

James City County Rural Lands Public Workshop #2 Verbatim Notes
Thursday, January 12, 2006
6:30 p.m. at Toano Middle School

From the Workshop Handouts

BY-RIGHT DEVELOPMENT:

PROS:

Value of land is retained
Less Government restrictions
Land owners development rights are retained
3 acres is a Manageable lot size
The land is set; it can't be developed any further
Keep "as is."
Keep private farms; allows freedom to own pigs, horses, cows, etc.
Allows Family farming
Landowners have the choice of what to do with their land
More Privacy

CONS:

Does not support rural economic development as an alternative
Not all land should be assumed for residential development
Development is inevitable
As stewards of the land, we need to plan ahead
Sprawl
No Privacy in cluster

OTHER COMMENTS:

Do not take By-Right development away from existing land owners
Farming is going to be non-existent
Leave our farm alone

DENSITY NEUTRAL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

PROS

Add higher density clustering as a By-Right incentive
Allow Cluster developments to share PSA resources
Allow unattached parcels to be combined for density calculations, so density can be increased or shifted between lots (ie. Allow TDR).
Leaves land available to future development if rules change

CONS

Don't require HOAs for clusters; allow conservation lots.

OTHER COMMENTS

Should not be applied to ALL rural lands:

Rural lands need to be classified according to certain criteria: community character corridor, proximity to PSA, proximity to transportation hubs (I-64, Rt. 60, etc.).

LOWER DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

PROS:

None listed

CONS:

Destroys the possibility to develop affordable or even middle income housing

Decreases land values

3-acres is already too large of a lot size; not everybody needs that much land to care for.

OTHER COMMENTS:

Do not take away any current rights from landowners

All in room say NO mandatory lower density

No clusters unless landowner wants to develop that way

Breakout session – Workgroup flipchart notes

BY-RIGHT DEVELOPMENT

PROS:

Provides a buffer compared with Northern Virginia

Development rights belong to landowner

Doesn't further restrict the landowner

Doesn't take away any of the owners' current rights

Expanding options is okay, but don't take away the right to develop at 3-acres.

Property rights stay the same

More privacy

Provides more options for locating a home on a lot with areas of unbuildable land conditions

Less added restrictions

This option will work for the builders

CONS:

Does not support rural development

No true affordable homes

Tax increases are making land less affordable

Restricts economics for land owner

Doesn't provide many affordable homes

Workers can't afford to buy in JCC under the current zoning and it is pushing first time home buyers out of the county

Too many restrictions

Want more options: voluntary cluster incentives

PARKING LOTS:

What is being done to preserve farming?

Horse lands do not require the same infrastructure as residential (like schools)

Let owner divide land the way he wants; especially for family subdivision

There should be different rules for long-time land owners and those with large plots of land.

Want more than one option (only three options are currently being presented)

Let owners make decisions on what to do with the land

Family subdivision of land should be supported

County should buy conservation land from landowners

JCC has already restricted landowners enough – making the land someone else's country club

Restrict options for developers and non-landowners with regards to regulations on water, infrastructure, roads, etc.

Want less government regulation and less options available to non land owners

Expand ways to give feedback besides these forms

Have to put up with complaints from new development (paint barn, tractor parked there etc.)

We are setting up JCC for developers and retirees

Taxes need to be lowered, instead of increasing so that landowners are forced to sell

Development should tie into PSA

Allow landowners to pool together developable land for building and pool together undevelopable land for conservation/green space.

PSA needs to be expanding, especially to provide affordable homes.

The design of by-right on Forge Road is the worst case scenario; not sure if it is presented in the best way

DENSITY NEUTRAL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

PROS

Incentive – increasing the number of lots in minor subdivision would be valuable

Could cluster lots on the best drainfield soils

Preserves existing density

Voluntary provides a mix of lot types and development

Maximizes value if owner can cluster around most valuable parts of land

CONS

Might have future development of open space

Homeowner/neighbors shouldn't be responsible for remainder open space

Don't use public money to maintain open space

Restricts flexibility of landowner; might devalue land

Mandatory clustering limits flexibility

Too many estates; homes too close together

No mandatory option!

Possible future development of open space

Would make HOAs necessary

Mandatory would devalue property and decrease housing choice

PARKING LOT

Should expand PSA to provide more options to rural landowners

Can unbuildable land be used as open space?

Provide for family subdivision

Increase density to 1 acre
Provide all options for landowners
Clarify incentives
Mandatory cluster removes incentive for conservation easements
NO incentives – maximize voluntary options
Incentive – increase density or allow connection to PSA
Infrastructure cost should be borne by new developer
Should distinguish between types of rural lands for development options
Cluster illustrations are not true representations
Expand the PSA instead of limiting landowners

LOWER DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

PROS:

Voluntary development
Expands options to landowner
Helps to preserve and maintain community character corridors
Better for traffic and schools

CONS:

10-acre lot has the potential for other uses
Mandatory restrictions on land
More restrictions
Lowers the value of land
Affordability of lots – investors coming in to subdivide lots
Not the best use of land in 10 acre
10-acre lot is too expensive to own
Can't afford maintenance on 10 acres
Why should homeowner provide green space?
Lowers existing land value
Inefficient use of land and infrastructure and precludes transit and rail
Communal wells are not feasible for 10-acres
Economically devalues the property
Too much to maintain and shouldn't be required
Low density is unrealistic; it devalues the land
Not enough incentive to get developer to build; will result in expensive homes
Lower density = unaffordable
Reduces the opportunity for future generations

PARKING LOT

County needs to realize that land will not remain the same – no one will farm land anymore
County needs to lower density
Distinguish between farm owners and land owners
Pass on cost of infrastructure to the developer
No more restriction on land use
Landowners concerned that they didn't call "the meeting"
Reward landowners for preserving green space
Government can use eminent domain

Nothing should be done
Too much growth, too quickly
Restrictions on rural lands
Graphic shows area that can't be developed
Graphics are deceptive and unrealistic
Build out estimate is unrealistic; restrictions on private wells, stream set-back restrictions
Didn't account for scenic easement
Too many restrictions currently on rural lands
Concern that voluntary could become mandatory
PDR program
Should be focusing on bringing in economic development such as industry/ R&D