applicant had submitted some updated proffers. He said that they committed to including signage to prohibit tractor trailer parking on the site, requiring sight lighting for the canopies to follow Dark Sky Compliance standards, including specific foot candle standards for lower lighting levels. He said that it also established a process for addressing any land condemnation requirements for additional road improvements, which would be carried out at the applicant's expense.

Mr. Zuraf said that staff analysis pointed to several considerations with this zoning change, including the applicant's request to rezone the property to B-1, which was due to the high-intensity commercial retail use of the retail store component. He said that this use was only permitted in the B-1 zone with a conditional use permit and was not permitted in the B-2 zoning district. He said that regarding noise, the use would generate similar noise as other similar commercial uses, mainly from vehicle traffic. He said that the closest existing and planned residential uses were 420 feet and 200 feet to the north and northwest, respectively.

Mr. Zuraf said that regarding lighting, fuel canopy lighting was typically brighter than regular parking lot lighting, and the larger than normal fuel canopies may generate greater light impacts. He said that to mitigate these impacts, the applicant had provided a double row of evergreen trees along the north side of the site, and had also added the proffer to commit to Dark Skies Compliance for the canopy. He said that regarding transportation, he would like to review the studies and approvals required for this project.

Mr. Zuraf said that as was often the case with rezonings, Buc-ee's would need to conduct a traffic impact analysis (TIA) to determine the necessary transportation improvements for the proposed development. He said that this typically involved meetings with VDOT and County staff prior to submitting the application to identify the scope of the study. He said that the traffic study was complete and had undergone six revisions throughout the process.

Mr. Zuraf said that Buc-ee's would also be required to develop a signal justification report (SJR) for any new traffic signals proposed for the development. He said that it was customary for this report to be completed after project approval, closer to the time of construction and near completion. He said that with this project and the proposed modifications to the Exit 140 interchange, an operational and safety analysis report (OSAR) would be required, which involved federal highway administration and VDOT review and approval.

Mr. Zuraf said that according to the proffers, Buc-ee's would be responsible for providing mitigation measures identified by the OSAR. He said that the OSAR framework was being finalized, and the report would be developed if the project was approved. He said that a limited access control change would need to be approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). He said that the stretch of Courthouse Road from the exit to Austin Ridge Drive was considered limited access, meaning site entrances were not permitted, and any changes along this

section of road required special approval from the Commonwealth Transportation Board, which would be requested at a later date.

Mr. Zuraf said that reviewing the traffic impact analysis and background details, the TIA examined the impact on several surrounding signalized and unsignalized intersections and proposed new intersections along Courthouse Road and Austin Ridge Drive. He said that two evaluation scenarios were used in the traffic study: Scenario A, which isolated Buc-ee's proposed impact without considering background traffic, and Scenario B, which included background traffic generated by the planned developments in the area. He said that County and VDOT recommended Scenario B as the appropriate option to analyze mitigation needs.

Mr. Zuraf would also like to note that tonight, they had two projects before the Board that were located across the street from each other, both being considered for rezoning. He said that a standard traffic study assumption was to account for all approved projects as background growth. He said that approved projects referred to those with zoning approval. Since these two projects were not approved, each one did not fully account for the other project in the background of the analysis.

Mr. Zuraf said that the estimated traffic generation was identified in the lower left section of the provided slide, based on vehicle trips counted at the six busiest Buc-ee's sites. He said that in comparison to the 20,940 trips per day, the by-right B-2 commercial development that could happen on the site was estimated to generate roughly 8,278 trips per day. He said that this would correspond to the highest intensity of by-right use on the site, such as a shopping plaza with retail and restaurants without drive thru's. He said that the middle and right tables showed how traffic had grown in this location over the last few years and how much would be added with Buc-ee's.

Mr. Zuraf said that the recent increase could be attributed to the development at the Embrey Mill site and Burns Corner commercial projects. He said that all this growth was accounted for in the traffic study in the background. He said that examining the results of the traffic study, he would like to point out the County's Comprehensive Plan Policy 7.7.7, which recommended that development projects maintain Level of Service (LOS) C for impacted intersections and road segments. If achieving LOS C was not practical given existing transportation deficiencies, improvements should be designed to not further degrade the level of service. He said that this was tested by identifying the level of delay.

Mr. Zuraf said that the provided slide highlighted the intersections that would experience level of service impacts below Level of Service C or experience increased delays if the project were to proceed. He said that to further explain, the first intersection on the left column, the Courthouse Road eastbound-westbound intersection, was the western crossover intersection in the Divergent Diamond intersection. He said that in the morning peak hour of 2032, the intersection without Buc-ee's would have a delay of 28.3 seconds, while with Buc-ee's, the delay would increase to 46.7 seconds, resulting in a Level of Service reduction from C to D.

Mr. Zuraf said that they had also provided the intersection averages. He said that the traffic study analyzed different movements through the intersection, providing scoring for through lanes, left turn lanes, right turn movements, and identifying level of service and delay for each movement. He said that this resulted in an average delay, which may vary depending on the specific

movement. He said that for example, intersection number four, Courthouse Road to Austin Ridge Drive, showed the highest average increase in delay.

Mr. Zuraf said that upon examining this intersection, the weekend peak hour conditions anticipated a 24-second overall delay. He said that the staff report identified the specific transportation movements that would experience delays contributing to this average. He said that the study also estimated vehicle queuing or stacking resulting from these delays, and the report showed that on the southbound Austin Ridge Drive during the weekend, a queue length of 1,900 feet in the worst-case scenario was anticipated.

Mr. Zuraf said that this was illustrated in the image with red shading and extended along the frontage of the site. He said that while the project with improvements would reduce overall delays in the morning and afternoon peak hours, it would still create increased queuing lengths. He said that in summary, at this stage, the traffic study found that the project with improvements would not fully mitigate impacts consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. He said that the applicant had included a position paper to address these findings and concerns, which was included in the Board package.

Mr. Zuraf said that the paper pointed out that when discounting by-right vehicle trips, the project would not create negative impacts, but the applicant could elaborate further. He said that regarding the OSAR, it was still being developed and would take time to complete. He said that the report would identify transportation needs at the exit 140 interchange through the year 2048 and evaluate potential solutions to address those needs caused by the proposed development. He said the report would also identify if additional transportation mitigation would be needed outside of the Buc-ee's development.

Mr. Zuraf said that the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map (FLUM) identified the site as being in the Courthouse Targeted Development Area. He said that the land use concept within this targeted development area designated the property for commercial, retail, and office uses. He said that this designation supported standalone commercial development, specifically retail and office uses. He said that staff had found that the proposed use was generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's land use recommendations, as well as recommendations for development within targeted development areas.

Mr. Zuraf said that Policy 2.1.3 of the Comprehensive Plan listed a series of general characteristics that development proposals should strive to incorporate. He said that a few of the points within this policy were relevant to this project, including maintaining or improving quality of life, mitigating degraded levels of service, and minimizing land use conflicts. He said that the proposed building designs were included and the applicant had proffered to follow. He said that the neighborhood design standards element of the Comprehensive Plan included architectural guidelines.

Mr. Zuraf said that the provided elevations were providing many of the recommended design features in the Comprehensive Plan guidelines. He said that a conditional use permit was required for the fuel sales and high-intensity commercial retail uses, as they may generate greater impacts on surrounding properties or roadway networks. He said that the traffic and light impacts

associated with these uses had been discussed, and the next few slides would focus on the comprehensive sign plan aspect of the conditional use permit.

Mr. Zuraf said that the comprehensive sign plan outlined the proposed locations and dimensions of signage on a property, specifically freestanding signs, wall signs, and fuel canopy signs. In this case, this image showed the location of these sign elements across the site. He said that the Zoning Ordinance allowed for a comprehensive sign plan to establish sign details for a project, and some elements of the plan included signage that exceeded the standards in the Zoning Ordinance, which was permitted through approval of a conditional use permit.

Mr. Zuraf said that three wall signs were proposed on the retail store on the southwest and north facades of the building. He said that each sign would be 285 square feet in area and would be similar to the freestanding sign with the business name and logo. He said that for comparison, the commercial signage standards in the Zoning Ordinance permitted individual wall signs up to 200 square feet each. He said that this represented an 85 square foot increase for each of these signs. He said that the freestanding monument sign was proposed in the southeast corner of the site adjacent to Interstate 95 near Courthouse Road.

Mr. Zuraf said that during the Planning Commission review, the proposed height had been reduced from 60 feet to 45 feet. He said that the Zoning Ordinance limited business signs to 30 feet in height, and the signage area was approximately 486 square feet. He said that the applicant had included two line-of-sight exhibits to illustrate the potential view of the monument sign from the closest homes in Austin Ridge and the approved undeveloped Embrey Mill senior townhomes. He said that the line of sight exhibits identified the originally proposed 60-foot high monument sign, which had now been reduced to 45 feet.

Mr. Zuraf said that this exhibit showed that the sign may be visible between the store and fuel pumps from homes in Austin Ridge; however, from that viewpoint, the sign would not appear any taller than the proposed store itself. He said that another exhibit showed that the sign would be blocked from view from Embrey Mill by the proposed fuel canopies as a result of the viewshed exhibits. He said that the proposed approval Resolution R26-131 included a series of conditions that required the property to be developed in conformity with the general development plan, including the location of access points, limiting the number of fuel positions, and the size of the store, as shown, and required buildings to be in conformity with the provided renderings.

Mr. Zuraf said that the conditions also ensured clear travel ways for emergency access and required signage consistent with the Ordinance standards, with the exception of the 45-foot monument sign height and increased wall sign dimensions, as they had reviewed. He said that the plat vacation item would be to approve the vacation of a right-of-way for the former alignment of Austin Ridge Drive. He said that this would vacate the unused right-of-way and revert ownership to the adjacent property owners for private use. He said that the original alignment of Austin Ridge Drive was platted in 2008, and it was located in the area highlighted in red on the plat.

Mr. Zuraf said that since then, with the reconstruction of I-95 and Courthouse Road improvements, the realignment of Austin Ridge Drive to the west, where it intersected with

Courthouse Road today, resulted in a 1.1-acre unused portion of the original right-of-way. He said that the right-of-way bisected the southwest corner of the proposed project site. He said that vacation of the right-of-way would utilize underutilized right-of-way and avoid fragmented parcels that may be difficult to develop.

Mr. Zuraf said that several positive aspects of the applications were noted. He said that the uses were consistent with the land use recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan, consistent with the commercial development pattern in the surrounding area. He said that the building architecture was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan guidelines. He said that pedestrian improvements would help address the needs identified in the Comprehensive Plan. He said that proffers would ensure the development was consistent with what was envisioned in the application. He said that the proposed wall signs and canopy signs would be consistent with the Neighborhood Development Standards Plan. He said that the proposed evergreen screening would help minimize impacts on adjacent properties.

Mr. Zuraf said that staff also identified several negative aspects. He said that although several transportation improvements were being offered to mitigate impacts, the traffic study identified some significant impacts that were not mitigated in conformity with the County's Comprehensive Plan guidelines. He said that staff questioned how the project would comply with the Comprehensive Plan guideline encouraging development, maintaining or improving quality of life for all residents, and minimizing land use conflicts. He said that staff noted that the applicant had responded to this point by committing to Dark Skies compliant fuel canopy lighting, thus reducing maximum lighting levels.

Mr. Zuraf said that in summary, for the zoning reclassification, staff recommended the Board consider the cited transportation impacts, compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, and lighting impacts cited. He said that for the conditional use permit, if the Board were to approve the application, it should be subject to approval of the zoning reclassification. He said staff had recommended denial of the rezoning and the CUP. He said that the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of both on the 4-3 vote. He said that as noted, the applicant had submitted new proffers and the position paper to attempt to address the negative aspects noted.

Mr. Zuraf said that for the plat vacation, the Board should approve the item contingent on approval of the concurrent reclassification and conditional use permit. He said that the plat vacation was not an item required to go through Planning Commission review.

Mr. Diggs asked if the applicant had a presentation.

Karen Cohen, Partner with Gentry Locke Attorneys, said that her firm served as the land use counsel for the applicant. She said that they had their team with them tonight, including traffic engineers from Kimley-Horn, Scott Ratcliff, Buc-ee's Director of Engineering, Kevin Oshinskie from MuniCap to discuss the fiscal impact analysis. She said that as Mr. Zuraf stated, the proposed use of a travel center was consistent with other similar uses in the area and was appropriate given its proximity to Interstate 95, as stated in the staff report. She said that she believed there was no question that the use of a travel center near the interstate in an area planned in the Comprehensive Plan for commercial use and zoned for business commercial was

appropriate, but there may be questions about the impacts, particularly traffic, and they would address that.

Ms. Cohen said that to review, what was already approved at this site was a retail commercial development consisting of seven buildings, 87,457 square feet of retail, and four drive-through's. She said that this was without the traffic mitigation proposed for the Buc-ee's project. She said that the buildings currently approved were allowed to be up to 65 feet in height, whereas the proposed travel center was a single-user generalized development plan with a retail component of 74,000 square feet. She said that for context, the larger buildings in the approved development were slightly smaller than the Buc-ee's buildings. She said that when comparing what was already approved versus what was proposed, one may ask why they had to request approval for this development.

Ms. Cohen said that the reason they must ask for approval was because the Zoning Ordinance required a conditional use permit for the vehicle fuel sales that would be part of the Buc-ee's development. Additionally, the Zoning Ordinance defined high-intensity commercial retail as having more than 100 average daily trips per thousand feet of gross floor area, and their development fell into this category. She said that even though B-2 was the higher intensity commercial zone, it appeared that the high intensity was allowed in B-1, but the low and medium intensities were included in B-2.

Ms. Cohen said that regardless, they required the conditional use permit for vehicle fuel sales and the comprehensive sign package. She said that in that regard, they were agnostic to the zoning issue.

She said that she would like to emphasize that this was a concurrent request, and they were treating the three items as one project. She said that the zoning aspect was tied to the proffered conditions. She said that they were also proffering the GDP for the travel center and the conditional use permit for the vehicle fuel, sign, and commercial retail component.

Ms. Cohen said that she had also included a rendering of the project to highlight the amount of green space, buffering and trees, and open space on the site. She said that the open space exceeded the requirements for either B-1 or B-2. She said that additionally, they had proffered a row of evergreens to screen the homes to the north. She said that looking at the actual proffer and a zoomed-in part of the GDP, and looking to the north, they had proffered evergreen screening, which included a 10-acre parcel not part of their project. She would also point out that they had reduced the sign height from 60 feet to 45 feet, which was barely higher than the store itself.

Ms. Cohen said that this was not a prominent sign in a busy shopping center, but rather a discreet installation near the interstate. She said that drivers on the interstate would see it, but otherwise there would be no visual impact. She said that additionally, there were new proffers. She said that the Planning Commission recommended approval of the project, but they did want the applicant to address some lingering concerns, including these. She said that they had included a new proffer that Buc-ee's would post signage prohibiting tractor-trailer parking on site; this was something they already did, but the signage would be present.

Ms. Cohen said that the Dark Sky compliance had already been addressed, but their team could answer any questions from the Board. She said that regarding transportation improvements, they would be discussed in detail, as she believed it was crucial for everyone to understand the impact this project would have on the road network. She said that the provided picture illustrated the new roads that Buc-ee's would be constructing and paying for, marked in darker gray. She said that she would also like to address the OSAR issue. She said that because this project involved a change to an access point from an interchange, it required federal approvals.

Ms. Cohen said that the OSAR was part of the Code of Federal Regulations with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and was a requirement for any project that modifies the interstate. She said that the TIA was mandated by the State Code, and they worked with County Transportation and VDOT to review it, typically for a variety of developments. She said that the OSAR was used to demonstrate that the proposed project would have no significant adverse impact on operations and safety. She said that it was required that prior to proceeding with a detailed analysis report for an OSAR, the person requesting it must validate two things first: that VDOT supports the request and that the local government, the municipal government, supports the request.

Ms. Cohen said that this made sense, as the federal government would not invest significant resources into an OSAR analysis for a land use that was not permitted. She said that she simply wanted to clarify that they cannot get to the OSAR until they get the land use approval. She said that one of the benefits of this project was that the applicant had offered to do whatever mitigation was required by the OSAR report. She recalled that one of the Commissioners was concerned because she had heard about another process at the federal level and wondered if this meant that the County was abdicating its authority or ability to review things.

Ms. Cohen said that she wanted to again clarify that the final site plan was contingent on the project having obtained all required transportation approvals, as defined in the proffers. She said that every proffer stated that the applicant would construct the improvements set forth in the proffer in accordance with the recommendations from the OSAR approved by VDOT and the County. She said that the County's approval was specified in every condition, so there was no abdication of County authority. She said that it was fortunate that a project like this was getting extra scrutiny due to its impact on the interstate.

Ms. Cohen said that the new Proffer 9 was requested by the County Transportation staff and was vetted and approved with the County Attorney. She said that it simply stated that if the OSAR identified transportation improvements attributable to the applicant's impacts, and if construction of those improvements would require getting additional off-site right away or easements, this proffer ensured that it would be paid for by Buc-ee's. She said that even if the County needed to exercise its eminent domain power, all that was put into the proffer was vetted by the County Attorney, and Buc-ee's would pay for it.

Ms. Cohen said that she would like to highlight a few key points from the traffic position paper received from Kimley-Horn. She said that the key point was that this was a lingering issue where staff's interpretation may differ from theirs. She said that however, the engineers' analysis demonstrated that there was no projected degradation in the overall level of service for the one intersection of concern, Austin Ridge Drive and Courthouse Road. She said that this was

consistent with the non-degradation policy outlined in the plan. She said that staff was referring to a single data point showing a 24-second increase in delay compared to the no-build situation, which was unrealistic.

Ms. Cohen said that a more detailed analysis by Kimley-Horn found that the delay would be at most eight seconds compared to the no-build situation, and seven-tenths of a second differential compared to the approved commercial development, which was negligible. She said that regardless, no degradation in level of service was expected. She said that the Kimley-Horn paper also noted that a local-serving high-traffic commercial retail development would generate local traffic and impact neighborhood streets, whereas the proposed travel center improvements were designed to maximize throughput for the traffic patterns associated with this use, which was starkly different from shopping center traffic.

Ms. Cohen said that they also received excellent feedback from the citizens of Stafford, which led to the plan including restriction of exiting traffic to only exit toward the interstate. She said that the report acknowledged that there was data showing existing traffic conditions, but emphasized the importance of viewing this data holistically and considering the quality of assumptions used, as well as positive findings that showed effective mitigation and overall improvement.

Ms. Cohen said that they thought they had received sufficient information from Mr. Zuraf regarding the proposed vacation of the right-of-way. She said that the Ordinance would be required to vacate the right-of-way had been vetted by the County Attorney, and this was contingent on the approval of the project. She said that the provided rendering showed the proposed Buc-ee's, versus what was what was already approved. She said that she would like to emphasize one important aspect of the legal analysis of a land use case. She said that some people may prefer a travel center, while others may prefer a busier shopping center with drive-through's.

Ms. Cohen said that however, from a legal perspective, it was essential to recognize that the Board of Supervisors' decision on the land use could not be based on personal preferences; it must be based on the law. She said that every land use case presented a tension between private property rights and the rights of neighbors. She said that in this case, if the applicant had complied with the Ordinance and taken sufficient steps to mitigate concerns, the applicant was permitted to develop their property. She said that the staff report highlighted more positives than negatives, and the lighting issue had been resolved.

Ms. Cohen said that the Kimley-Horn report also showed that there was no degradation in the level of service. She said that Buc-ee's was experienced in managing traffic and would not have a successful business if it did not. She said that she would like to acknowledge the local support for this project, which included positive comments from residents. She said that while personal opinions may vary, people had acknowledged this development would bring in tax revenue and jobs. She said that a benefit of this single user was that the County knew exactly what was being developed here and what to expect in terms of improvements.

Ms. Cohen said that the last comment mentioned the idea of a Buc-ee's versus alternative options, but they were concerned about Buc-ee's receiving tax breaks and what the County and

state would pay for. She said that the answer to that was the County and state were paying for nothing. She said that the comment also stated that if Buc-ee's was willing to pay for road construction, they were fully supportive of the project. She said that in response to that, she could confirm that Buc-ee's was willing to pay for all of the construction of all improvements. She said that she believed this warranted the Board's approval of the project.

Scott Ratcliff, Director of Engineering for Buc-ee's, stated that he would address a few points regarding transportation and clarify some misunderstandings. He said that the TIA addressed various scenarios, including the concept of "stacking" peak trips. He said that in this context, they combined the peak travel times for their current commuter traffic with the peak traveler for the Buc-ee's facilities. He said that he had provided a chart which visually represented the offset between these peak times, highlighting the differential between projected and actual traffic.

Mr. Ratcliff said that additionally, it was requested of them to include the in-and-out traffic equivalent in the TIA, but Buc-ee's was unique in that their residence time was longer than other fueling stations, so their in-traffic did not match their exit traffic. He said that this discrepancy was included in the TIA, leading to a false peak hour trip generation. He said that he would like to provide this information to illustrate the difference between commuter peak and actual Buc-ee's peak. He said that regarding the transportation as it related to the current zoning for this particular tract versus the traffic system improvements proposed by Buc-ee's, he had provided a comparison of the impacts of the by-right development versus what Buc-ee's would result in.

Mr. Ratcliff said that the by-right development generated far more delays, and on Sundays the difference was negligible. He said that this illustrated how Buc-ee's proposed traffic improvements, including the westbound lane at the Austin Ridge and Courthouse intersection, would enhance the overall system for all community members, not just Buc-ee's customers. He said that specifically, this improvement would increase the maximum available queuing for all transportation vehicles, reduce waiting times for those leaving Austin Ridge and heading towards the interstate, and provide additional storage for all travelers in all hours, not just peak hours. Furthermore, the deceleration lane or right turn lane would allow those utilizing the slip lane to go north on Austin Ridge.

Mr. Ratcliff said that residents would no longer have to wait behind people entering Buc-ee's, as they would be pulled out of the traffic stream, providing a benefit to the residents and anyone else using the development improvements to the north. He said that regarding the Proffer 7A4, improving pedestrian safety was a key aspect of the proposed Buc-ee's development, which included additional signage, control mechanisms, and safety measures for pedestrians. This complemented the proposed intersection improvements outlined in Proffer 7B, which would be determined later in the process but were committed to providing necessary transportation improvements.

Mr. Ratcliff said that similarly, the intersection at Israel Rodriguez would receive improvements for both pedestrian and vehicular movements. He said that the proposed slip lane would provide a designated divided road, reducing weaving movements for those heading southbound on the interstate to northbound Austin Ridge, and allowing for easier transportation through the intersection without entering the stream of traffic. He said that they would also provide

additional lanes for through movements, as well as improved capacity for those heading back from the interstate to their homes to the west.

Mr. Ratcliff said that the proposed improvements would include additional lanes for peak hours, as well as at all times during intersection operation. Additionally, the development would provide additional storage and capacity for those traveling in the opposite direction, relieving existing traffic congestion and assisting in existing queues. He said that the proposed pedestrian improvements along Courthouse, including a bike plaza with service stations, would also be provided, offering amenities for the general public. He said that finally, a new street, Israel Rodriguez, would be provided to enable development to the north and east, facilitating necessary transportation improvements and meeting the community's needs.

RECESS

The Board recessed at 8:22 p.m. and reconvened at 8:32 p.m.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing. He asked if any members of the public wished to speak to this item.

1. Ignacio Esteban, Garrisonville District, shared a video. [video plays 2:24 - 2:28]
2. Alexander Saavedra, Garrisonville District, said that he lived in Embrey Mills and previously resided on Valdosa Drive for nearly 10 years. He asked the Board to please not approve this project. He said that he moved from Valdosa Drive in 2015 due to frequent difficulties in leaving their home due to traffic congestion on Route 1 and Bells Hill Road. He said that this project would only exacerbate traffic issues on Austin Ridge and Courthouse Road. He said that furthermore, when I-95 was congested, traffic from Buc-ee's would bleed into Route 610, causing problems on Mine Road and through neighborhoods. He said that he had no issues with Buc-ee's, as he frequently visited the Florence location for work.

Mr. Saavedra said that during a recent spring break, his family visited the Rockingham location while vacationing at Massanutten Resort. He said that he was speaking from experience. He said that the first time he visited the Florence Buc-ee's was about three summers ago, and it took them almost an hour to park from the exit and another 45 minutes to leave and get back on the road. He said that neither of these locations were in high-traffic areas or residential backyards. He said that this Stafford location was not suitable for a project that is not a gas station, but a tourist destination attraction. He said that people may argue that this would not bring traffic, but it seemed unlikely that they could add 120 gas pumps at a place similar to a Walmart without attracting traffic.

Mr. Saavedra said that if it did not attract traffic, they should not need 120 pumps nor shopping carts. He said that on social media sites like Trip Advisor, Reddit, and major complaint forums, people expressed frustration with parking and exiting Buc-ee's. He said that the minimal revenue gain from Buc-ee's was not worth the traffic congestion it would bring. He said that Buc-ee's was intended for travelers, not Stafford residents. He said that they cannot predict the traffic here. He said that people were late to tonight's meeting with the traffic they already experienced. He said that this project did not move the needle as they were still spending their money outside the County.

Mr. Saavedra said that he hoped the Board would make a decision that prioritized the well-being of Stafford residents, rather than catering to out-of-towners. He said that he knew Buc-ee's was sending care packages to people who showed up today, and it worried him to think about what they were doing behind closed doors to sway public opinion. He said that he also noticed that non-Stafford residents are being encouraged to comment their support on the project, despite having no impact on their lives. He said that for Stafford residents speaking negatively about Embrey Mill residents, he would ask that they consider their contributions to infrastructure here, including their hefty community development fees.

Mr. Saavedra said that he did not understand the bashing of neighborhood residents' concerns when a project welcomed outsiders to not spend any money outside of Buc-ee's. He said that today, someone made a social media post that stated they would rather see the beaver than 100 new homes. He said that he was also interested in Supervisor Vanuch's viewpoint on this project, considering that during her time on the Planning Commission, she attempted to impact a project using by-right land by changing an ordinance, because she did not want it near her home. He said that Stafford was ultimately sued, resulting in nearly \$1 million in legal fees and settlement, according to the Potomac Local News.

Mr. Saavedra said that this land was not suitable for a high travel center and fuel sales. He said that she previously expressed opposition to such a development in her own front yard. He said that similarly, they do not want this type of development in their own backyards. He said that he would like to request that the Board provide them with information on the proposed shopping center and how the revenue generated from that shopping center related to the revenue they receive from the gas station, which was then sent to the state.

3. Janice Withrow, Hartwood District, said that she had lived in Stafford County since 1989. She said that I-95 was one of the busiest travel corridors in America, with millions of people traveling this highway every year between New York and Florida for vacations, military moves, work travel, college visits, and family trips. She said that Stafford sits directly in the middle of that corridor. She said that along much of I-95, travelers could find modern travel centers designed for families and everyday travelers. She said that here in Virginia, there was a noticeable gap, and the larger stops closest to Stafford were primary traditional truck stops focused on commercial trucking operations.

Ms. Withrow said that there was a major difference between a truck stop and a family-focused travel center. She said that truck stops were designed around freight traffic, diesel fueling, truck parking, and commercial operations. She said that Buc-ee's was designed for families, tourists, family members, seniors, and everyday travelers looking for a clean, safe, well-lit place to stop. She said that when parents were traveling late at night with children, they were not simply looking for gas; they were looking for safety. She said that they were looking for clean restrooms, reliable food, bright lighting, and a place where they feel comfortable.

Ms. Withrow said that in addition, Buc-ee's estimated that combined sales and fuel tax revenue could generate approximately over \$3.5 million per year for Stafford County. She said that at a time when the County recently raised the tax rate by \$0.04, this level of revenue could help reduce future tax increases and provide long-term relief for property taxpayers. Instead of relying solely on residents to carry the burden of rising costs, this project will allow

visitors passing through Stafford County to contribute directly to our local tax base. She said that there had been concerns raised by nearby neighborhoods about traffic impacts.

Ms. Withrow said that while traffic management was important, this area sits directly on I-95, and over time Stafford and VDOT had planned and invested in this corridor precisely because it was a major interstate gateway. She said that growth here was not unexpected and it was part of the long-term function of this interchange. She said that denying a project like Buc-ee's would also be inconsistent with the pattern of commercial development already approved in this corridor, which has included gas stations, restaurants, and other highway-oriented businesses over time.

Ms. Withrow said that Stafford had an opportunity to provide a service that was currently missing along one of the busiest highways in America. She said that beyond the revenue and jobs, this project benefited Virginians and millions of people traveling throughout our state every year. She said that it made Virginia safer and more convenient for travelers and families. She said that she believed Buc-ee's would be a positive addition to Stafford County, and she respectfully asked the Board for their support of the project.

4. Judith May, Rock Hill District, said that she had lived in Stafford since 1980, when she purchased her first home at the age of 21. She said that over the past 46 years, she had owned three homes in the Rock Hill District. She said that when she moved here, she truly made Stafford her home. She said that her company, J&J Upholstery and Drapery, was also located in the Rock Hill District since 1993. She said that she had witnessed Stafford's growth from a small community to a part of northern Virginia.

Ms. May said that their taxes continued to rise to cover the cost of the large influx of people moving here, necessitating the construction of new infrastructure and schools. She said that according to the income stated at the Planning meeting, Stafford could expect to receive \$1.9 million in gas tax and another \$1.9 million annually in general sales and food tax. She said that this revenue would be used to fund essential services such as schools, Fire and Rescue, Sheriff's Offices, and roads. She said that a significant portion of this tax money would come from travelers who were stuck on I-95.

Ms. May said that Buc-ee's provided them with a place to rest, get gas, use clean restrooms, and spend their money in Stafford County, generating much-needed tax income that would stay in Stafford. She said that the unskilled labor jobs offered by Buc-ee's would also benefit young adults or older individuals who wanted to work without traveling. She said that the pay started at \$18 an hour and increased from there, with medical benefits and retirement matching up to 6%. She said that there were few other jobs in Stafford that paid that well.

Ms. May said that she had posted a reminder about this meeting yesterday. She said that as of 4:35 p.m. this afternoon, there were 286 likes, 61 loves, and three angry faces for Buc-ee's on her social media post. She said that this told her a lot about what Stafford really wanted for this community. She said that as a final note, people loved Buc-ee's so much that they were willing to travel to Buc-ee's at night to shop and ship products to areas without Buc-ee's. She said that it was not just a gas station; it was a shopping destination where travelers could stop, rest, spend money, and sometimes get gas and charge their electric vehicles. She said that

given the traffic issues and Buc-ee's willingness to pay for all the road improvements needed, she respectfully asked that the Board say yes and allow Stafford to be part of the Buc-ee's family.

5. Doreen Almond, Hartwood District, said that she was a 22-year resident of the Hartwood District. She said that in those 22 years, she has witnessed significant growth in this County, both good and not so good. She said that she had also seen numerous businesses come and go. She said that Buc-ee's, if approved, was here for the long haul. She said that Buc-ee's was not asking for a single cent in tax breaks, unlike a lot of other businesses that had come to this County. She said that Buc-ee's would bring substantial tax revenue to the County, which they desperately needed, along with road improvements and good-paying jobs, generating additional revenue for other local businesses.

Ms. Almond said that the naysayers, who stated "not in my backyard," were often the same individuals who purchased homes adjacent to commercial properties, and advocated for "doing better for our children." She said that however, there was nowhere in the County that offered \$18 per hour with benefits. She said that the same individuals who expressed concerns about Buc-ee's traffic were those who already allowed hundreds of vehicles to pass through daily, from Courthouse to Route 1 and Route 1. She said that while traffic would be chaotic for the first 30 days after Buc-ee's opened, it would eventually subside, as it did with any new business in the United States. She said that she asked the Board to please vote in favor of Buc-ee's in Stafford. She said that I-95 would be I-95 regardless of whether Buc-ee's came here or not. She said that at least the people on I-95 would have a place to stop, get refreshments, and go to the bathroom.

6. Cindy Simpson, Garrisonville District, said that she lived just a mile from the proposed Buc-ee's site at Exit 140. She said that she had lived in this community for 27 years. She said that she was not here solely as a neighbor, but as part of a group of citizens who had spent years studying this project, attending every public hearing, and conducting the necessary due diligence. She said that she would like to begin by thanking the Supervisors who took the time to speak with her by phone or in person. She said that residents deserved that kind of engagement and she was grateful. She said that she looked forward to meeting with Chairman Diggs in about two weeks.

Ms. Simpson said that regarding this project, the proponents argued that it would bring jobs and revenue, but traffic was precisely why the County Planning staff recommended denial and why VDOT issued 86 comments on the traffic plan. She said that those issues remained unresolved. She said that this interchange cannot safely absorb the approximately 21,000 additional vehicle trips per day, with more than 2,100 during peak hours. She said that on revenue, the numbers being cited did not tell the full story. She said that the state gas tax would go to Richmond, while the wholesale fuel tax collected here in Stafford went directly to the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC), restricted by law to transit and transportation purposes only.

Ms. Simpson said that this revenue cannot fund schools or public safety. She said that the proponents cited \$1.9 million in annual General Fund revenue, which was less than four-tenths of one percent of Stafford County's \$497 million General Fund budget. She said that

not a single dollar of that projection accounted for the road improvements, public safety demands, and infrastructure costs this facility would place on the County for years to come. She said that Exit 140 was not a remote highway interchange; it was the front door to Austin Ridge, Westgate, Embrey Mill, and many other residential communities where thousands of Stafford families have built their lives. She said that those residents had watched Stafford County grant exception after exception to its own Comprehensive Plan. She said that this application was asking them to do it again. She said that the Plan existed for one reason, and she asked the Board to honor it. She said that this was the Board's chance to get it right. She asked the Board to deny this application.

7. Michael Stafira, Garrisonville District, said that he was present to ask the Board to vote no on Buc-ee's rezoning application and conditional use permit. He said that this was not a vote about whether people liked Buc-ee's, but rather about whether Stafford County should approve a project that was legally vague, financially uncertain, and still incomplete. He said that the proffers relied heavily on the phrase "general conformance," which may seem reassuring, but it was weak enforcement language. He said that the renderings and plans shown to the public were not necessarily what became legally binding. He said that if future changes were considered, general consent could often be approved administratively without returning to the Board or notifying the public. He said that this meant that residents were being asked to trust future interpretations instead of enforcement standards. He said that if the Board truly intended to hold Buc-ee's accountable, then the language should require strict conformance or clearly measurable requirements before approval.

Mr. Stafira said that the proffers allowed for modification to major parts of the project, including entrances, parking, stormwater systems, driveways, and building layouts, as long as someone determined the changes were consistent with the original intent. He said that this was not a fixed project; it was approval of a moving target. He said that the most important issue tonight was the unfinished OSAR study for the I-95 and Exit 140 interchange. He said that the Board was being asked to approve this project before the County, VDOT, or the public knew what traffic migrations would actually be required. He said that Buc-ee's had committed only to improvements required of the applicant. He said that if the OSAR later assigned major interchange costs elsewhere, then Stafford taxpayers could be left covering unknown gaps and taking on added debt to pay for those improvements. He said that once the zoning was approved, the County lost all leverage. He said that Stafford County's own professional Planning staff had recommended denial. He said that these were the experts hired to evaluate land use, transportation impact, infrastructure capacity, and zoning compliance. He said that if the Board intended to override the recommendations, then residents deserved a clear public explanation of which concerns had been resolved and how. He said that tonight's decision would have long-term consequences for traffic, infrastructure, and taxpayer liability in Stafford County. He asked the Board to vote no on this request.

8. Farshid Hakimyar, Falmouth District, said that he was CEO of the Coliseum Sport Resort, a business registered in Stafford County. He said that he had two athlete daughters who had been playing volleyball for the past five years. He said that his family has extensively traveled along the East Coast for athletic events. He said that looking back at the macro-economy of their County, they were approximately three-quarters of a billion dollars in debt. He said that

they recently approved the budget with a significant deficit of almost \$40 million. He said that their County undoubtedly needed good businesses that brought value and create jobs.

Mr. Hakimyar said that with a labor force of over 81,000, they were strategically located next to Washington, D.C. in Northern Virginia, which was a \$700 billion economy. He said that the sports industry in Washington, D.C. directly contributed almost \$5 billion to that local economy. He said that Stafford County was roughly four times the size of Washington, D.C. He said that the Commanders were building a large stadium that they projected could generate \$1.2 billion for Washington, D.C. He said that he was not advocating for building multiple large sports facilities that could attract 100,000 people; that would be a misstep.

Mr. Hakimyar said that however, sports were no longer just entertainment; they are an investment. He said that they formed a robust ecosystem that brought health, lifestyle, quality food, and real estate. He said that they had been working on the Coliseum Sport Resort for over three years. He said that it was extremely tough to develop a project of this size. He said that they were estimating a \$350 million investment with a projected revenue of \$25 million for the County directly. He said that the tax revenue would come from event taxes, lodging taxes, meal taxes, and real estate taxes.

Mr. Hakimyar said that they were partnering with businesses from London to Barcelona, Copenhagen to San Francisco. He said that he was inspired by great business models, and particularly the longstanding effect of the Coliseum in Rome. He said that although no one was playing sports there anymore, the name still attracted business and opportunities. He said that as a father, he had a big dream to bring a business model like this to their area, one that would make him and future generations proud.

9. Jeff Eastland, Rock Hill District, said that during a recent town hall at the high school, a gentleman in front of him stood up and stated that Stafford's problems stemmed from the 30 years of approving too many housing subdivisions and drive-in restaurants. He said that he agreed with him, but then the gentleman suggested that the solution was to bring in more businesses, such as Buc-ee's and data centers. He said that as he held his head in frustration, he thought, it seemed they had made a mess of the last 30 years, so now they were going to screw up the next 30 years. He said that he was not naive or ignorant to the County's struggles with revenue and the pressure on schools and resources.

Mr. Eastland said that however, when the County was trying to attract business, it seemed to forget about the 170,000 residents who called this County home. He said that ironically, those irresponsibly approved housing developments had created thriving communities across the County, including those along Courthouse Road, Colonial Forge, and Austin Ridge. He said that these areas featured unique restaurants, athletic opportunities, and a strong sense of community, with diverse neighborhoods and a real sense of belonging. He said that this was what truly mattered, and it was worth more than any financial gain.

Mr. Eastland said that what was being proposed now - heavy industry like data centers and commercial ventures like Buc-ee's - offered no sense of community. He said that these outside, extractive industries exploited the County's resources, land, soil, air, and water, while paying a relatively small price for the harm they caused. He said that they ultimately put the

rest of the residents at risk and harmed the environment. He said that he had sent an email to the Board last week, detailing the environmental, economic, and traffic disaster that this proposal would result in. He said that the footprint of this project would forever alter the face of the County, taking away its heart and soul.

Mr. Eastland said that he had seen this pattern before, having moved to Rock Hill in 1975 to escape the hell of Disneyland in California. He said that a lot of people were moving away from nice places they had poured themselves into, and it was heartbreaking to see the self-inflicted demise of their County. He said that the Board had the power to prevent that from happening here, and he urged them to use it for the good of their community, and not the benefit of corporations.

10. Elena Prokos, Rock Hill District, said that she first moved into Stafford County in 1973. She said that she had always been grateful over the years to have access to Crow's Nest, Stafford Civil War Park, Abel Lake, Curtis Park, and Government Island, where she could hike and paddle. She said that to be honest, she did not understand why citizens would want Buc-ee's as entertainment and a place to eat and shop when they could spend time at these places that were beneficial for both mental and physical health. She said that they all knew the downsides of the business, including a lack of adherence to the Comprehensive Plan in the area of improving quality of life.

Ms. Prokos said that the traffic was another concern, which contributed to more impatient drivers operating vehicles unsafely. She said that environmental impacts and possible decreases in house values were also serious issues. She said that the only positive aspect was revenue. She said that she was not knowledgeable about the debt situation in Stafford, but it was clear that revenue was needed. She said that however, she wondered how far \$1.9 million could go, and what percentage that was of the County's actual debt. She said that approving this project with all its drawbacks and a minimal impact on debt relief, she hoped the Board would vote no. She said that they should focus on spending more time outside in our parks to promote their health and well-being.

Ms. Prokos said that she also wanted to note that at the Planning Commission meeting, she sensed that some members had reservations about this project, but felt it was time to send it to the Board of Supervisors. She said that despite their reservations, they approved it, which was not a complete endorsement.

11. Nancy Rueter, Garrisonville District, said that on May 7, 2024, she had the opportunity to speak to the Board and state her opposition Buc-ee's building at the corner of Courthouse and Austin Ridge Drive for the first time. She said that her opposition had only grown as she learned more about the huge impact on the Stafford community. She said that regarding Item 4, she urged the Board to deny the rezoning from B-1 to B-2. She said that B-2 implied that the community should benefit from the use of this parcel, similar to successful Embrey Mill shops or the Market at Austin Ridge, rather than mainly serving on-and-off travelers, which B-1 would allow.

Ms. Rueter said that regarding Item 5, she strongly advised against the conditional use permit to allow fuel sales. She said that they already had adequate gas stations. She said that the

environmental impact of air pollution and contaminated water runoff would be significant, both now and for years to come. She said that regarding Item 6, she requested that they deny the vacating of the plot of undeveloped land. She said that she requested that they deny the entire application. She said that her primary concern was the traffic. She said that the prospect of 20,000-plus vehicle trips per day on their road was overwhelming. She said that the recommended remediations were inadequate.

Ms. Rueter said that there was a precedent for denying this application. She said that in 2022, when Lidl requested to put in a grocery store at the corner of Mine Road and Route 610, the Board listened to the community, took into account the VDOT report showing a traffic grade of F, and wisely denied the application. She said that VDOT had reported 86 unresolved comments on the Buc-ee's application regarding the Courthouse-Austin Ridge interchange. She said that the community was voicing its concerns. She said that traffic gridlock had real-life consequences. She said that EMTs were slowed in reaching critical patients. She said that Sheriff's duties were slowed in their response time.

Ms. Rueter said that parents were late picking up their children from school or daycare. She said that commuters were late to work or catching their rides. She said that students were late to school and missed instructional time. She said that bus drivers had to do overtime to complete their routes. She said that the Board had denied a grocery store in 2022 because of traffic. She said that a grocery store, which by any traffic measure, generated a fraction of what Buc-ee's would produce. She asked how they could approve this application with so many unresolved issues. She said that she respectfully requested that the Board deny this application. She said that they had the right and the privilege to protect Stafford, and she implored them to do so.

12. Bea Fitzgerald, Garrisonville District, said that she had lived in Austin Ridge for the past 32 years. She said that she strongly supported the proposed Buc-ee's development and urged the Board to do the same. She said that to begin, Buc-ee's had garnered a positive sentiment from approximately 98% of Stafford County residents, and they were eager to have it there. She said that she implored the Board not to let the concerns of a few residents from Embrey Mill and Austin Ridge dictate what the whole County wanted. She said that tonight, the Board had heard concerns about traffic. She said that while was true that traffic would be an issue, they already experienced traffic congestion on I-95.

Ms. Fitzgerald said that the diverging diamond interchange on Courthouse Road was built to address the massive residential growth in their area, not specifically to mitigate traffic caused by Buc-ee's. She said that it was time for them to capitalize on traveler-generated revenue, and Buc-ee's would significantly contribute to this through estimated annual sales of \$3.5 to \$5 million. She said that the facts were clear: revenue from the gas, general sales, and food tax could help fund their schools, Fire and Rescue services, Sheriff's Office, and roads. She said that this revenue could also help close the \$40 million deficit they were facing. She said that Buc-ee's was not requesting any proffers from Stafford County, unlike many of the developments that had been approved.

Ms. Fitzgerald said that they had committed to making all necessary road improvements, addressing traffic concerns, and had specifically addressed the OSAR. She said that they

could not proceed without approval from Stafford County. She said that she respectfully asked that the Board grant this approval, allowing Buc-ee's to move forward. She said that tonight, they had heard that they were willing and had committed publicly and in writing to paying for these road improvements. She said that she lived in Austin Ridge, and she urged the Board not to let the opinions of those who opposed it dictate what was best for Stafford County.

13. Jim Fry, Aquia District, said that he strongly supported the construction of Buc-ee's in Stafford County, as it represented responsible growth, economic opportunity, and plenty of community benefits. He said that Buc-ee's would generate significant tax revenue for the county, which would help fund schools, public safety, and infrastructure without increasing the burden on local taxpayers. He said that this project would also create well-paying jobs with benefits for residents of all ages, offering stable employment close to home. He said that Buc-ee's enhanced the quality of life by providing a clean, family-friendly destination that served travelers, commuters, and residents alike.

Mr. Fry said that its reputation for excellent customer service reflected a kind of business that strengthened, rather than diminished, the community. He said that approving Buc-ee's sent a positive message to Stafford County, supporting smart development, job creation, and long-term prosperity. He said that he encouraged leaders to approve the project for the benefit of the residents and future generations. He said that having lived in Stafford County for 56 years, he recalled the numerous single-lane roads that once existed. He said that he remembered the 20-year plans that envisioned businesses offering exactly what Buc-ee's offered. He said that based on this, he did not see why they would not approve this project.

14. Metria Singleton, Rock Hill District, said that she wanted to start by expressing her support for economic development in Stafford County. She said that however, she believed they needed to be selective about the types of businesses they approved. She said that they should choose quality over simply accepting any opportunity that came their way. She said that she had no issue with Buc-ee's or beavers, but she wanted it located at an exit where she did not live. She said that for those supporting this, especially those that did not live in Stafford County, she imagined they would not want this traffic attraction near their homes or exit, either.

Ms. Singleton said that she had actually visited a Buc-ee's, and she would like to share her personal experience. She said that to her, it felt like an upscale indoor flea market. She said that unfortunately, it was overwhelming, and she could not even get gas because every pump was occupied. She said that she never got to experience their famous clean bathrooms due to the long line, so she ended up going to a gas station down the road. She said that Stafford was already known as a drive-through County. She asked if they really wanted to become known as a pit stop county, simply because Buc-ee's had clean bathrooms and travelers saw Stafford as a convenient place to stop off I-95.

Ms. Singleton said that instead of building a massive gas station, she said she would prefer to see Stafford attract fine dining restaurants and more upscale businesses, so residents like herself did not have to drive north, south, or west to enjoy those experiences. She said that additionally, as a business owner herself in Stafford County, she had had to host events in neighboring counties due to the lack of space for entertainment in their County. She said that

she would love to see more venues added. She said that for her, Buc-ee's was not a viable option. She said that she would like to see the County she had proudly lived in for nearly 40 years aim for something greater than another gas station, especially when there was already a Wawa across the street and a Sheetz down the road, both of which had clean bathrooms.

15. Nathan Mowery, Garrisonville District, said that he lived in Embrey Mill. He said that he would address three main points regarding the potential impact of this project on their community. He said that firstly, he believed that insufficient due diligence had been conducted on the negative effects of the traffic generated by this project. He said that the traffic study presented to the County was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which likely resulted in diminished results. He said that they, as surrounding residents, were well aware of the consequences of I-95 traffic congestion, which resulted in traffic coming down Mine Road and Austin Ridge, clogging their neighborhood streets.

Mr. Mowery said that this project would not improve the lives of the surrounding community and did not work in harmony with the surrounding neighborhoods. He asked the Board why they would rush through to an approval on a project that creates such massive traffic without conducting the proper due diligence. He said that secondly, he would like to highlight the significant investment his community had made in the surrounding area. He said that as a resident of Embrey Mill, he could attest that his community had invested substantial resources in improving the infrastructure, including water, sewage, and road infrastructure, through a special CDA tax.

Mr. Mowery said that they had also invested their savings, time, and futures into their family homes. He said that this project, if approved, would diminish the futures of their families and not work in harmony with their community. He said that lastly, he would like to emphasize the Board's responsibility to look out for the interests of all residents, even if it did not directly impact their own electoral districts. He said that as a Board, they had a duty to consider the long-term consequences of their decisions. He urged the Board to refrain from approving a project that would have such longstanding negative impacts on their community.

16. Alex Hall, Garrisonville District, said that he stood before the Board today, not just as a Stafford resident, but as a husband, a father, and a retired career fireman who spent a lifetime protecting and serving his community. He said that he also owned and operated a local business here in the County, giving him a deep understanding of the fiscal realities and infrastructure needs that drive the local economy. He said that he was in favor of responsible growth, and he supported the development of the Courthouse area, as thoughtful commercial expansion added essential value to surrounding residential properties.

Mr. Hall said that however, as a public safety professional and business owner, he knew that one could not build a healthy community by putting the cart before the horse. He said that he did not support the proposal for a Buc-ee's at the I-95 Courthouse exit at this time. He said that his opposition was rooted in four critical areas. He said that expert recommendations and traffic realities prior to the Planning Commission's vote had been ignored. He said that Stafford's own professional planning staff had recommended denying the application, citing insufficient traffic improvements to mitigate the massive increase in volume. He said that the VDOT experts on the roadways had also issued a similar recommendation for denial.

Mr. Hall said that the Planning Commission chose to ignore those experts, but the Board could not afford to do the same. He said that as of 2025, Northern Virginia had surpassed Los Angeles for the worst traffic in the US. He said that the Fairfax to Fredericksburg corridor was the nation's primary bottleneck, and adding a high-volume destination stop to an already failing artery was not growth; it was a guarantee of gridlock. He said that public safety and human trafficking were also major concerns. He said that in his career in the fire service, he had seen the dark side of major transit hubs. He said that the proposed Dark Sky lighting may have seemed like a solution, but it was actually worse. He said that large-scale anonymous pit stops along I-95 acted as incubators for human trafficking.

Mr. Hall said that they already knew this occurred at Green Spring Road, the Holiday Inn Express, and the local Wawa. He said that adding a facility of this unprecedented scale provided the exact kind of anonymity that traffickers exploited. He said that this was a documented public safety risk that their current infrastructure was not prepared to police. He said that regarding infrastructure versus sprawl, they were currently failing to build infrastructure prior to development, like Prince William County. He said that Courthouse Road had only been widened to Winding Creek to the west. He said that when I-95 inevitably backed up between Exits 140 and 143, motorists bailed out, causing traffic to flood residential neighborhoods. He said that even if they did not live in those neighborhoods, they faced that impact, getting stuck in it and dodging traffic as pedestrians. He said that there was also an economic misnomer.

17. Rachel Campbell, Rock Hill District, said that she was speaking as a lifelong resident of Stafford. She said that she had witnessed the growth of their County and observed how longtime residents bear the costs of that growth. She said that while she wholeheartedly welcomed and supported healthy growth and revenue growth, she had concerns when evaluating the project through the lens of economic growth and job creation. She said that according to Buc-ee's, the project was expected to create approximately 200 jobs with hourly wages ranging from \$16 to \$19, resulting in annual salaries between \$32,000 and \$39,000.

Ms. Campbell said that while this was not a terrible income, she questioned whether it would be sufficient to sustain a household, whether for one, two, or three individuals. She said that furthermore, when considering the cost of living in Stafford, the median home price was \$580,000, and the median residential rent was approximately \$2,550 per month. She said that the wages that Buc-ee's had listed were not particularly lucrative, but rather just above minimum wage. She said that additionally, she was concerned about the infrastructure costs associated with maintaining the roads, water, sewer, fire protection, stormwater management, waste management, and electricity.

Ms. Campbell said that it was unlikely that Buc-ee's would bear the full burden of these costs, which would ultimately fall on the residents of Stafford, including herself. She said that as they looked around, they could see the effects of traffic congestion on their local roads, including I-95 and Route 1, which were already experiencing heavy traffic. She said that with the widespread use of navigation devices like Waze and Google Maps, it was clear that traffic congestion was a persistent issue. She said that as a County, she asked they were prepared to support and absorb the effects of this project, including the increased traffic and associated infrastructure costs.

Ms. Campbell said that Buc-ee's was a large-scale development that raised concerns about its proximity to their homes and communities. She said that the sheer number of gas tanks, 120 in total, was staggering. She said that she strongly questioned the necessity of this development, given its potential impact on their daily lives. She said that the disruption it would cause was significant, and she worried about its effect on their property values. She said that she was concerned about their safety, particularly with so many fuel sources concentrated in one area. She asked how this development would be planned and executed to mitigate these risks.

18. Wonda Grayson, Garrisonville District, said that she was a resident of Embrey Mill. She said that she was not here to ask the Board to vote for or against Buc-ee's, but she did want to ask them to consider a couple of things. She said that the projected \$3.8 million revenues from Buc-ee's did not resolve the \$40 million deficit. She said that she worried that Buc-ee's may be seen as a solution, but then taxes would still increase. She said that their investment was not even 10% of the deficit. She said that regarding the CDA, they did pay it, and while studies had been conducted on traffic at Austin Ridge and Courthouse, none had been done on the traffic at Courthouse and Mine.

Ms. Grayson said that they all knew that people would deviate from the recommended route, and when the lines got too long at Austin Ridge and Courthouse, they would simply go through Shields and back up Mine, which was where the CDA was covered by residents. She said that if they were expecting or promoting economic development that would bring 20,000 cars a day, approximately 7.3 million cars, through Shields to Mine, it would be nice if someone could mitigate the CDA burden on Embrey Mill residents, who had not requested the increased traffic. She said that she also wanted to ask that their next project consider something that they had universally asked for: a higher-end grocery store, entertainment center, or movie theater that would benefit their community, not just attract passing traffic.

Ms. Grayson said that they wanted development that would benefit them, not just staff and visitors. She asked if the County could consider the next project to be something that had been universally asked for. She said that this would facilitate a better image of Stafford as a business-friendly community, because so far they had continuously rejected developments because they were not appropriate for their community. She said that they wanted the right kind of development that would allow them to benefit from what was levied on their community, not just be a stopover for others.

19. Steve Beck, Garrisonville District, said that he lived two miles up the road in Austin Ridge. He said that he believed that there were better, smarter ways to utilize this property to generate revenue and benefit the residents of Stafford County. He said that while it was inevitable that something would be developed here, there was a significant difference between development that served a community and development that overwhelmed it. He said that Buc-ee's was not a neighborhood amenity; it was a massive interstate highway pit stop designed to capture travelers passing through Stafford, with 20,000 vehicles a day stopping off I-95. He said that this project would not make Stafford a more desirable place to live.

Mr. Beck said that it instead, it would bring nonstop noise, 24/7 stadium lighting, and inevitable gridlock, which would depress their home property values and discourage new families from moving here. He said that they could do better, and their master plan for

Stafford County demanded better. He said that he urged the Board to reject this mega travel center and hold out for smart growth. He said that they should pave the way for highly desired restaurants, shopping, and community-centric stores that their residents would actually want to visit. He said that these establishments would elevate their quality of life, boost their property values, and make Stafford County a place where people would like to raise a family. He implored the Board to listen to the Planning staff, traffic engineers, and the thousands of residents who lived here, and vote no to Buc-ee's. He said that they could instead build a future that actually benefited the people of Stafford County.

20. Brandon Stevens, Garrisonville District, said that 0.2% was a remarkably low return on investment. He said that he wondered how many people would stake their livelihood on a return of that size. He said that if he were to share this with his wife, he would not be walking away from that conversation. He said that he did not think that was a fair value proposition. He said that yet, it was very similar to the conversation they were having here tonight. He said that the Stafford budget for 2026 was over a billion dollars, and meanwhile, Buc-ee's generated \$2 million in tax revenue annually. He said that this meant that Buc-ee's was essentially suggesting that compensation for increased traffic, infrastructure strain, and community alienation was equivalent to 0.2%.

Mr. Stevens said that the applicant claimed to build road improvements to mitigate these concerns, but the initial construction costs would be funded by them, and then VDOT would take over maintenance and upkeep. He said that suddenly, that 0.2% began to look more like 0.1%. He said that they promised well-paying jobs, but Buc-ee's employees typically stayed with the company for only six months to two years, holding a 2.5-star rating on Indeed and Glassdoor. He said that many employees cited issues like micromanagement, long hours, and high-stress internal culture. He said that higher-level jobs were reserved for individuals transferred from other stores, not qualified locals.

Mr. Stevens said that this turnover led to potential employees commuting from surrounding areas, taking their money back with them. He said that as a result, the sub-0.2% began to stagnate. He said that residents in Stafford moved here because they loved the community and what it offered. He said that they were willing to tolerate current traffic or tax increases, but prospects like Buc-ee's and data centers eroded that tolerance. He said that this prompted an exodus of residents, negatively impacting property values and community strength. He said that for perspective, there were between 4,000 and 5,000 homes within a two-mile radius of the proposed Buc-ee's location. He said that this was the number of tax-paying Stafford families who would be most impacted if this location proceeded.

Mr. Stevens said that he wondered if less than 0.2% annual gain worth the hardship to this portion of the community. He asked, what if the impact was a larger radius than that? He asked additionally, how much could they reasonably expect this sub-0.2% profit to impact their taxes each year? He said that he wagered it was not as much as some would hope. He said that to those who loved Buc-ee's, he understood, but they could get Buc-ee's products delivered to their door from Amazon without any additional detriment to their community. He said that he would not stake his family's livelihood on a 0.2% increase in profit. He implored the Board all to assure him that they were not willing to wager their community's livelihood on the same scale.

21. Eric Vetro, Garrisonville District, said that he had moved to the area five years ago from Prince William County. He said that he had chosen this area because of its quality of life and the feel they were looking for. He said that they had been happy for the past few years, but now they were experiencing a shock. He said that the influx of data centers, power lines, and now Buc-ee's. He asked how much one community could absorb. He said that on top of their home price and taxes, he paid into a CDA to enhance roads, sewage, and a school that was never built. He said that now, those roads were being used to support new developments. He said that the lack of traffic studies and the denial of other businesses for less significant projects raised concerns that the Board was turning a blind eye.

Mr. Vetro said that he found it hard to believe that they were not addressing these issues. He said that they had discussed the traffic study, but there had been no discussion about the impact on Garrisonville, Mine Road, and Austin Ridge when people took them as a detour. He said that the current traffic light on Austin Ridge could only accommodate five cars turning left towards I-95, and eventually, it would need to be extended to accommodate more traffic. He said that this would only exacerbate the delays for eastbound traffic on Courthouse Road. He said that this was without consideration of the trucks that would be traveling to Buc-ee's and other businesses. He said that additionally, when considering the \$1.9 million in revenues from Buc-ee's, he wondered if an analysis had been done with regard to how much revenue could be brought in if they made Stafford more friendly to small businesses.

Mr. Vetro said that currently, he had to travel to Fredericksburg to find an original restaurant and a steak that was not from Outback. He said that he would like to see more local businesses and restaurants in Stafford, so they could spend their money locally and not in Fredericksburg or Manassas. He said that the economic impact of Burns Corner and Publix Plaza was also a concern. He said that the traffic would make it difficult for people to visit these businesses, and the fuel sales would not benefit Stafford; they went to the PRTC. He asked the Board to please vote no on this proposal.

22. Jennifer Stratton, Garrisonville District, said that tonight, she wanted to discuss the Board's legal and ethical obligations to the citizens of Stafford County. She said that when each of them took office, they swore an oath to uphold the U.S. and Virginia constitutions and faithfully perform the duties of their office. She said that these duties are not symbolic; they carried real obligations to Virginia law and Stafford County's planning and zoning ordinances. She said that Virginia law was clear that zoning decisions should be based on the public welfare, long-term planning, transportation impacts, compatibility with surrounding properties, and protection of existing communities, not the pressure, popularity, or the size of a corporation. She said that their obligation mattered tonight.

Ms. Stratton said that years ago, Stafford County intentionally planned this area for smaller-scale commercial development. She said that this was not an accident, because the County understood that this land sits directly beside neighborhoods and directly beside Interstate 95. She said that decision-makers recognized that development near homes must protect residents' quality of life, so the County created limitations. She said that they did not want one massive interstate destination, but smaller retail spaces intended to balance commerce with livability and compatibility for nearby residents. She said that the original intent mattered because ordinances and zoning classifications were supposed to mean something.

Ms. Stratton said that if carefully planned limitations could simply be set aside whenever a larger commercial applicant arrived, then residents and business owners lost trust in the process. She said that the Board's responsibility was not to ask whether Buc-ee's was popular; their responsibility was to determine whether this rezoning is consistent with the County's ordinances, planning principles, infrastructure, realities, and the welfare of the citizens who already lived here. She said that the surrounding area was already showing what responsible development could look like. She said that near the Publix corridor, they were seeing smaller-scale businesses, walkable areas, restaurants, gathering spaces, and development that integrated into the community instead of overwhelming it. She said that this type of growth improved quality of life, while a massive interstate travel center did the opposite.

Ms. Stratton said that Buc-ee's repeatedly described itself as a destination business designed to attract extremely high traffic volumes from I-95. She said that this Board must decide whether that belonged beside neighborhoods, homes, schools, and growing residential communities. She said that the citizens of Stafford were asking the Board to honor both the spirit and the letter of the ordinances that were put in place to protect the community. She said that the oath they took was not to developers, and it was not to interstate commerce. She said that it was to the Constitution, to the citizens of Stafford County, and to the faithful and impartial execution of their duties under the law. She asked the Board if, as sworn officials of Stafford County, whether they would follow the law. She said that earlier, they were discussing the violation of the Virginia Constitution with the redistricting vote, and that concern also applied here. She asked the Board to please deny the application.

23. LaToya Caldwell, Garrisonville District, said that she was a registered nurse and nursing educator, as well as a board-certified psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. She said that she held a Master's of Science in Nursing Education and a Master's of Business Administration. She said that she taught clinicians to make decisions based on evidence. She said that in healthcare, the cost of ignoring evidence was measured in lives. She said that she would like to present the evidence and ask who was responsible.

Ms. Caldwell said that the applicant's own traffic impact analysis projects 20,940 vehicles per day at this site, 2,174 cars per hour at peak. She said that these numbers came directly from their engineers. She said that VDOT's April 2024 review described the Courthouse Road and Austin Ridge Drive intersection as worsening, degrading, and failing. She said that VDOT identified a significant safety issue at the primary entrance and called the U-turn frequency problematic. She said that these were VDOT's words, not hers. She said that Stafford County Fire Rescue had an eight-minute response standard. She said that the Journal of American Heart Association states that every single minute of EMS delay reduced a cardiac arrest patient's survival by 6% to 10%.

Ms. Caldwell said that her analysis on this project suggests 5 to 9 additional minutes of delays on this corridor at peak hours. She said that this was not a traffic inconvenience; it was a difference between life and death. She said that what this Board had not yet heard was the full scope of this issue. She said that this was not just about Embrey Mill; it affected every district in this County. She said that when Buc-ee's generated a call, such as a fuel fire, parking lot accident, or cardiac arrest, Stations 2 and 13 were required to respond. She said that the

moment those units left, they were out of service for Embrey Mill, Courthouse Road, and every community in this coverage zone.

Ms. Caldwell said that if a second call came in, and dispatch cannot send Station 2, they must send Station 9 from Aquia Harbor, and if they could not respond, they must get a third call from Station 10 from Potomac Hills. She said that she needed the Board to picture one family with a grandmother in Embrey Mill, on a Friday evening during Buc-ee's peak hours. She said that if the family called 911 because their grandmother could not breathe, Stations 2, 13, and 15 at this time did not exist. She said that this was simple math, and she asked who was responsible.

24. Mark McLeod, Rock Hill District, said that he had lived in Stafford for 23 years. He said that he would like to start by expressing their strong support for Buc-ee's. He said that this company would bring significant benefits to their County, including jobs, tax revenue, tourism, and recognition. He said that it was exciting to think that one day, travelers on I-95 would proudly say, "Take the Buc-ee's exit on I-95 in Stafford." He said that this was a big deal for their County, and he hoped tonight marked a successful night for Buc-ee's. He said that if Buc-ee's was approved, it would be because they had navigated a rezoning and conditional use permit process.

Mr. McLeod said that this was bittersweet because his family business, Crow's Nest Outdoor Adventure, had spent nearly two years in litigation fighting Stafford County and this Board over a campground use that was by right. He said that this situation should be alarming to every property owner in Stafford County, as it highlighted the potential for unequal treatment of projects and property owners, especially when a project was already entitled to use under the law. He said that tonight, while he supported Buc-ee's and its benefits to their county, he hoped the Board reflected on the disparate treatment of projects and property owners in this County, particularly in cases where a project was already by right.

25. Susan Shannon, Rock Hill District, said that she would like to say that if Buc-ee's does not come to their area, seven other properties were likely to follow suit. She said that it was already approved for that, and it was clear that traffic would be an issue regardless. She said that she was here to support Buc-ee's, as she had lived in Stafford County for over 60 years. She said that she moved here with her parents when she was 11 years old, seeking a quieter lifestyle away from the hustle and bustle of northern Virginia. She said that at the time, they purchased property eight miles down Route 610 off a dirt road, hoping to avoid the commotion. She said that although there was only one high school when she graduated, a new one was not built until 1981.

Ms. Shannon said that today, they were building their sixth high school due to the rapid growth of housing construction. She said that many residents may not be aware that if one had multiple children in the school system, their real estate taxes did not even cover their education. She said that the cost was approximately \$5,000 per child. She said that to address this, they needed additional revenue, and Buc-ee's could provide that. She said that if they did not cover education, it also would not cover law enforcement, Fire and Rescue services, Parks and Recreation, waste management, infrastructure, and community development. She said that

in reality, Stafford County needs businesses that generate jobs and tax revenue, which Buc-ee's would do.

Ms. Shannon said that she recalled when Austin Ridge and Embury Mills were first advertised, one of their selling points was their proximity to the interstate and convenient access for commuters. She said that this proximity also brought gas stations, restaurants, and other commercial developments, including Buc-ee's. She said that the existing traffic in their area was a result of its location near the interstate. She said that the same traffic that was already present would be the ones generating revenue for the County. She said that if someone was considering moving to Stafford and did not want traffic, they should not buy a house next to the interstate.

26. Yolanda Roussell, Aquia District, said that September 1 of this year would mark her 20th year in Stafford. She said that she frequently traveled between Stafford and New Orleans along the I-95 corridor. She said that about two years ago, she was introduced to Buc-ee's for the first time, and she immediately understood why people intentionally plan their travel routes around it. She said that what struck her was that it was not just the gas pumps and snacks; it was the realization that some communities had learned to capitalize on traffic that they had no other control over; traffic that already existed. She said that Stafford County sits directly on one of the busiest travel corridors in America.

Ms. Roussell said that they were all aware that millions of vehicles moved north and south on I-95 every year. She said that none of them approved of it, but it happened and they did not have control over that traffic. She said that however, they could decide whether Stafford benefited from it or whether those dollars continue flowing past them into other communities. She said that families traveling long distances were looking for more than just fuel. She said that they were seeking clean and safe facilities, quality food, convenience, rest, and a welcoming atmosphere. She said that communities that understood this were turning highway traffic into economic opportunity. She said that tonight's discussion is not just about one business; it was a conversation about mindset.

Ms. Roussell asked if they saw Stafford as the County that merely experienced growth and traffic, or if they saw Stafford as the County that strategically positioned itself to benefit from realities that already existed. She said that the traffic was already here, the travelers were already here, and the spending was already happening. She said that the question was whether Stafford would participate in that economy or continue watching neighboring regions capture revenue, jobs, meal taxes, fuel taxes, tourism dollars, and business opportunities. She asked if they would continue to see those opportunities slip away. She said that she absolutely understood the concerns of the residents and the concerns that have been raised here. She said that she supported bringing Buc-ee's to the County.

27. Karen Fox, Hartwood District, said that she was respectfully asking the Board to decline the Buc-ee's application because she did not believe it conformed to Stafford County's Comprehensive Plan. She said that this was not about whether Buc-ee's was a successful business, but rather whether this project at this location fit the long-term vision Stafford County had adopted for itself. She said that the Comprehensive Plan existed for a reason, guiding growth, protecting infrastructure, and ensuring compatibility between projects and

nearby communities before approvals were granted. She said that tonight, she did not believe that standard had been met. She said that the proposed 74,000 square foot facility with 24-hour operation, 120 fueling positions located next to established residential neighborhoods, was not a small commercial project; it was a large highway use.

Ms. Fox said that the County's own planning framework emphasized compatibility, transition between commercial and residential areas, and coordinated development within the Courthouse Targeted Development Area. She said that she did not believe this project aligned with those principles. She said that she was also concerned about the transportation issues. She said that the traffic impact analysis already showed worsening congestion at key intersections while major transportation questions remained under ongoing VDOT and federal review. She said that these were not minor details; they directly affected whether this project could function responsibly and safely in this location. She said that approving the project before those questions were resolved meant approving first and dealing with the consequences later, which was backwards.

Ms. Fox said that there had also been a great deal of discussion about revenue, but the projected fiscal benefit was minuscule compared to the County's overall budget. She said that meanwhile, the impact on nearby neighborhoods, traffic patterns, infrastructure, and long-term use would be permanent. She said that when she stepped back and looked at the traffic, the scale, the location, and the timing, she was left with one question: Were they building a County that attracted visitors and supported the people who lived there, or were they becoming a place shaped mainly around people passing through on their way to someplace else? She said she would reiterate: if it did not align, they must decline.

28. Kevin Maroney, Rock Hill District, said that to be honest, he found some of the concerns to be redundant and somewhat amusing. He said that as a trucker, he had been trained to look for potential trafficking hotspots, and he had noticed that truck stops and roadside areas often had inadequate security measures. He said that for Buc-ee's had numerous cameras and intense lighting, making it an unattractive spot for traffickers. He said that furthermore, traffickers could be present anywhere and were not an issue unique to truck stops. She said that with regard to traffic, as someone who had spent years driving with 18 wheels behind him and 40,000 pounds, he could attest to the challenges of navigating roads with other drivers. He said that he recently went to the Buc-ee's in Rockingham County because his mother and his father-in-law wanted to go, which he felt was important for family bonding. He said that the fact that Buc-ee's was going to be paying for all of this development and road improvements also made it an easy choice.

Mr. Maroney said that he could not think of any other gas stations that did this. He said that for instance, the 7-Eleven on Route 1 had only right-turn lanes, making it difficult for truckers like himself to access the store. He said that again, as a trucker, he understood Buc-ee's limiting truck parking at their store; he would prefer a focus on families visiting there, anyway. He said that not only did they benefit their economy, but they also provided opportunities for young people to start their careers. He said that their society was facing a major problem wherein people did not know what they were doing because they were never taught. He said that they should give people this opportunity to learn right and have a company that backed them up. He said that he was fully supportive of Buc-ee's.

The Board recessed at 9:56 p.m. and reconvened at 10:10 p.m.

Mr. Diggs said that they would continue with the public comment period.

29. Janessa Maroney, Rock Hill District, said that she wanted to point out that the Embrey Mill neighborhood was not built until after this location was already zoned for commercial use in 2005. She said that as someone who had lived in the County for over 40 years, she had seen a lot of changes. She said that with the rapid growth of new homes, she firmly believed that Buc-ee's was essential. She said that she had worked for Sheetz, and she could attest that they often had issues with their gas pumps. She said that she believed Buc-ee's had a more reliable system, with more pumps available. She said that even if some of them did fail, the sheer number of working pumps would ensure that customers could find one that was operational.

Ms. Maroney said that her family had visited several Buc-ee's locations, including Daytona and Florence, and they had always been able to get gas quickly, find a parking spot, and be on their way. She said that for her, Buc-ee's was more than just a convenience store - it was a tradition for her family. She said that she had seen how much other communities loved Buc-ee's, and she believed it would be a wonderful addition to Stafford. She said that it would bring joy to the residents and create lasting memories for generations to come. She said that she encouraged the Board to say yes to the Buc-ee's request.

30. Adrienne Malin, Garrisonville District, said that as a Stafford County resident who would be directly impacted by both the proposed North Anna to Bristers high voltage power line project and the proposed Buc-ee's development, she had been closely following both issues. She said that in doing so, she had noticed something important. She said that the principles this Board was now advancing to the proposed Comp Plan amendments related to the transmission line project were the very same principles that should be considered as they made their decision tonight regarding the Buc-ee's applications.

Ms. Malin said that the County had stated that it had been opposing any alignment of the power lines that would diminish property values or negatively impact residents, Stafford County schools, and quality of life. She said that these principles should not be project-specific; they should be applied consistently. She said that the proposed amendments further stated that infrastructure projects should minimize impacts to residents, schools, and sensitive land areas, and that residential density should be considered when making decisions. She said that these were important statements, because if these principles applied to power lines, they should also apply to large-scale commercial development.

Ms. Malin said that the impacts were functionally the same. She said that pressure on infrastructure, impacts to property values, school disruption, safety risks, and quality of life concerns were all relevant. She said that the proposed amendment specifically stated that residential density was a material factor in determining whether infrastructure was appropriate, particularly in areas with concentrated residential development and in schools, and this applied here as well. She said that this corridor included some of the highest residential density in the County, multiple schools, student drivers, school bus routes, and an already strained transportation infrastructure. She said that their proposed amendments

emphasized protecting established residential communities and preserving long-term neighborhood viability.

Ms. Malin said that the amendments stated that projects should be evaluated not simply on proposed economic gain, but on their full impact to property values, economic development patterns, infrastructure, and quality of life. She said that it was essential to recognize the distinction here. She said that the County was proposing these protections in response to utility infrastructure tied to regional energy demands, infrastructure that some might argue was necessary. She said that yet, even there, this Board had emphasized minimizing impacts to resident schools, property values, and quality of life. She said that a large-scale travel center was not public infrastructure; it was a discretionary commercial development.

Ms. Malin said that if these protections and standards were appropriate for projects driven by public necessity, they should apply at least as strongly to projects based on commercial convenience and tourism. She said that if protecting resident schools, property values, infrastructure, and quality of life were guiding principles through one major project, they should remain guiding principles for all of them. She said that for these reasons, she respectfully asked the Board to deny the requested rezoning and CUP applications by Buc-ee's at this location because the proposal was inconsistent with the principles that this Board had already stated mattered in their community. She said that consistency also mattered.

31. Abby Carter, Falmouth District, said that she would like to discuss traffic with the Board this evening. She said that she had reviewed the VDOT numbers from the 2023 audit of ramps on and off I-95, as well as other busy intersections in Stafford County. She said that although she was not a traffic analyst, she had difficulty believing that the daily traffic at the proposed Buc-ee's would be half that of the Warrenton Road Route 1 intersection turning toward Fredericksburg. She said that the applicant had stated that they expected fewer than 20,000 cars to come and go daily, while the Warrenton Road Route 1 intersection handled 40,000 vehicles per day. She said that they were all aware of how quickly this intersection could back up when there were issues on I-95.

Ms. Carter said that the Buc-ee's in Daytona had an average of 44,000 trips per day, which was a fair comparison to a very busy I-95 corridor. She said that additionally, the southbound I-95 ramps at Garrisonville Road east and west handled a daily total of 71,000 trips per day, according to VDOT. She said that she understood that the traffic impact statement was written for the roadways nearby, and it was based on the trip numbers provided by the applicant. She said that however, she wondered what if the applicant was incorrect, and the actual number of trips was closer to 25,000 or 30,000, or that the numbers were closer to those seen at the Falmouth intersection or the 610 ramps. She said that they all knew that these two high-traffic areas could back up quickly, which had significant implications for residents, commuters, and surface roads throughout the middle of the County.

Ms. Carter said that she would like to ask if they were confident enough in the traffic numbers and mitigation efforts to approve this application. She said that if they were unsure, then more information was needed. She said that Buc-ee's had asked to be allowed to build not in a rural or an exurb area, but in a suburban area. She asked the Board to please ensure that they had

the best outcome in their pocket before approving this project, which had significant potential impacts on residents, commuters, and travelers.

32. Kelly Smith, Rock Hill District, said that Buc-ee's was a highly profitable business, and if this project moved forward, Stafford would receive a very small share of the revenue. He said that the majority of the profits would be sent back to Texas, where the products were manufactured and shipped. He said that the contractors building these facilities were from out of state, and the influx of 40,000 travelers would likely view Stafford as a toilet and a trash can rather than a thriving community. He said that he believed they could do better, and he hoped the Board would agree.

Mr. Smith asked the Board to consider bringing back a local business with roots in their community, such as Imperial Gardens or Mason Dixon. He said that they could also explore the idea of repurposing a local landmark, like hauling a log cabin to the site and eliminating the blind spot. He said that local businesses kept their money within their community, which benefited them more. He said that he would also like to propose a vision for the future, one that included coming down that road and seeing a steeple with a cross on it, serving as a symbol of inspiration and a gathering place for their community. He said that in contrast, a 45-foot sign featuring a giant invasive rodent would likely have the opposite effect.

33. Cherie Smith, Garrisonville District, said that her home is approximately 420 feet away from the proposed property. She said that she would prefer a data center to be located there. She said that the reason for this was that data centers had a setback of 1,000 feet from residents, whereas the current setback was 420 feet. She said that this was due to the humming noise from air conditioning units and the cooling systems, which could significantly impede family life. She said that in contrast, she would have to endure noise from Buc-ee's 24-hour business, including closing doors, slamming, horns, kids screaming, and people yelling, all of which can be heard from her backyard. She said that if she had to choose, she would prefer a data center.

Ms. Smith said that secondly, she was concerned about the lack of communication from the Buc-ee's Corporation to the residents of Booth Court. She said that the residents were supposed to be informed four weeks ago, but they have not received any updates. She said that on the other hand, other residents in the County had received gifts from the Buc-ee's Corporation. She said that the staff's light impact assessment suggests that the project would have a negative impact on nearby residents, which was of major concern to her, considering she would be 420 feet away. She said that light impacts could affect health, sleep, and overall well-being, leading to insomnia and other issues.

Ms. Smith said that additionally, the OSAR could not be completed until the Board voted in favor of it. She said that however, it was indicated that they could provide the proposed OSAR. She urged everyone to review it for themselves and not rely solely on the applicant's assessment. She said that the issue of who was being impacted was a significant concern. She said that 26% to 27% of Garrisonville was composed of Black and brown communities, and 19% were retired individuals. She said that according to the National Health Institute, when traffic and health risks were present, 15%-20% of these individuals may leave the area. She said that given that a majority of the Board was composed of Black individuals, an indicator

that Stafford was greatly diverse. She said that considering the potential emigration resulting from the traffic impacts, they would be losing 2,500 to 3,400 Black and brown community members, as well as retirees. She said that this would be a major loss. She asked the Board to please deny the CUP because it was not worth it.

34. Chris Zimmerman, Garrisonville District, said that he would have been here earlier, but he was delayed due to traffic in his commute back from northern Virginia. He said that as one of the 20,000 veterans who called Stafford County home, he was proud to be part of this community. He said that about one in every nine residents of Stafford County was a veteran. He said that he chose to retire here because Stafford County had a strong sense of community and actively supported veterans. He said that the County provided various public and veteran-specific community services, including an Armed Services Memorial and numerous veterans' events. He said that they also supported veterans' owned businesses.

Mr. Zimmerman said that Chair Diggs would be speaking and laying wreaths at the County's Memorial Day ceremony this Friday at 10:00 a.m.. He said that he would like to address the issue of Buc-ee's support for veterans. He said that Buc-ee's did not honor the sacrifice and service of their active duty members. He said that their website explicitly stated that they did not offer any discounts to veterans. He said that he was disappointed that a business with a street named after U.S. Marine, Izzy Rodriguez, who died in the line of duty as a volunteer firefighter, did not recognize the values and service of veterans.

Mr. Zimmerman said that there were many businesses in their area that did support veterans. He said that he understood that small, independent businesses could not support an increase in tax revenue, but they had an Economic Development Council that had three priorities: cybersecurity and technology, logistics, and corporate headquarters. He said that there was no mention of a big gas station. He said that their veteran community deserved opportunities to thrive inside Stafford County. He asked the Board to consider the County's legacy when they took this vote tonight, because a vote for Buc-ee's was a vote against the 20,000 veterans in Stafford County.

35. Rachelle Stanley, Garrisonville District, asked the Board to please conduct thorough due diligence and consider the impact of this project on everyone. She said that this was not just about Austin Ridge or Embrey Mill; it would affect Shelton Shop and Rock Hill, and communities beyond the five-mile radius. She said that the revenue projections they had made would likely be offset by decreased home values in Austin Ridge and Embrey Mill. She said that as a single mom who moved to Stafford nearly 30 years ago, she chose this community because it was safe. She said that she had been there for 20 years, and she had seen it grow.

Ms. Stanley said that she understood that growth could be beneficial, but it should be focused on smart business. She said that Buc-ee's did not contribute to their community in meaningful ways. She said that Buc-ee's did not provide community services or give back to the community. She said that in contrast, Publix and other local businesses did offer services and support. She said that Buc-ee's only seemed to prioritize its own interests, focusing solely on its bottom line. She said that this lack of concern for the community was why they were not addressing the issues they had created, such as traffic congestion. She said that while they would pay for the initial infrastructure, they would not cover the ongoing maintenance costs.

She urged the Board to reject their application and consider alternatives that would benefit Stafford residents.

36. Connie Smith, Garrisonville District, said that from her perspective, it was clear that many of the Supervisors were preoccupied with other matters while sitting in their seats, which was somewhat concerning given that they had residents who had come out to speak about the direct and indirect impact this establishment would have on them. She said that from where she stood, she could confidently say that no resident, regardless of their location in Stafford or beyond, would be unaffected by the traffic generated by this business. She said that one thing she wanted to highlight was that while they often discussed the budget, they rarely talked about the financial implications on existing businesses in the town.

Ms. Smith said that they knew that Buc-ee's would bring in significant revenue, but they also needed to consider the financial losses that other businesses would incur. She said that it was not rocket science to figure this out. She said that while Buc-ee's may bring in money, other businesses would not be able to match that revenue. She said she was willing to bet that she could identify which of the Supervisors would vote in favor of this proposal and which of them would not. She said that it was well-known within the community where this issue would stand, and that was disturbing because the Supervisors were here, they should be here, and they were elected by their constituents. She said that they often discussed the School Board's budget and the lack of funds, but she asked that they consider the students who were already late to school because of school bus issues.

Ms. Smith asked how this proposal would affect them. She said that they may say that the traffic was not a concern until Buc-ee's was built, but the truth was, they would all be impacted by the construction. She said that she found it extremely disappointing that they were at this point and that it had been approved by the Planning Commission. She said that it was clear that due diligence had not been done and that had been acknowledged, it did not make sense how they had proceeded to today. She said that all of the Supervisors should be asking how they got here today. She said that finally, it did not change the fact that they would still be traveling to restaurants in the north and south. She said that Stone Bridge was opening Cooper's Hawk, and she wondered why they could not have something similar here in Stafford. She said that they needed the County Economic Development team to look at the Mosaic, Stone Bridge, One Loudoun, and other developments. She said that this was what should be given to the people of this community.

37. Mary Loyd, Garrisonville District, said that she would like to discuss the implications of Buc-ee's for the people who actually lived here, rather than just its amenities. She said that this was not about whether Buc-ee's had good snacks, clean bathrooms, or loyal customers; it was about whether Exit 140 and Courthouse could realistically handle the proposed development and whether their families should bear the consequences if they could not. She said that currently, residents of Austin Ridge and Embrey Mill already experienced traffic congestion during rush hour, school drop-off, and accidents on I-95. She said that they lived it every day.

Ms. Loyd said that now, they're being told to accept nearly 21,000 additional vehicle trips per day at this interchange. She said that this number came from Stafford County's own planning staff, not from opponents of the project. She said that comparable Buc-ee's locations generated

over 2,000 vehicles per hour during peak periods, and this was why many of them were alarmed. She said that considering their location, the I-95 corridor at Exit 140 had already been ranked one of the worst traffic hotspots in the U.S. She said that Virginia invested hundreds of millions of dollars in expanding the express lane system here to improve congestion, and approving this project risked undermining that investment immediately.

Ms. Loyd said that what concerned many of them was that the professionals' review of the project raised serious warnings. She said that County staff recommended denial due to the project's failure to meet required service standards under the County Code, and the required federal interchange review process has also not been completed. She said that these were not minor technicalities; they were major unresolved issues. She said that traffic was only part of the concern. She said that the project would place a 120-pump mega gas station next to a neighborhood with children and families. She said that as a nurse in this community for many years, she had grave concerns from a health perspective.

Ms. Loyd said that gas stations emitted toxic chemicals through fueling operations, storage tanks, and tanker deliveries. She said that the World Health Organization (WHO) stated that benzene had no safe exposure threshold. She said that a Columbia University study found hazardous benzene concentrations extending hundreds of feet beyond gas pumps, and these findings were based on facilities much smaller than what's proposed here. She said that the truth was that no long-term health study exists for a mega-format gas station at this scale, and their community should not become the experiment. She said that there were also environmental concerns involving underground storage tanks, stormwater runoff, and potential impacts to local waterways and drinking water. She said that her family and she had lived here for 23 years, and they had been fortunate to enjoy the green space, trails, ponds, wildlife, and outdoor areas around the proposed site. She asked the Board not to invite this toxicity to their community and its outdoor space. She said that ultimately, the decision comes down to one simple question: are they prioritizing responsible development or quality of life?

38. Kamal Davis, Garrisonville District, said that he resided in Embrey Mill, just a few miles away from this site. He said that he would like to start by acknowledging the reality of their situation. He said that this was a referendum on Stafford, but it reflected what was happening across all of America. He said that if they did not make a decision now, not just the Supervisors, but as a community, they would have to understand that they had been afforded a choice and develop based on either action or inaction. He said that inaction would lead to scarcity, and scarcity was a choice that should frighten everyone. He asked why they would choose to limit their County's growth simply because they did not like the options being presented.

Mr. Davis said that he was not here to advocate for a specific business, but he did see an opportunity. He said that he would like to address some common concerns he had heard, not just tonight, but during previous sessions. He said that regarding taxes, it was inevitable that they would increase, regardless of this development. He said that they were seeing people from all over the country, including Georgia, South Carolina, New York, and Pennsylvania, moving here. He said that they were drawn here because of the prime housing market, which was expected to continue growing. He said that decent pricing was a major factor in that regard.

Mr. Davis said that for federal employees and veterans, proximity to Washington, D.C. was a significant advantage. He said that they could discuss crime, but it was a complex issue that was influenced by population. He said that studies had shown that population density was a key factor in crime rates, and Buc-ee's was not the source of that. He said that Stafford and Spotsylvania were trending in the same direction, and even cities like Fredericksburg and Harrisburg had similar trends. He said that they must address the problem at a head. He said that the reality of their situation was that they must make a decision. He said that the Supervisors must decide whether Buc-ee's would make the most of an investment in the County, and whether they could afford to move forward with either the Buc-ee's or other plans, including improving parks, streets, and other issues. He asked the Board to support the Buc-ee's application.

39. Alane Callander, Falmouth District, said that she had been following contentious development proposals in Stafford for nearly 40 years. She said that the proposal for the Buc-ee's appeared to be in a class of its own, with multi-faceted, far-reaching, and predominantly negative impacts. She said that the celebrity aspect of Buc-ee's had become apparent, as it had gained a cult-like following among some citizens. She said that similar to a rock star, it was difficult to say they should not come and perform here. She said that it was clear that Buc-ee's representatives should be thanked for their interest in Stafford, but ultimately, it was not a good fit for the area. She said that the proposed location, near the new Courthouse interchange, was inappropriate. She said that it would destroy the quality of life for residents of adjacent subdivisions, which were carefully planned for residents of Stafford. These neighborhoods required quality services, schools, parks, and retail, not a mega gas station travel center.

Ms. Callander said that the Board of Supervisors had been warned that they must bring in more commercial development, as there was an imbalance. She said that she agreed, but they needed the right Economic Development staff to successfully bring in quality commercial development. She said that she primarily valued the history and natural beauty of Stafford, and promoting a Texas-based business with a beaver mascot in Virginia, the home of American presidents, seemed ridiculous, yet trivial compared to the negative consequences of adding 20,000 vehicle trips per day to an already congested area, along with the noise, lighting, and air pollution. She said that she recently spoke with someone who brought her children to the Rouse Center from Spotsylvania, and she expressed concern and disbelief about the potential impact of a Buc-ee's on her daily routine. She said she would struggle to get her kids to swim class, let alone navigate the increased traffic. She implored the Board of Supervisors to vote no on this proposal.

40. Neil Hamblin, Garrisonville District, said that he had been a resident of Stafford for 29 years, and he had two children graduate from North Stafford High School, giving him a significant personal investment in this town. He said that he recently visited the Buc-ee's location in Knoxville, which was approximately 20 miles east of the city. He said that he stopped at the Buc-ee's to refuel, and it took about 15 minutes to exit the highway and enter the store. He said that his family spent about an hour there, purchasing brisket, and then it took another 15 minutes to return to the highway. He said that he believed this worked out well because it was located in a rural area, a small community that likely needed the investment. He said that in

contrast, he was initially surprised to hear that Buc-ee's planned to build a location in the D.C. metro area, particularly so far north.

Mr. Hamblin said that however, he considered the potential reasons for this decision. He said that it was possible that Buc-ee's aimed to maximize traffic, but ultimately, it was up to the local communities and land values to determine the location. He said that in his opinion, this project would be more suitable approximately 50 miles south of here. He said that he predicted that Courthouse Road would start looking like the Knoxville area. He said that adding 21,000 cars per day would make traffic inevitable, regardless of any mitigation. He said that as a consultant and engineer, he had worked on similar traffic estimates, and he would be interested in seeing the range of potential traffic numbers, whether the 21,000 was at a minimum or average. He said that in terms of revenue, this would not generate enough revenue to swing this decision one way or another. He said that they could not balance the budget on this project. He said that in addition to traffic and the non-issue of revenue, he thought they should consider what they wanted Stafford to be. He asked what type of identity they wanted Stafford to have. He said that when residents went to D.C. and said they were from Stafford, he wondered if they wanted the response to be, "Oh, that's where the Buc-ee's is." He asked if they could offer more value than that.

41. Carl Kline, Garrisonville District, said that he wanted to express his opposition to this project. He said that in his opinion, it was the wrong project in the wrong place for the wrong reason. He said that it would not generate adequate revenue, and it would negatively impact the quality of life for Stafford residents. He said that as the previous speaker had mentioned, they should seriously consider what they wanted Stafford to be known for. He asked if they should be known as the home of Buc-ee's, or something more significant. He said that he firmly believed that this project was not in the best interest of the residents he represented. He said that the Planning Commission had punted the decision to the Board, and the staff had recommended against it. He said that he was confident that the Board had heard a lot of information from both sides. He said that ultimately, their decision would be guided by what was best for the residents they served. He said that if they chose to move forward with this project, it would be a decision that would have lasting consequences, and he was not convinced that it was a decision he would want to live with.
42. Jon Walman, Garrisonville District, said that he was a 30-year resident and taxpayer of Stafford County, residing in Austin Ridge, and he was speaking to public safety. He said that according to national crime statistics, gas stations and convenience stores were the most common places for crimes, with over 1.2 million incidents per year nationwide. He said that Buc-ee's was a 24/7 gas station. He said that these facts described the type of facility being considered at the entrance of their otherwise safe community. He said that the spillover threat to Austin Ridge and Embrey Mill was real. He said that high-volume, high-traffic facilities attract anonymous transient populations, creating a risk of burglaries, vehicle thefts, and property crimes.

Mr. Walman said that Austin Ridge and Embrey Mill were adjacent communities, and their streets, driveways, and families were potential secondary targets. He said that in essence, they were building a honeypot for criminals right in their backyard. He asked the Board to consider that the Sheriff's Office would bear the additional cost. He said that the presence of Buc-ee's

would exacerbate drug and gun trafficking along Interstate 95, placing their residents at risk. He said that he wanted to formally petition the Board to provide an independent law enforcement impact assessment to estimate the projected costs, response times, and required staffing for Buc-ee's. He said that he also wanted to formally request the applicant to submit a comprehensive security plan, as the Board's duty was to protect public safety and residents is at stake. He said that Route 1 was consistently backed up with traffic at a standstill, even without Buc-ee's being there. He said that of all the options Buc-ee's had to choose their location, it was puzzling why Buc-ee's chose this site. He said that the revenue of \$1.9 million would not be available for four to six years, while there was \$25 million of revenue mentioned by the Coliseum CEO. He said that he thought this was a viable option. He said that finally, the Board had a duty to serve all members of the County, per the Board's by-laws.

43. Caroline Grant, Garrisonville District, said that she lived about four blocks from the proposed Buc-ee's. She said that she spoke at the first meeting and attended the town hall. She said that she had some anecdotal evidence from the past two weeks that solidified her feelings on a potential Buc-ee's in Stafford. She said that on Mother's Day, she was driving home from the University of South Carolina, where her daughter recently graduated. She said that as she drove through South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, she noticed the traffic starting at Richmond and not letting up until Warrenton Road. She said that on Mother's Day, she was sitting on I-95, feeling exhausted and close to tears. She said that she was thinking about how Buc-ee's would result in her being gridlocked literally to her doorstep in Embrey Mill, as she would have to exit and cross Courthouse Road through the Buc-ee's property get into her neighborhood. She said that she liked Buc-ee's and had visited their locations in Florence, South Carolina and Florida. She said that she had also seen tractor trailers parked outside their locations. She said that she was concerned that these trucks would find ways to circumvent Buc-ee's parking regulations, which could impact Austin Ridge and the surrounding area.

Ms. Grant said that she had also witnessed an accident on the off-ramp during her visit and has seen similar incidents on I-95. She said that as a parent in Stafford County Public Schools, she was aware of the regular emails about bus delays due to accidents and traffic jams. She said that she was also worried about the value of her home, but she could not afford to sell because she had recently moved her parents here and had to put them first. She said that recently, she took the back roads from Falls Run to Embrey Mill, and she saw tractor trailers on the roads, causing congestion at stop signs. She said that her daughter texted her about an accident on I-95, and everyone knew that the traffic would still affect their neighborhood even with Buc-ee's proposed traffic improvements. She said that she supported finding additional revenue for the County, but it should not negatively impact their quality of life.

44. Jay Gillis, Hartwood District, said that he had lived in Stafford County since 2001, with the majority of that time spent in Rock Hill, but he was now a resident of Hartwood. He said that his wife and he had four children who graduated from North Stafford High School, and this would continue to be their home. He said that he had lived here longer than anywhere else in his life. He said that he was here tonight because his property taxes continued to increase annually, and after the discussion on Buc-ee's, he believed this project and its rezoning was the right move for Stafford County and his tax bill.

Mr. Gillis said that while it may not solve the issue entirely, it was part of the equation, and he supported the necessary approvals for Buc-ee's to come to Stafford. He said that Buc-ee's would generate recurring tax revenue, strengthen the County's ability to fund core services without increasing the burden on homeowners, and create hundreds of good-paying local jobs, ultimately broadening the County's economy. He said that he had seen alternative ideas on social media and heard some of them tonight, but he did not believe it was realistic to compare concepts to a real, shovel-ready investment with immediate benefits. He said that approving Buc-ee's was a clear step towards strengthening Stafford's commercial tax base and reducing the pressure on homeowners. He urged the Board to support the necessary approvals.

45. Justin Green, Garrisonville District, said that there appeared to be a community development plan, commercial development plan, and residential development plan all happening simultaneously. He said that given that they had a plan for significant commercial development in the area, with the boundary condition of the residents' plans that had since come into being, it was reasonable to assume that this plan had been in the works. He said that as a resident, he should have been aware of this plan from the start. He said that consequently, many of the negatives and inconveniences associated with this development could be projected against future development.

Mr. Green said that he thought it was unfair to pin everything negative on Buc-ee's. He said that it was a family-friendly business. He said that his worst fear was having a casino in the County. He said that he wondered if Buc-ee's did not get approved, that a casino would be developed instead. He said that he would rather have a Buc-ee's than a casino or data center. He said that he also thought Buc-ee's was more environmentally friendly than a data center. He said that additionally, the job density for a Buc-ee's was significantly higher than 10 people running a farm of data centers. He said that his son had taken midnight shifts at Amazon, hurting his back for less pay than what Buc-ee's was offering their employees. He said that his children could not get \$18 per hour plus benefits anywhere else in the County. He said that this was a direct community benefit. He said that young adults needed these types of transitional jobs to form their careers. He said that he supported Buc-ee's and they would work through the inconveniences.

46. Connie Barrow, Rock Hill District, said that as a 24-year resident of Rock Hill, she was here to discuss the real purpose of this meeting. She said that it was not to decide the popularity of a particular business or whether one business had better food or cleaner bathrooms. She said that the Board's duty, as required by law, was to determine if this project was compatible with the Comprehensive Plan. She said that this was the bottom line, because they were being asked to change the Comp Plan for the zoning of that land. She said that she believed this project was incompatible with the Comp Plan due to the conflicts with traffic, land use, environment, and quality of life guidelines, as stated by the Planning and Zoning staff who conducted thorough analysis.

Ms. Barrow said that they had reviewed the details of this project, and she kept hearing about the 20,000 additional vehicle trips per day. She said that if it was 365 days a year, that was 7.6 million vehicle trips per year, with 120 fuel pumping stations and over 800 parking spaces. She said that was one million gallons of fossil fuel per month. The Embrey Mill Fire Station 15 was not a real station, and neither was the road across from the proposed location. She said

that the Stafford County Planning and Zoning staff had worked diligently and analyzed the application, recommending denial due to the overall traffic volume that could not be fully mitigated by off-ramp extensions and turn lanes. She said that traffic was expected to bottle up, reaching a level of service F. She said that it did not matter whose analysis was funded; the staff's evaluation was based on their expertise and not influenced by developer funding. She said that surprisingly, they had found it would be acceptable, but that was because Kimley-Horn was paid by the developers. She said she did not want to make this a bad marriage; there was no divorce option if they approved it. She urged the Board to vote no.

47. Christine Fick, Garrisonville District, said that the County had made so many compromises to keep Buc-ee's happy, and she did not understand why they had a Plan if they were not going to follow it. She said she just did not understand that. She said that two independent entities, the Professional Planning Task Force in the County and VDOT advising against this. She wondered why they were not trusting the professionals who worked for them to help them make a decision. She said that the professionals had said not to do it and it was a bad idea. She said that Buc-ee's kept telling them they were going to pay for all the mitigation costs. She said that she wondered if they would be paying for the drop in home values. She said that in Austin Ridge, realtors had written that people were hesitant to buy homes due to the Buc-ee's development. She said that their houses used to sell quickly, but now they were not. She asked who would compensate them for the loss in value. She said the lawyer for Buc-ee's had also stated that they had a right to develop the property, but she would like to correct that statement. She said that they had the right to want to develop. She asked the Board to remember they had the right to say no.
48. Shamgar Connors, Hartwood District, said that everyone had some compelling arguments, both for and against Buc-ee's. He said that the only way to solve the argument was to do a taste test of every item they offered, which he was willing to do. He said that he had never visited a Buc-ee's, but his mother had bought him a beaver costume and he had brought some snacks to try. He said that he was fully supportive of the Buc-ee's proposal and felt sorry for those who did not like Buc-ee's.
49. Lillian Swain, George Washington District, approximately two years ago, she was driving south on Interstate 95, heading to South Carolina, her home state. She said that her phone's battery was running low, and she needed a charger cord. She said that as she approached Buc-ee's in Florence, South Carolina, she decided to get her charger at Buc-ee's because she had never been. She said that it was a positive experience and everything went well. She said that however, the one problem was that traffic was backed up about half a mile in the right lane of I-95, heading towards Buc-ee's. She said that one might wonder whether the Buc-ee's was located in the middle of a commercial district, but it was actually located in a rural area. She said that perhaps there were other businesses on that exit, but Buc-ee's was the only one on the right-hand side of the road she was taking. She said that it was a Tuesday in May, with no events or holidays happening, so it was evident that this was just the regular traffic.

Ms. Swain said that she did not want to dismiss the Buc-ee's representative's statement that they knew how to move traffic in and out of Buc-ee's, and perhaps she had hit them on a bad day. She said that six days later when she was returning north on the interstate, she saw that traffic to Buc-ee's was similarly backed up onto the interstate. She said that she had developed

a fondness for Buc-ee's, and when she heard it was coming to Stafford County, she thought it was a positive development. She said that however, when she discovered it would be at the Courthouse Road exit, her support evaporated. She said that the Courthouse Road area was already very busy, and she had not seen any compelling evidence that the traffic could be mitigated. She said that she only had her own experience, which was that there was a lot of traffic there. She said that she thought Buc-ee's was a great store, but the Courthouse Road exit area was the wrong location. She asked the Board to deny this application due to the location.

50. Gary Smith, Hartwood District, said that he served as the vice president of his homeowners association, which represented over 1,100 homes, he served as the governance chair of Thrive Virginia, and he was also involved with several other boards. He said that he was also a retired Marine and was here to stay in Stafford. He said that he was here to express his strong support for bringing Buc-ee's to Stafford County. He said that this project represented more than just a travel stop; it was an investment in the community's growth and identity. He said that Buc-ee's had built a national reputation for excellence, known for its clean facilities, friendly service, and family-oriented environment. He said that this was not a typical gas station; it was a destination that brought travelers, families, and neighbors together while promoting local pride. He said that Buc-ee's could mean hundreds of new jobs economically, with competitive pay and benefits for Stafford residents.

Mr. Smith said that it would generate significant local tax revenue, which would allow them to reinvest dollars in their schools, infrastructure, and public safety. He said that this sent a clear signal to other businesses that Stafford County was open to smart, responsible development. He said that beyond the numbers, Buc-ee's fit the character of the region, which valued hard work, welcome, and forward thinking. He said that their commitment to cleanliness, efficiency, and quality customer service aligned perfectly with the values they held here in Stafford. He urged the Board to seize this opportunity to enhance the local economy, reduce travel burdens for commuters, and put Stafford County on the map as a stop people wanted to make, not just one they passed by. He thanked the Board for continuing to make Stafford County a place where business and families could thrive.

The Board recessed at 11:15 p.m. and resumed at 11:16 p.m.

Mr. Diggs said that they would continue with the public comment period.

51. Peter Stencavage, Garrisonville District, said that he felt that this issue had already been decided and Buc-ee's was going to be approved. He said that he wished to discuss the Cassandra complex, which was named after a Trojan princess in Greek mythology. He said that she had been blessed with the power of true prophecy, but cursed by Apollo so that no one would ever believe her. He said that this tragic figure remained a symbol of foresight, frustration, and doomed warnings. He said that today, the Cassandra metaphor was used to describe a person whose valid warnings were dismissed or disbelieved by those around them.

Mr. Stencavage said that for over two years, his family, friends, and neighbors had been voicing concerns about the Buc-ee's project in the Stafford community, which had been echoed by the Planning Commission. He said that they had listed numerous problems with the

proposal, including extreme traffic congestion, leading to air pollution, accidents, and longer response times for law enforcement and ambulance crews. He said that the safety of their children, especially as they went to and from school, was also a concern. He said that there were massive water consumption issues, especially considering weekly reports of community water shortages and low aquifer levels, with large businesses prioritized over residents. He said that environmental risks were also present, including groundwater and soil contamination, air pollution from hundreds of fuel pumps, and 24-7 noise and light pollution.

Mr. Stencavage said that despite these concerns, the project was moving forward. He urged the Board to consider the impact on their community and vote against Buc-ee's. He said that he was reminded of Ebenezer Scrooge's words in *A Christmas Carol* to the Ghost of Christmas Future, where he asked to be assured that he may yet change the shadows he had seen. He asked that they, as the Board of Supervisors, take this opportunity to alter the course of action and vote for the community and its residents. He said that as a side note, as of 6:30 p.m. this evening, I-95 traffic was backed up in both directions.

52. Cade Hildreth, Hartwood District, said that he wanted to share some critical firsthand observations about Buc-ee's. He said that every location he had personally visited had one thing in common: they were located far away from all other facilities. He said that for example, Virginia's first Buc-ee's was in Mount Crawford, a small town with approximately 500 residents. He said that in contrast, the Florence, South Carolina location was situated in a rural stretch of I-95, surrounded by open highway corridor, farmland, and swampland, with no neighborhoods nearby. He said that this presented a significant geographic experiment for this application. He said that Stafford County was a large community with a population of around 170,000, which had undergone significant development, including the Embrey Mill neighborhood, the Rouse Center, and the Embrey Mill Town Center.

Mr. Hildreth said that however, Buc-ee's would not fit with this character, as it would bring too many negative consequences. He said that when a facility like this opened, anticipating 20,000 plus vehicles per day, highway congestion would be severe. He said that when those exits backed up, drivers would be rerouted by their smartphones, and they would likely end up in the neighborhoods. He said that the applicant's attorney had mentioned that they would attempt to restrict traffic exiting Buc-ee's from becoming cut-through traffic, but their concern was the traffic congestion on the highway. He said that once this routing pattern was established, it did not go away. He said that GPS algorithms and drivers would learn it, and the neighborhood streets would become cut-through routes.

Mr. Hildreth said that he had often driven past this area and could attest to the large number of people, including kids on e-bikes and e-scooters, zipping around the Rouse Center and the Embrey Mill neighborhood. He said that people lived out their daily lives here and many homes fronted the roads. He said that staff had recommended denial, citing significant traffic impacts that were not mitigated in accordance with the County's Comprehensive Plan transportation goals. He said that they had also expressed uncertainty about how the project would comply with the Comp Plan's guideline to improve the quality of life for residents. He said that he hoped that the Board would take staff's recommendation and deny this proposal.

53. Kristen Maxson, Falmouth District, said that she wanted to note that there was a rule that no food or drink should be brought into the Board Chambers. She said that additionally, it was disrespectful, and laughter also did not show respect. She said that it was not surprising that someone spoke out, and they had to believe that fair was fair. She said that she believed that staff had affirmed they did not want Buc-ee's, and none of them wanted to be in that traffic. She said that she believed that it would be voted down. She said that the Buc-ee's presentation began with other projects and did not go into detail on what this meant. She asked what was pushing Buc-ee's to this location. She said that staff had stated there were questions and concerns regarding transparency in submissions that normally went to VDOT but were being deferred to later phases.

Ms. Maxson said that this was included on page 777 of today's agenda, which was 3,496 pages. She said that this was too much. She said that it was obviously due to the other source that did not understand Stafford like they did. She said that mitigating the impact would require bundling it and hitting them later. She said that the study was missing the label of Attachments 6, 7, and 11, and she would like to know why. She said that Attachment 12 on page 2 of 30 was empty, as on page 316. She said that proposed Ordinance 26-17 with 13 attachments, followed by a copy with 18 attachments, with proposed zoning Ordinance 25-37 with 15 attachments, zoning application with applications did not have section codes attached, as seen on page 345. She said that the application page numbers were inconsistent with the neighboring parcel owners and incomplete for the affidavit. She said that 28 pages of count but matched only 22 pages. She said that R26-131 vehicle high density with 11 attachments bundled with R25-274 a resolution of 2,025 with nine attachments and the following copy.

54. Rodney Womack, Garrisonville District, said that he was an original builder at Austin Ridge, lot 473. He said that he wanted to ask the Board to do what was right in their hearts and in alignment with what their constituents wanted. He said that he believed that Buc-ee's would be a benefit to Stafford. He said that had seen many wooded areas cut down without being developed. He said that they could discuss the abandoned Mine Road, Aquia Harbor, and failed movie theater developments. He said that the lot in question had been vacant for 15 years, a long time. He said that now, they had an organization willing to help them and benefit them.

Mr. Womack said that they were sitting there saying no, but there were numerous issues that could not be addressed in one night. He had sent an email to them and he thanked Mr. Diggs for the response. He said that he hoped all Board members had taken the opportunity to read what he had written. He said that he wanted to emphasize that this was not just his opinion, but also his wife's and many friends who could not be here tonight. He said that they were all in favor of Buc-ee's. He said that he would like to see it built here, as it would be a valuable addition to their community. He said that their identity as a place was not defined by a single business like Buc-ee's. He said that it was about the people, the services, and the amenities that made their community unique. He said that he wanted them to stop thinking that way and consider the benefits of bringing Buc-ee's to Stafford.

55. Julia Lewis, Falmouth District, said that she respectfully asked that the Board please vote to approve Buc-ee's tonight. She said that she appreciated that the Board would need to weigh the benefits to the county against those who opposed it. She would like to highlight the

numerous advantages, including the estimated \$1.9 million in sales tax and \$1.8 million in gas tax revenue to fund roads, as well as the \$1% meals tax going to teachers. She said that additionally, Buc-ee's will bring increased local business, and their sewer water would be resold to data centers. She said that she would like to remind the Board that Buc-ee's was downzoning from B-2 to B-1, and they are not asking to rezone A1- land to commercial or heavy industrial.

Ms. Lewis said that this location was ideal for a Buc-ee's Travel Center due to its proximity to I-95 and the efficient design of the exit. She said that Buc-ee's had the financial resources to back up their promises, in contrast to the developer who originally rezoned this land and cleared it. She said that this was a common issue in their area, which was why they placed conditions on the Harris Teeter project. She said that there would certainly be increased traffic, but Buc-ee's had experience in managing traffic and had agreed to fund and follow the recommendations of the OSAR study to mitigate traffic.

Ms. Lewis said that the OSAR study will benefit all businesses in the Courthouse corridor. She said that perhaps this will revive the stalled Westgate commercial development. She said that Stafford County had a reputation of making it difficult for businesses to open, but she believed they were open for business. She said that the Board recently gave tax incentives to Darden Restaurants to open across the street from this proposed Buc-ee's. She said that Buc-ee's was not asking for any tax incentives and was willing to invest in improving the roads to the benefit of Stafford County and VDOT. She said that if this Board said no to Buc-ee's, it may send a negative message to other businesses that were looking to move here.

Ms. Lewis said that most importantly, their commercial tax revenue base needed to be diversified. She said that they could not rely on a single revenue source. She said that the data center gold rush may bring temporary revenue, but Buc-ee's would provide a more stable and long-term source of income. She said that she understood that some people may be concerned about the impact on traffic and neighborhood character, but every district had to sacrifice to bring in revenues, and increased traffic was often a sign of a thriving business. She said that Buc-ee's had already seen success with their million-dollar opening day in Ohio.

56. Dave Kendall said that he was advocating for support of Buc-ee's. He said that as someone who frequently traveled to Florida, he could attest that getting off I-95 into any neighborhood was often a nightmare and stressful experience due to traffic. He said that he knew from experience that Buc-ee's had traffic management down to a science. He said that he had visited Buc-ee's at least six times this year, and every time, the traffic flowed smoothly, with no noise or congestion. He said that the clientele was also welcoming, with friendly employees and a diverse group of visitors, including residents from other countries. He said that his sister, who had never been to Buc-ee's before, had a particularly positive experience.

Mr. Kendall said that after attending a funeral in Mount Crawford, she was hesitant to go, but her son encouraged her to go inside, where she was greeted with kindness and hospitality. He said that she had called him to say that she thought Buc-ee's would be perfect for Stafford. He said that he had spoken with Buc-ee's employees, and he could attest that they were happy and well-treated. He said that as someone who had paid an increased tax on real estate this year, and understanding the low pay of their local teachers, he believed that Buc-ee's could be a

valuable asset to their community's revenues. He said that he had never experienced a traffic jam that he attributed to Buc-ee's, even in busy areas like Daytona Beach and Brunswick, Georgia. He said that he was confident that Buc-ee's would address any concerns and provide a smooth traffic experience for I-95.

57. Mrs. Kendall said that she had accompanied her husband on their RV trips to Florida, and she had provided information on the salaries of Buc-ee's employees. She said that the cashiers, gift attendants, cleaners, janitors, warehouse staff, and grocery stockers all made \$18 an hour. She said that the restroom crew members made \$21 an hour, with no experience necessary. She said that they also received extra pay on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, with the amount increasing each day. She said that the general manager position paid between \$175,000 and \$250,000. She said that she had had the opportunity to visit several Buc-ee's locations, and she could confidently say that they had never experienced any issues with backups. She said that while she was aware that other locations may have had problems, they had not encountered them. She said that what she did want to emphasize was the importance of clean bathrooms, especially after visiting regular gas stations, which often had unsanitary conditions. She said that she was pleased to know that Buc-ee's prioritized cleanliness, and she appreciated the opportunity to use their facilities.

Mrs. Kendall said that what was equally significant was the impact Buc-ee's would have on their local economy, bringing high-paying jobs and full benefits to those who took them. She said that she recalled when she moved to Fredericksburg, she did not receive the same level of benefits. She said that Buc-ee's would bring in revenue, and it was crucial revenue because currently, taxes were solely borne by residents. She said that they lacked sufficient businesses in the area to share the revenue burden. She said that Buc-ee's would be fully funding its building, which meant it would not cost Stafford County anything. She said that she attended the meeting they held last year at Colonial Forge, and several issues that were raised, such as traffic, were addressed.

Mrs. Kendall said that their experience with Buc-ee's, located on the main road, was that they had side roads that directed traffic into the facility, rather than impeding the main road. She said that they had never had to contend with traffic on the main road. She said that regarding property values, Buc-ee's assured her at the Colonial Forge meeting that they have never experienced a decline. She said that there was a concern about crosswalks, but they acknowledged the issue and stated that they would create two additional ones. She said that they also assured her that they generally do not have problems with loitering. She said that they have conducted studies on how to integrate a Buc-ee's into a community, whether in a neighborhood or otherwise. She encouraged the Board to support the Buc-ee's application.

58. Melissa Baer, Garrisonville District, said that she would also appreciate it if the Board would consider denying this proposal, which she based on her direct involvement. She said that unlike others who claimed Stafford County would not have to pay for anything, that was not true. She said that the fact that they continued to focus solely on I-95 was a small portion of the issue, as there were people who only wanted to visit Buc-ee's, and they would come from all directions, including back roads that were not currently accommodating to these developments. She said that these roads were not being planned for, and I-95 may provide some assistance, but it would not address the significant increase in traffic over the year. She

said that the traffic study failed to account for the various directions of travel, and the traffic infrastructure was only a small part of the larger issue. She said that greater infrastructure impacts would be felt in water, electric, environmental, and law enforcement areas, and it was clear that the true extent of the problem lay beneath the surface.

59. Brad Baber, Rock Hill District, said that he had lived in Stafford County for 50 years, having moved there due to the way things were done here, and he was pleased to see that they were continuing to do so. He said that he was happy to be here. He said that some of the main complaints tonight had been traffic. He said that unfortunately, the traffic was largely a result of new residents who had moved to the area in the last 10 or 15 years. He said that they were also complaining about property values, but it seemed to him that some of these individuals had bought homes in the area at inflated prices and now wanted to sell and leave.

Mr. Baber said that he was not concerned about property values, as if they decreased, his taxes would likely decrease as well. He said that he was not planning on selling and moving out of Stafford, as he had lived there for 50 years and intended to stay. He said that his family and he were committed to this community, and they were not the newcomers who bought a house and then left without concern for the community. He said that the Board was tasked with making a decision for the entirety of the County. He said that Embrey Mill had 1,827 homes and Austin Ridge had about 800 homes, which were a very small portion of the total 56,276 homes in the County.

Mr. Baber said that he was asking the Board to approve Buc-ee's, as he believed they were a good business that would be a good fit for the area. He said that when a Walmart opened, other businesses tended to follow. He said that he thought they would find that when Buc-ee's opened, some other businesses would come to the area. He said that some had mentioned big-name restaurants and fine dining establishments, but that sounded more like Fairfax to him. He said that if people wanted to live in Fairfax, they should have moved there. He asked the Board to approve the Buc-ee's proposal.

60. Molly Denham, Hartwood District, said that she wished the community had provided this level of support and interest during budget season when discussing how to fund the County. She said that as a strong advocate for bringing industry to Stafford that would generate good-paying jobs and revenue for the County, she had been keenly interested in Buc-ee's proposal, which, in her opinion, hit both of those priorities. She said that the key factors that were important to her with this proposal included the average hourly rate for employees, which ranged from \$18 to \$31 per hour, and the salary positions for multiple managers and assistant managers, which ranged from \$100,000 to \$220,000 per year.

Ms. Denham said that for context, it took a teacher approximately 19 years to reach \$100,000 per year, and the reality was closer to 24 years. She said that Buc-ee's would be one of the largest commercial employers in the County, providing good salaries for up to 300 residents. She said that she firmly believed that this proposal checked all the boxes for improving the quality of life, as noted in the staff's presentation earlier tonight. She said that furthermore, she was confident that the 300 people employed by Buc-ee's would attest to the positive impact it would have on their quality of life. She said that she was also disappointed by the number of

people here tonight who were dismissing the revenue generated by Buc-ee's, claiming it would not make a difference.

Ms. Denham said that she encouraged those individuals to review last month's budget sessions, when this Board spent hours trying to cut almost the same amount of money from the County budget because they did not have enough funds. She said that she would like those same people to consider the impact on teachers and county employees who didn't receive the full pay increase they deserved this year, or the agencies like the food bank that did not receive the help they desperately needed due to the County's lack of additional funds. She said that Buc-ee's was not the only solution, but it was a crucial step they needed to take, and she wholeheartedly supported approval of the application.

61. Will King, Griffis-Widewater District, said that he had not been closely following the Buc-ee's process, but he could state that the Board had a difficult job of weighing a lot of variables, variables that were often in conflict with each other. He said that he was not particularly in support of either approval or denial, but he did want to lend his support to all the people who came out to this meeting to say how it affected them. He said that the decisions the Board made had qualitative impacts on people. He asked the Board to consider the qualitative impacts and weigh them against the quantitative impacts. He said that this needed to be looked at from a whole-system perspective. He said that he appreciated the Board listening to their constituents' personal statements.
62. Kiara Porter, Garrisonville District, said that she was a resident of Embrey Mill. She had heard tonight that people had been discussing traffic and other issues. She said that however, she believed that no one had actually addressed the pollution and its impacts, particularly in relation to their homes, offices, and businesses across the street. She said that specifically, there was a healthcare facility directly across from the proposed Buc-ee's location. She said that no one had mentioned the need for wall barriers to mitigate the pollution that was spilling over into these areas, which could have serious health and wellness implications for residents and those traveling for urgent care.

Ms. Porter said that there was also a premium daycare center in the same area, which should be considered. She said that unfortunately, no one had mentioned this during tonight's discussion. She said that as these children attended school, and patients sought treatment, they were impacted by this pollution. She said that these citizens deserved quality care and access to services, and the impacts of Buc-ee's would be long-term. She said that she felt that they were prioritizing revenue over their community, which was a serious concern for her. She asked if cheap gas and cheap food for momentary enjoyment were worthwhile. She said that there was no long term value in the community other than snacks and cheap gas.

Ms. Porter asked if it was worth compromising the safety and well-being of their residents, including their children and elderly. She was not opposed to Buc-ee's, but she did think they needed to consider alternative locations that could accommodate their business without putting their community at risk. She asked if they would send their children to a premium daycare center located directly across the street from a Buc-ee's, or if they would send their mothers or elderly individuals to a healthcare facility with over 100 pumps nearby. She said

that she hoped the Board would take a moment to consider these questions as they made their decision tonight.

63. Chris Denning, Rock Hill District, said that he recently moved out of the Austin Ridge neighborhood to escape the impact of Buc-ee's. He said that the Board had the control to shape this situation. He said that a no vote or a vote to fix this type of situation would allow them to maintain control. He said that if they voted yes, the control would shift to others, and while they would still have a say, they would be one of several parties involved. He said that he strongly encouraged the Board to reconsider voting yes tonight. He said that they should take control and, if necessary, shape the outcome to make it more tolerable.

Mr. Denning said that as someone who had lived in this area in the 1990s, he remembered a time when this place had a sense of community and soul. He said that they had been able to successfully resist Walmart's plans to build on Ferry Farm, and they had been able to preserve that historic land. He said that he was proud of how their County had taken control of that situation. He said that from his perspective, and as he had traveled, he had been able to proudly point to where he was from. He said that he was not proud of saying that he was from the East Coast's most popular toilet. He would also like to mention that he had researched Buc-ee's locations in Denton and Ennis. He said that the homes closest to those Buc-ee's had experienced a significant drop in value, ranging from 15% to 35%, after the Buc-ee's opened.

Mr. Denning said that the recovery had been largely flat, with some fluctuations. He said that none of the homes he had examined had recovered their former value. He said that he did not think they all wanted to be in a position where they would have to reassess the budget and raise rates again in a couple of years, when homes had lost value. He said that this was not a popular prospect. He urged the Board to take this responsibility seriously and please consider exercising their power to ensure they received the best deal they possibly could, if they must say yes. He said that to reiterate, he urged the Board to vote no because of this unacceptable location. He said that similar to Walmart, they should take it down the road.

Mr. Diggs closed the public hearing. He asked if the applicant had any response to public comments.

Ms. Cohen said that she would be brief. She said that she understood the passionate comments. She said that the Board's decision was not to be guided by passion; it must be guided by the law. She said that in light of this, she would point out a few legal issues of importance. She said that in Virginia, the Comprehensive Plan served as a guide. She said that this application met all the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. She said that staff had consistently stated that this proposed land use was consistent with the long-range land use in the Comprehensive Plan, specifically in the Courthouse Targeted Development Area.

Ms. Cohen said that staff had repeatedly stated that this use was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's direction on commercial development. She said that staff did not recommend denial tonight. She said that initially, staff had recommended denial to the Planning Commission, after which point the applicant had mitigated and addressed concerns with additional proffers. She said that the staff recommendation tonight was to weigh the positives and negatives of this application, and staff had provided significantly more positives than

negatives. She said that the one issue that remained was traffic, but Mr. Ratcliff had presented substantial traffic improvements, demonstrating real benefits to the road network, reducing delays, and maximizing throughput.

Mr. Diggs asked the Board for a motion to continue the meeting past midnight.

Dr. Yeung motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to continue this meeting past midnight to the next day.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen, English, Vanuch

No: (0)

Mr. Diggs asked Ms. Cohen to continue with her remarks.

Ms. Cohen said that to reiterate, there would be no degradation in the level of service. She said that she would like to address the issue of 20,000 vehicles per day, as it kept coming up. She said that it was essential to note that this number referred to trips, not vehicles, so there would be approximately 10,000 vehicles involved in these trips. She said that regardless, there was no degradation in the level of service. She said that someone raised concerns about Kimley-Horn, the consultant, preparing the analysis.

Ms. Cohen said that, as part of the process, the County did not pay for the applicant's consultant to prepare the TIA. She said that the applicant, not the taxpayers, bears this cost. She said that Kimley-Horn was a licensed professional engineer company in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and it was their professional judgment and duty are to provide accurate information. She said that they had worked closely with staff to prepare the TIA, using professional expertise to provide the necessary information.

Ms. Cohen said that she hoped the Board would consider this request in light of the law and the proper considerations for this particular land use. She said that it was understandable to be passionate about a local issue, but it was essential to remember that it was a travel center with fuel sales. She said that the Board was being asked to approve the land uses, which were consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Allen asked if the applicant could provide a timeline for when the project would be completed, considering the OSAR was still in progress.

David Capparuccini, Traffic Engineer for the applicant, said that they anticipated an 18-month timeline for the OSAR process. He said that they had already begun working on a framework document, and they were not permitted to begin construction until the OSAR was completed and signed off on by all necessary parties, including VDOT and the FHWA.

Ms. Allen asked if it would be potentially up to two years before they began construction.

Mr. Capparuccini said that a potentially useful comparison could be made to a site in New Kent County, where they were currently working on a project and had been three years without receiving final approval for the interchange report.

Ms. Allen asked if County Transportation staff knew how much revenue they received from the Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) in gas tax.

Matthew Lehane, Transportation Planning and Funding Manager said that last year and this year, they were anticipating a budget of between \$6.5 and \$6.7 million from PRTC.

Ms. Allen asked what the County's Transportation budget was for this year.

Mr. Lehane said that within their five-year financial plan, he anticipated \$15 million in revenues, with \$6.7 million of that coming from the gas tax.

Mr. Diggs asked if staff could provide some further clarification on PRTC's role.

Bryon Counsell, Chief Engineer, said that according to State Code, there must be a regional recipient of the gas tax, and the funds were dispersed from that regional recipient back to the localities. He said that the regional recipient has an administrative cost and budget. He said that he believed Stafford's share of PRTC administrative costs was approximately \$200,000. He said that this was how the process worked across the state.

Ms. Allen said that for every gas station with a Stafford ZIP code, the County received fuel tax on their sales. She said that the County kept all of that revenue except for what they paid into the administrative costs of PRTC.

Mr. Lehane said that additionally, \$2.8 million went to Virginia Railway Express (VRE).

Ms. Allen said that Stafford County paid into VRE so that Stafford constituents could VRE services to reach areas north of them, usually for work.

Mr. English said that Mr. Capparuccini had mentioned their project in New Kent County. He asked if they had broken ground or anything yet.

Mr. Capparuccini said no. He said that to clarify, the as part of the interchange study, they identified improvements that Buc-ee's would build. He said that instead, Buc-ee's ended up contributing a certain amount of money toward the full build of the interchange there. He said that it would become a divergent diamond.

Stan Beard, Director of Real Estate Development for Buc-ee's said that to clarify, what they were building in New Kent County was what currently existed in Stafford County today.

Mr. English asked if Mr. Beard could address the concern regarding lowered residential property values in the area surrounding Buc-ee's.

Mr. Beard said that no, there had been no data to prove that. He said that they had never had anyone question whether home values increased or decreased before or after Buc-ee's was

developed. He said that in Auburn, Alabama, they actually hired a consultant to conduct a pre- and post-Buc-ee's pro forma regional land value assessment. He said that the consultant concluded that their presence raised property values.

Mr. Beard said that in Denton, there were half a million dollar homes, which remained at that value today. He said that he had heard that they did not build near neighborhoods, but he would like to point out that they had four examples, including Denton, where they built in their backyard. He said that people sometimes countered that by stating that homes nearby Buc-ee's were built afterward, but even in that scenario, having a Buc-ee's nearby did not appear to negatively impact residential development nor the demand for those homes.

Mr. English asked if Buc-ee's tended to attract more businesses to the surrounding area.

Mr. Beard said yes, if there was room for it.

Ms. Guy asked if it could have less than 120 gas pumps.

Mr. Ratcliff said that the fueling pumps were used as parking stalls. He said that if they reduced the number of fueling pumps, more people would be waiting to get fuel. He said that people could park their cars at the fuel pump and go inside the establishment. He said that as a result, the turnover rate at this facility was not typical of a traditional gas station, where turnover rates were usually between five to 15 minutes. He said that the additional fueling stations enabled them to manage traffic more effectively.

Mr. Ratcliff said that if they decreased the number of fueling positions, it would lead to a significant increase in wait times, with people queuing behind each other. He said that given the software limitations, they were currently at 120 fueling positions, which was why they had maintained this number. He said that decreasing one issue often led to increased problems in other areas.

Ms. Guy said that she wanted to say to the public that they would continue to face issues that were emotional for people. She said that when citizens engaged with their Board of Supervisors, they should not threaten the Supervisors. She said that it was very ineffective and made her feel compelled to do the opposite of what she was being threatened to do. She said that her vote would always be her own, and she was not concerned about whether or not it may result in a referendum on her seat.

Ms. Evans said that she was also curious as to why they could not reduce the 120 pumps when they had other establishments with 104 or 80 pumps.

Mr. Ratcliff said that this facility allows for the digestion of four vehicles. He said that to increase efficiency on his property, he was trying to optimize the use of space. He said that some of his properties had limited capacity, resulting in 104 and 116 fueling positions, which limited his ability to remove vehicles from the system, service them, and move them forward.

Mr. Ratcliff said that in contrast, their original travel centers initially had only 24 fueling positions, leading to traffic congestion and people backing out to find an available spot. He said that by increasing the number of fueling positions, they found that even though it may take some

time to find an open one, there was usually one available within the 120 positions, allowing drivers to exit the drive aisle and access a fueling position, ultimately enabling a smoother experience.

Ms. Evans asked if it was accurate to say that it was Buc-ee's choice to install 120 pumps in this particular location.

Mr. Ratcliff said that yes, it was ultimately his decision to install 120 pumps. He said that this choice was intended to maximize efficiency and minimize delays off-site, allowing them to better accommodate the increasing number of cars coming in.

Ms. Evans said that it was also to maximize revenue.

Mr. Ratcliff said that no; their goal was to provide the best experience for their customers, which involved minimizing conflicts and struggles. He said that by offering ample parking and fueling positions, they aimed to enable customers to quickly and easily enter and exit the facility, have a pleasant experience, and continue on their journey. He said that if they reduced the number of fueling positions, customers would have to wait, become frustrated, and this was not beneficial for their business or anyone involved. He said that when evaluating their models and facilities, they considered how many people they could safely process and efficiently move through the system, ultimately allowing them to safely exit onto the interstate.

Ms. Evans asked if the amount of revenue the County was projecting to receive from this project was a conservative estimate.

Scott Mayausky, Commissioner of Revenue, said that yes, that had been his analysis. He said that even before they had received Buc-ee's economic analysis, he had conducted an independent analysis. He said that he had conducted research on various locations and reviewed internal data. He said that he believed Buc-ee's projections were conservative, particularly for local taxes, which totaled \$1.9 million, excluding the fuels tax.

Mr. Mayausky said that to provide context, he had previously shared a list of the top 10 taxpayers in Stafford County during a previous data center conversation with the Board. He said that if they looked at this list now, Buc-ee's would be the fourth largest taxpayer in Stafford County, even with conservative projections. He said that he wanted to emphasize the importance of perspective, as many people did not understand the magnitude of local taxes.

Mr. Mayausky said that a \$2 million tax bill to a business was substantial. He said that as they aimed to build a tax base, they needed larger corporations like Buc-ee's to establish a foundation, which was why these difficult conversations were crucial. He said that he would not be surprised if Buc-ee's rose to the second or third largest taxpayer when revenues started coming in.

Ms. Evans asked what the County could possibly see if Buc-ee's were approved and was up and running.

Mr. Mayausky said that it was speculative. He said that he would feel comfortable estimating that the cost would be around \$3 million, not counting the fuels tax. He said that this was based on the property taxes and local consumption taxes.

Ms. Allen asked if the \$1.9 million estimate included meals tax.

Mr. Mayausky said yes. He said that one of the interesting aspects of Buc-ee's was its impact on various tax types. He said that typically, 70% of local revenue came from property taxes, which included the building and equipment. He said that in addition to property taxes, Buc-ee's generated revenue from consumption taxes, such as meals tax, which was a significant contributor. He said that local sales tax also played a substantial role, as a portion of the 5.3% state sales tax paid by customers was returned to the local government. He said that utility tax revenues and inventory tax were also sources of income.

Ms. Evans said that the County had just finished a difficult budget season, during which they had to raise the real estate tax rate by \$0.04. She asked if Mr. Mayausky could estimate how many cents on the tax rate they would save if Buc-ee's were to do business in the County.

Mr. Mayausky said that between his projections and Buc-ee's projections, it would be equivalent to about \$0.01 on the tax rate, or \$2.6 million.

Dr. Yeung said that the fuel tax depended on what was used for Transportation project costs. She said that in 2024, the County only received \$2 million of the \$6 million from 473 pumps. She said that Buc-ee's would be providing \$1.6 million from 120 pumps. She said that taking out the contributions to VRE and PRTC, whatever the County had left depended on Transportation projects. She said that she wanted to clarify that the County did not receive the full amount of fuel tax revenues.

Dr. Yeung asked if Mr. Zuraf could provide an illustration on how vehicles would get to and from the site and I-95. She said that she wanted to see the traffic pattern and how the slip lane would be used on Austin Ridge Road.

Mr. Zuraf said that to go southbound on I-95, one would take Exit 140 and take the slip lane, which followed along parallel with Courthouse Road. He said that the road remained divided as it turned and continued northbound on Austin Ridge Drive. He said that eventually, the separation or median disappeared, and to access the site, one would turn into it after being a short distance into Austin Ridge. He said that to get to the site northbound, one would take Exit 140, turn left at the exit, and enter the divergent diamond. He said that one would then navigate through the weaving and end up in the main westbound lanes of Courthouse Road, turn right onto Austin Ridge Drive and then turn in across from Sunflower or any other access point. He said that all vehicles leaving the site would have to take Rodriguez Drive, turn left onto Austin Ridge Drive, then left onto Courthouse Road, and finally turn to go either north or south.

Dr. Yeung said that they could potentially go down Austin Ridge Road and Mine Road. She said that there would be more than 20,000 trips circling Austin Ridge Road within less than a mile. She asked if traffic model completed in Wisconsin was for a generic divergent diamond to calculate that.

Mr. Capparuccini said that the divergent diamond specifically had the calibration parameters based on the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's calibration handbook.

Dr. Yeung said that the divergent diamond was much smaller than typical ones. She asked if they had measured it.

Mr. Capparuccini said that yes, they calibrated the existing cues here to perform their modeling.

Dr. Yeung asked if reuse water would be utilized at this site.

Mr. Ratcliff said that they did not know.

Dr. Yeung said that there was a total demand of 60,000 gallons per day.

Mr. Ratcliff said that just domestic was 25,000 gallons per day.

Dr. Yeung asked about the 35,000 gallons that was mentioned in the application.

Mr. Ratcliff said that he believed that referred to irrigation for landscaping.

Dr. Yeung said that she continued to have concerns about the proffers. She said that in Proffer 7, transportation improvements must be complete before Buc-ee's received an occupancy permit. She said that the OSAR had been mentioned along with Proffers 7A through 7D. She asked if Buc-ee's was planning to fund additional improvements to Courthouse Road and to Austin Ridge Drive if they were specified in the OSAR.

Mr. Ratcliff said that yes, they would do those improvements. He said that Buc-ee's would not open without all of the improvements in. He said that they must have all of the necessary transportation infrastructure.

Dr. Yeung asked if that remained true if something was specified in OSAR but not previously written in the proffers.

Mr. Ratcliff said that yes, if the OSAR required it, they would perform those necessary duties in order to accommodate the traffic identified in the OSAR.

Dr. Yeung asked if Buc-ee's was supposed to send out a certain number of notices to surrounding neighbors. She said that someone in Booth Court told her they only received one notice in the entire neighborhood.

Mr. Zuraf said that he was unaware of that, but they sent notices out to all property owners within 500 feet.

Dr. Yeung said that in the staff report, the TIA identified impacts, some significant that were unmitigated in conformity with the County's Comprehensive Plan transportation goals. She said that yet, the letter from Kimley-Horn dated May 12, 2026, indicated that the proposed traffic improvement was consistent with non-degradation and the policies outlined in the Stafford County Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Zuraf said that his understanding of that memo was that it was factoring in the by-right development, so they were discounting the by-right development. He said that their evaluation was based on the delta, or only the trips generated by Buc-ee's.

Dr. Yeung said that she knew that VDOT had previously addressed the traffic issues with this application and that some had not been resolved. She asked if the County or VDOT believed that the applicant's TIA used the best data and scenarios to accurately calculate the traffic flow.

Mr. Zuraf said that this data had been thoroughly vetted as part of their advance work and subsequent review. He said that the report had undergone six iterations, ensuring that all relevant information had been thoroughly examined.

Dr. Yeung said that the County had never gone through the process for an OSAR. She asked if staff was prepared to handle any potential recommendations from the OSAR.

Mr. Zuraf said that he could not speak with certainty because they had not gone through the process yet. He said that he was unsure of what the OSAR would find and what the end result would be.

Dr. Yeung asked if Mr. Zuraf could elaborate on the statement in the staff report that this project may not fit with the character of the area. She said that the monument sign was one aspect of this, which the applicant had reduced to 45 feet. She asked what staff would recommend as the appropriate height.

Mr. Zuraf said that the comment may be related to the Comp Plan policy that was cited. He said that this was more of a subjective policy for the Board to consider whether this use would improve quality of life, and was somewhat related to the intensity of the use.

Dr. Yeung said that she appreciated that the applicant had accepted the proffer to disallow truck parking at Buc-ee's, but it would remain an issue on Sunflower Drive. She said that with regard to the approved B-2 project mentioned, that was a much smaller development, but when subtracting fuel sales, the revenues between that project and Buc-ee's were essentially the same.

Mr. Zuraf said that the estimated revenue was \$2 million for the Marketplace project, so yes it was relatively close.

Dr. Yeung said that it was mentioned that Embrey Mill was not fully built out. She asked how many homes were going to be built.

Mr. Zuraf said that he believed it was approximately 170.

Dr. Yeung said that there was a pump station on Pump Road, near the proposed slip lane. She asked if Buc-ee's was aware of that.

Mr. Counsell said that there was an existing location with an abandoned wastewater pump station. He said that the general area drained to that corner, but it had been rectified with a series of other projects, so it would not remain in service.

Dr. Yeung asked if Buc-ee's was planning on limiting the hours of operation.

Mr. Ratcliff said no.

Dr. Yeung asked if Buc-ee's was planning to put lights at intersections 4 and 5 along Austin Ridge Drive.

Mr. Ratcliff said that they would conduct the necessary studies and consider the results as they relate to the required improvements. He said that if those studies indicated a need for additional traffic control measures, he was committed to implementing them as part of the process.

Ms. Vanuch asked Mr. Zuraf if her rough estimate was correct and that a subdivision with about 1,827 houses would create about 15,000 to 18,000 trips per day.

Mr. Zuraf said that for single family housing, it would be 18,000, and townhouses would be a little less.

Ms. Vanuch said that this meant that Embrey Mill generated about 15,000 to 18,000 trips per day. She said that there had been a rumor in the community about a sports complex, a 10,000-seat concert venue, and a 1,000-foot retail, restaurant, and sports complex proposed for this location and touted as a better alternative. She said that when she did her research on this, it appeared that an event day would create about 12,000 to 15,000 trips per day. She asked Mr. Zuraf if that was correct.

Mr. Lehane said that according to the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) code, the most relevant comparable was a baseball stadium. He said that this would likely generate approximately 12,000 to 15,000 trips for that event.

Ms. Vanuch asked if by-right developers were required to mitigate their transportation impacts.

Mr. Zuraf said that they would not necessarily have to submit traffic impact analyses, but they would have to ensure they met VDOT standards, including access and safety guidelines. He said that however, they may not have to address levels of service.

Ms. Vanuch asked if Mr. Zuraf was aware of a Board member communicating with the developer about using that parcel of land for low-income housing, which would also generate a significant amount of traffic trips.

Mr. Zuraf said no.

Ms. Vanuch said that the developer had been reaching out to other Board members regarding potential housing there.

Mr. Diggs said that for him, the major concern was the potential backup on a main thoroughfare with schools nearby. He said that he understood that the OSAR report would be completed and that the applicant had committed to addressing any issues that arose. He said that a number of concerns had been raised by constituents, and his fellow Board members had tried to clarify a few of them. He said that he would like to address the constituents, regardless of their stance on

the issue. He said that what he was most proud of was how they had conducted themselves this evening, outside of one outburst, which was to be expected given the emotional nature of the discussion.

Mr. Diggs said that he was impressed by the diversity and the way people with differing opinions treated each other with respect. He said that seeing this level of civility was deeply appreciated. He said that one thing that struck him was that when constituents expressed a desire for local businesses or specific features, the underlying issue was often that many of these businesses could not afford the necessary infrastructure upgrades. He said that as they considered these suggestions, they must also take into account the broader economic implications. He said that he encouraged everyone to meet with the Supervisors and engage in these conversations, whether through town halls or other forums, so they could provide additional perspectives and work together to find solutions.

Ms. Allen asked the County Attorney if the applicant would have to address the recommendations contained in the OSAR report before they were allowed to finish the project.

Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney, said that was correct. She said that the applicant was proffering that they would comply with the OSAR, and moreover, they could not receive approval on the final site plan, meaning they could not begin construction, until such time that the requirements of the OSAR were met.

Ms. Allen said that she wanted to emphasize that the applicant could not get their final plans approved without mitigating whatever was noted in the report.

Mr. Diggs said that he wanted to address one final point that was mentioned by constituents this evening. He said that many people expressed strong support for fine dining establishments, but those prospective businesses had informed the County that they needed more rooftops first. He said that the Board was often told by constituents that they did not want any additional housing, but that meant they could not attract the businesses that constituents were advocating for. He said that he did not want anyone to think the Board was dismissing their requests and suggestions; there was a lot more that went into these conversations.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Mr. English, to approve proposed Ordinance O26-17.

Dr. Yeung made a substitute motion, seconded by Ms. Guy, to approve proposed Resolution R26-130.

Dr. Yeung said that she supported denying this request because of compliance with the stated requirements of the zoning district. She said that Buc-ee's was geared toward serving Interstate 95 traffic, not the adjacent resident areas. She said that regarding the existing use and character of the property and surrounding properties, Buc-ee's was a different use than others in the area, much larger in size and scale, and was a 24/7 operation. She said that the building was 75,000 square feet, in contrast to the nearby Publix, which was 49,000 square feet. She said that regarding trends of growth and development in the surrounding area, it had historically been smaller commercial buildings and single family homes. She said that Buc-ee's was different from that. She said that regarding transportation requirements and impacts on transportation networks,

not all impacts were mitigated in the application and did not comply with the Comprehensive Plan policies for no degradation in the staff report.

Dr. Yeung said that in terms of requirements for public facilities and services, the project required substantial transportation improvements, some were unaddressed and others were unknown until the OSAR process was completed. She said that she did not want the County to be stuck with the costs of transportation problems caused by Buc-ee's. She said that regarding conservation of property values in the area, in her opinion, smaller retail buildings with less traffic impact was a more appropriate use of the property. She said that regarding the timing of public facility construction and the public cost of development, unmitigated traffic impacts would inevitably shift the cost burden to the County and VDOT. She said that the proffers were written and did not commit to traffic signalization on Sunflower Drive and Israel Rodriguez Drive. She said that it was not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Diggs called the vote on approval of proposed Resolution R26-230, which was to deny the rezoning application.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (2) Yeung, Guy

No: (5) Allen, Diggs, English, Evans, Vanuch

Mr. Diggs said that the motion failed, so the original motion to approve the rezoning returned to the floor.

Ms. Allen said that she wanted to assure everyone that this decision was made with deep thought and consideration. She said that she had been advocating for generating revenue and business growth in the County for seven years on the Board. She said that the Board recently committed to giving meals tax incentives to a restaurant group in order to attract their business to the County, so she could attest they were doing everything possible to encourage economic development and alleviate the County's budgetary pressures. She said that for years, development had not paid for itself, so when the County had opportunities to bridge that gap, they had to take it. She said that when she was a member of PRTC, she saw the initiatives Spotsylvania was taking to spur development, she would not want to give away this potential fuels tax revenue to a neighboring County 30 miles away.

Ms. Allen said that when the County was struggling to make do with the limited resources for their Transportation projects, to refuse this potential fuels tax revenue would require raising real estate taxes and property taxes to fund those projects. She said that she would rather take this alternative, acknowledging that it was not a perfect project. She said that unless they were a Stafford family who had been in the County since the 1800s, all of them had contributed to the development of the County and the costs associated. She said that it was her job to figure out how to move them forward. She said that knowing this and the potential offset, she was not comfortable taking away \$0.01 of the tax rate because it was a Buc-ee's.

Ms. Vanuch said that the live feed went down, so the vote could not be seen by viewers.

Mr. Diggs said that they would take a five-minute recess to resolve the technical difficulties.

The Board recessed at 12:48 a.m. and reconvened at 12:53 p.m.

Mr. Diggs called the vote to approve Ordinance O26-17 to approve the rezoning application.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Diggs, English, Evans, Vanuch

No: (2) Guy, Yeung

ITEM 5. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO PERMIT VEHICLE FUEL SALES, HIGH-INTENSITY COMMERCIAL RETAIL, AND A COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLAN IN THE B-1, CONVENIENCE COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT ON TAX MAP PARCEL NOS. 29-60C, 29-60-D, 29-60E, 29-60F, 29-60G (PORTION), AND 29-ROW (PROJECT KNOWN AS BUC-EE'S OF STAFFORD); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-131 (APPROVAL); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-132 (DENIAL)

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Mr. English, to approve proposed Resolution R26-131.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Diggs, English, Evans, Vanuch

No: (2) Guy, Yeung

ITEM 6.. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER A PROPOSED REQUEST TO VACATE A PORTION OF A PLAT, SPECIFICALLY UNDEVELOPED RIGHT-OF-WAY BETWEEN AUSTIN RIDGE DRIVE AND COURTHOUSE ROAD (PROJECT KNOWN AS BUC-EE'S OF STAFFORD PLAT VACATION); PROPOSED ORDINANCE O26-23 (APPROVAL); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-173 (DENIAL)

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Mr. English, to approve proposed Ordinance O26-23.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Diggs, English, Evans, Vanuch

No: (2) Guy, Yeung

ITEM 7. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER A PROPOSED ZONING RECLASSIFICATION FROM THE A-1, AGRICULTURAL ZONING DISTRICT TO THE B-2, URBAN COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT ON TAX MAP PARCEL NOS. 29-75, 29-75A, 29-76, 29-76B, AND 29-78 (PROJECT KNOWN AS MARKET AT AUSTIN RIDGE); PROPOSED ORDINANCE O26-07 (APPROVAL); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-77 (DENIAL)

Amy Taylor, Engineering Specialist, said that she would be presenting information on the last two items before the Board on tonight's agenda. She said that these included a rezoning reclassification and a conditional use permit for Market at Austin Ridge. She said that this was a zoning reclassification from the A-1 Agricultural Zoning District to the B-2 Urban Commercial

District for 25.04 acres, including a conditional use permit to allow for multiple drive-through facilities, vehicle fuel sales, mini-storage warehouse, and storage warehouse facilities in the B-2 Urban Commercial District, located in the Hartwood District.

Ms. Taylor said that the applicant, Courthouse West, LLC, was represented this evening by Jeff Harvey with Legacy Engineering. She said that the subject parcel, located on the south side of Courthouse Road west of the intersection with Austin Ridge Drive, was currently zoned A-1 and was shown in light green on the zoning map. She said that the surrounding zoning districts included a mix of Agricultural, Light Industrial, Urban Commercial, and Planned Development II zoned properties.

Ms. Taylor said that the site's existing conditions included a mix of open and wooded areas. She said that the area fronting along Courthouse Road was largely open, while the southern portion of the site was heavily wooded. She said that several single-family dwellings and various outbuildings had already been removed from the property. She said that the site's topography consisted of rolling terrain throughout much of the property, and there were no sensitive environmental features on the site.

Ms. Taylor said that the surrounding area included single-family residential dwellings to the west, the North Point Warehouse distribution facility, which was currently under development to the south, a planned commercial retail development to the west, and the Embrey Mill Town Center shopping center to the north. She said that in regard to the development proposal, staff had noted that the original applications associated with this project had previously proposed to rezone the property to B-2 Urban Commercial and a portion of the property to M-2 Heavy Industrial, and had included three development options, including a data center. She said that proposed uses under the CUP previously included low- and medium-intensity retail uses in the commercial district.

Ms. Taylor said that however, the applicant had amended the applications to eliminate the data center and revise the requested zoning districts to reflect B-2 and M-1 Light Industrial. She said that the amended applications had been presented to the Planning Commission on February 25, and while the site layout and the overall scope remained unchanged, the application amendments required those changes to be re-advertised. She said that the Planning Commission had deferred the amended applications to March 25 and had identified several issues for the applicant's consideration.

Ms. Taylor said that following the initial Planning Commission hearing, the applicant had further amended the applications based on comments and recommendations received, and currently proposed to reclassify the entire project to B-2 Urban Commercial, with two development options, for a shopping center with various commercial and retail uses, including specific uses such as a drive-through facility, vehicle fuel sales, mini-storage warehouse, and warehouse uses as permitted with a CUP.

Ms. Taylor said that the generalized development plan presented a conceptual layout of all the buildings, internal travelways, sidewalks, parking areas, and other features for each development option proposed. She said that according to the GDP, the retail option envisioned primarily commercial uses, including multiple retail buildings, restaurants, a convenience store with fuel

sales, a car wash, a grocery store, and a child care center. She said that most of the buildings would be one story in height; however, the retail option also depicted a five-story mixed-use building with offices over first-floor restaurant or retail uses and a mini-storage warehouse facility located in the southern portion of the site.

Ms. Taylor said that drive-through locations were proposed for multiple buildings throughout the site, and as shown, all drive-through lanes demonstrated adequate vehicle stacking, meeting or exceeding minimum stacking length requirements and including bypass lanes as recommended. She said that the convenience store with vehicle fuel sales would be located near the intersection of Courthouse Road and Austin Ridge Drive, with fuel pumps situated between the proposed building and Courthouse Road.

Ms. Taylor said that the mini storage warehouse would be located at the south end of the property and was depicted as three buildings with up to two stories in height. She said that the mini storage facility also included outdoor storage areas and would be located behind the primary buildings, screened from view of public right-of-way and adjacent properties. She said that the overall development would be accessed by way of five new entrances along Courthouse Road and Austin Ridge Drive, providing adequate internal access and vehicular circulation.

Ms. Taylor said that landscape buffers were proposed along abutting residential uses and along Courthouse Road and Austin Ridge Drive. She said that the site layout for the hotel option was virtually identical to that of the retail option, proposing many of the same commercial uses, including the mini storage warehouse facility. However, this option replaced one of the retail buildings with a hotel with up to 100 rooms, and the mixed-use building was reduced to three stories. She said that site access and landscape buffers remained the same under this option.

Ms. Taylor said that included in her presentation were building elevations and architectural renderings, which represented the general design and materials to be utilized for various buildings. She said that the GDP also included various design standards, which detailed the guidelines pertaining to permitted exterior materials and colors for all buildings within the development. She said that staff noted that the proposed guidelines and renderings were generally consistent with the architectural guidelines of the Neighborhood Design Standards Plan.

Ms. Taylor said that the proposed proffers also committed to the general design and theme of the commercial buildings as depicted. She said that the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map identified the site as being within the Courthouse Targeted Development Area. She said that the more detailed land use concept for the Courthouse TDA designated the property for mixed use, commercial, and residential specifically, as shown here in purple. She said that in regard to public facility impacts, no significant transportation impacts were identified, and the TIA determined that the project would not degrade the level of service of the transportation network.

Ms. Taylor said that no impacts were identified for other public facilities such as Utilities, Schools, Parks, and public safety. She said that staff noted that the proposed proffers required general conformance with the GDP, but also allowed for other uses permitted within the B-2 district, aside from those specifically shown or identified on the GDP, which would allow for flexibility as the site developed.

Ms. Taylor said that to summarize, some of the proposed proffers would generally require the property to be developed in general conformance with the GDP based on the two development options proposed, to prohibit development of specific uses otherwise permitted in the B2 district, limit the maximum number of entrances to five, and require inter-parcel connection as depicted on the GDP, required construction of sidewalks along Courthouse Road and Austin Ridge Drive frontage, required construction of all noted transportation improvements as identified by the TIA, to limit the maximum vehicular trip generation to no more than 11,576 trips per day, based on all combined uses.

Ms. Taylor said that additionally, commercial buildings were required to follow the general theme of the renderings as depicted on the GDP, they must provide enhanced perimeter buffers with a minimum of 85% of evergreen plantings, eliminate internal vegetative buffers between proposed buildings and uses, permit open space to be calculated on a limited basis, and require a minimum of 30% open space for the overall development. She said that furthermore, they must establish requirements for the provision of water and sewer facilities to adjacent properties in certain situations.

Ms. Taylor said that for the conditional use permit, proposed conditions would generally limit the number of drive-through facilities, fuel sale uses, and mini storage warehouse or storage warehouse uses permitted. She said that these conditions would also limit the location, hours of operation, building heights, and outdoor storage areas associated with the mini storage warehouse use. She said that outdoor storage areas would require screening where adjacent to residential properties. She said that other conditions would address the location and distribution of drive-through facilities, vehicular access and circulation, drive-through screening, pedestrian accommodations, and limit the number of fueling positions permitted.

Ms. Taylor said that illuminated signage adjacent to residential uses would be prohibited, and general signage coordination would be required for the overall development. She said that staff found that there were multiple positive aspects to this proposal and believed that the proposed development was consistent with many of the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. She said that the proposed uses were consistent with the pattern of commercial retail development in the surrounding area. She said that the development was also in conformance with transportation policies by limiting maximum trip generation and providing for multiple transportation improvements along Courthouse Road and Austin Ridge Drive.

Ms. Taylor said that the architectural concepts were consistent with the National Design Standards plan guidelines. She said that the commitment to exceed open space requirements for the overall development and the proposed proffers and conditions limited the scope of the development. She said that in regard to negative aspects, staff found that the only negative impact associated with the applications are that the conceptual buildings shown on the General Development Plan do not meet the minimum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) recommendations for commercial development specifically recommended in the TDA. She said that staff was generally supportive of the project and recommended approval of both the zoning reclassification and CUP applications. She said that at its March 25, meeting, the Planning Commission voted 7-0 to recommend approval of both applications.

Mr. Diggs asked if the applicant had a presentation.

Jeff Harvey, Director of Planning with Legacy Engineering, said that he would be brief. He said that the applicant believed that this rezoning and conditional use permit application would bring new opportunities for the County in commercial retail uses. He said that they had four tenants under current letters of intent (LOI), which were Texas Roadhouse, Aldi, Flagship Carwash, and Sheetz. He said that the applicant was actively working with additional potential tenants to attract new businesses to the County. He said that they were confident that this application complied with the goals and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Harvey said that the negative comments in the staff report addressed the site's floor area ratio, recommending the Comprehensive Plan for targeted development areas. He said that to meet the .4 FAR requirement, a building must be at least two stories in height, which was not feasible for retail development in Stafford County at this time. He said that in fact, he did not know of any commercial retail opportunities that met the .4 FAR requirement. He said that they believed their application met the standards for a conditional use permit and the requirements for approving a rezoning. He said that their development team was present and happy to answer any technical questions the Board may have.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing. He asked if any members of the public wished to speak to this item.

1. Julia Lewis, Falmouth District, said that she thanked the applicant for choosing to pursue a B-2 rezoning request rather than an M-2 rezoning. She said that she appreciated there would be an Aldi's here, along with the other businesses. She said that at the Planning Commission meeting, Sheetz representatives discussed how they did not feel they would cannibalize the other Sheetz, and she also thought they would be happy to be across the street from Buc-ee's. She said that anyone that did not want to go to Buc-ee's would go to Sheetz. She said that she was happy to see this application and encouraged the Board to vote to approve it.
2. Kristin Maxson, Falmouth District, said that there was no public threat to the public today. She said that there was a cause and effect. She said that the word "cannibalism" was described as an effect on March 25, 2026 at the Planning and Zoning hearing during the Market at Austin Ridge presentation. She said that this application was also known as Courthouse Center, but the single sign for the hearing today was not visible from the road because it was bent. She said that Courthouse Center was also absent from the County's documents. She said that Attachment 7, Courthouse Center Application, had no adjoining neighbors within it and did not ensure neighbors were contacted through the life of the application. She said that this also applied to the application affidavit addendum, Attachment 9, page 17 of 39. She said that there were no page numbers in the application.

Ms. Maxson said that project name, plan number, and date were missing from the application affidavit. She said that this did not ensure proper placement. She said that R19-188, Attachment 9 was missing the County Administrator's signature, and had a question of code handler inside. She asked that they please note that GDP was questionable with the district line, as noted on page 1305 of the agenda today. She said that districts were not represented as lines, but boundaries. She said that this could imply a conflict of interest. She said that the Institute of Transportation Engineers trip generation was smudged out on page 3,436.

Ms. Maxson said that staff stated during a budget work session that they wanted to hire a past staff director to assist with that issue, then realized this public statement was a conflict of interest. She said that tucked in the study was the Courthouse Center attachment; however, they cannot find it. She said that costs were an element of developing multi-modular infrastructures with transportation, as seen on page 26 of today's agenda. She said that this was what was causing the very high budget crunch they were feeling today with the economic uncertainty and the rubber stamp putting Stafford over the edge. She said that page 155 stated that the TIA identified several impacts to the transportation network.

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

Ms. Vanuch said that she wanted to thank the applicant for changing the request for M-1 zoning to B-2. She said that regarding the mini storage and warehouse uses, she would like to know if the applicant would consider removing those uses because the County had a sufficient amount of these types of uses.

Mr. Harvey said that it was a placeholder for the overall development plan. He said that the applicant was exploring potential uses for the area, but given the surrounding area, which included large storage warehouses and would soon include flex office space across the street, the mini storage and warehouse could be a transitional fit could be beneficial if that was the intended use. He said that the conditional use permit could accommodate a storage warehouse, making mini storage one of the possible uses, although it was not the applicant's primary focus at this time, and they would prefer it to remain in the application.

Ms. Vanuch said that she was unsure if she could support the application if the mini storage stayed in the application.

Mark Bowman, applicant, said that the reason for the mini storage warehouse was largely due to the approvals they had received prior to their application for the North Point project and the dead ending of Austin Ridge Road. He said that retail required more visibility to be seen and to achieve its highest and best use. He said that the County was currently exploring additional roads in that area. He said that they were willing to review this plan as it progressed. He said that the purpose of the mini storage warehouse was to provide flexibility at the southern end, in the event that no road was built.

Ms. Vanuch said that she understood what the applicant was saying; if it remained a dead-end it made sense. She said that she was wondering if they could include in the proffers that they would prioritize the road connection over the mini storage use.

Mr. Bowman said that he would prefer to leave it in the application as-is.

Dr. Yeung said that regarding the traffic in this area, she wanted to ensure that staff was working to address the potential transportation impacts in the Transportation Master Plan due to being nearby the courthouse and hospital.

Mr. Lehane said that unrelated to this project or Buc-ee's, there were transportation needs staff was looking at based on previously approved developments in this area. He said that the solutions included widening Courthouse Road further west toward Mine Road, as well as some

improvements at Hospital Center Boulevard that they would bring forward to the Board in the near future. He said that there were a number of items staff was considering, which would be addressed in the Courthouse Targeted Development Area Transportation Plan.

Mr. English said that he had concerns about the number of gas stations that were proliferating in this area, as well as the proposed storage units. He said that with those outstanding issues, he was unsure if he could support the application.

Ms. Allen said that she had also assumed the Sheetz was a possibility rather than a certainty. She said that she wondered if Sheetz had agreed to be a tenant with the understanding that Buc-ee's would be across the street. She said that it was a lot of gas stations to have in this particular area. She said that the community was also generally unsupportive of the high number of storage unit facilities that were in the County.

Mr. Bowman said that to clarify, the Sheetz had decided to locate there before this application was submitted. He said that they knew there was another Sheetz nearby, and as they stated in the Planning Commission meeting, their focus was to capture the traffic on both sides of the interstate, so they would not be taking away business from the other Sheetz. He said that they were also well-aware of Buc-ee's being a neighboring business, which they viewed as complementary to their business model rather than a competitor. He said that he understood the Board members may not like having a Sheetz there, that was the contract that allowed them to begin this process and purchase the property.

Ms. Allen said that she had tried to do some research and find a similar scenario where a Sheetz or Wawa was situated next to a Buc-ee's and there was nothing comparable. She said that she was unsure how they would impact each other.

Mr. Bowman said that as a public commentor stated, anyone that did not want to stop at Buc-ee's would undoubtedly stop at Sheetz. He said that a Sheetz representative was present earlier in the meeting but left due to the late hour. He said that however, he spoke directly to that concern at the Planning Commission hearing. He said that Sheetz had done their own modeling that determined they would not be taking away business from the other Sheetz and that Buc-ee's was not direct competition for them.

Ms. Allen said that she remained uncertain. She said that there was a section along Route 1 in her district that had three gas stations in a row before reaching a Wawa, and those three gas stations barely got any business. She said that once the Wawa came in, it took all of those customers. She said that she was concerned that Buc-ee's may have the same effect. She said that she was willing to accept the storage units, but the gas station seemed redundant.

Mr. Bowman said that this application was submitted over two years ago, and should have been well in advance of Buc-ee's but for some delays in the review process unrelated to anything the applicant could control. He said that people would find the easiest way in and out of a location, and typically, going from west to east, it would be making a right turn into Sheetz versus the left turn into Buc-ee's or the left into the Wawa. He said that this was why Sheetz was interested in locating here.

Mr. English said that he was concerned that the Board was being asked to approve another gas station, coming directly after many residents expressing that they did not want more gas stations and wanted nice, sit-down restaurants. He said that he also would prefer they take the storage units out. He said that he did not know if he could support this application.

Mr. Diggs said that when discussing traffic patterns, he believed Buc-ee's would be a great local draw for the initial few months, but then they would return to Wawa and Sheetz for their daily trips. He said that he understood the delays the applicant had in the process, and he wanted to ensure they continued to support business development in the County. He said that in short, he was going to support the application.

Ms. Evans motioned, seconded by Mr. Diggs, to approve proposed Ordinance O26-07.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (4) Diggs, Evans, Guy, Yeung
No: (3) Allen, English, Vanuch

ITEM 4. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) TO ALLOW MULTIPLE DRIVE-THROUGH, VEHICLE FUEL SALES, MINI-STORAGE WAREHOUSE, AND STORAGE WAREHOUSE USES IN THE B-2, URBAN COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT ON TAX MAP PARCEL NOS. 29-75, 29-75A, 29-76, 29-76B, AND 29-78 (PROJECT KNOWN AS MARKET AT AUSTIN RIDGE); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-78 (APPROVAL); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-79 (DENIAL)

Ms. Evans motioned, seconded by Mr. Diggs, to approve proposed Resolution R26-78.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (4) Diggs, Evans, Guy, Yeung
No: (3) Allen, English, Vanuch

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned its meeting at 1:24 a.m., May 20, 2026.



William H. Ashton, II
County Administrator