

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** February 14, 2006

**TO:** Members of the Rural Lands Committee

Jeff Barra	Victoria Fahringer
George Billups	Richard Krapf
Rich Costello	Gary Massie
Jim Daniels	Jack Schmidt

**FROM:** Tammy Rosario, Senior Planner II

**SUBJECT:** Rural Lands Committee Meeting #7 - February 15

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Happy Valentine's Day! Please find attached the materials for the next Rural Lands Committee meeting scheduled for February 15<sup>th</sup> at **4:30 p.m.** at the **James City County Library Community Room** (7770 Croaker Road). These materials include minutes from the January 25<sup>th</sup> meeting and the agenda for the January 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

To start the meeting, the consultants will present the committee members' feedback from the homework assignment leading into a discussion on the draft set of recommendations. At this time, the committee will review the draft set of recommendations and offer comments on the form and substance of the draft. Renaissance will also present the draft design guidelines for the committee's deliberation. Finally, the agenda will conclude with a review of the committee's remaining schedule.

Thank you for your diligence thus far. As the Rural Lands Study comes to an end your continued input and evaluation of the recommendations and design guidelines will be essential for the overall success of the study. Also, please be reminded that we have returned to a two week schedule. The next Rural Lands committee meeting is scheduled for March 1<sup>st</sup> at **4:30 p.m.** at the **James City County Library**.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me. I look forward to seeing you tomorrow.

Attachments:

- Minutes from the 1/25/06 meeting
- Agenda for the 2/15/06 meeting



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**TO:** Members of the Rural Lands Committee

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**FROM:** Kristin Van Voorhees and Eric Wright, Renaissance Planning Group

**SUBJECT:** 1-25-06 Steering Committee minutes

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The sixth committee meeting began with a public comment period during which there were no comments. Tammy Rosario of staff acknowledged the receipt of the previous steering committee assignment from public citizen Linda Rice. The committee then reviewed and approved the minutes from the 12-14-05 meeting.

The meeting followed the following format with discussion on each topic:

**Committee Observations of Public Workshop #2**

- Workshop #2 dispelled the public's misconceptions they had in the first workshop. We found the By-Right diagram to be distracting to community feedback, but by the last session we were able to get around this. (Rich Krapf)
- Up-zoning, or lowering density, is not considered a realistic option by the community. Loudoun had some good cluster examples, and it had some zoning catastrophes. We need clear guidelines to ensure good development. We should take to mind the community votes and use the examples from the bus trip in moving forward. (Jack Schmidt)
- The community had questions about how clusters could maximize the use of rural lands. Can cluster developments be situated on build-able lands, with the remainder conserved, and can un-buildable lands such as wetlands, steep slopes, hills, ravines, etc be included as open space? (George Billups)
  - o That may be an incentive for voluntary clustering on certain lands (Jeff Barra)
  - o This is a possible incentive depending on the committee's definition of "open space". (Tammy Rosario)
  - o Density bonuses are often given as an incentive for this type of land (Milt Herd)
- I thought this workshop was better than the first. We had good attendance. Some dominated the discussions, however. (Rich Costello)



- It may not be accurate to say that about half voted for by-right and half for voluntary cluster. We gave each person 8 dots and some may have placed all on no-change exclusive of voluntary. (Vlad)
- It is clear that the community has a preference for "no-change". (Jeff Barra)

### **Alternative Recommendations - Options ABCD:**

- Shortening the maximum cul-de-sac length will result in more flag lots. (RC)
  - o Usually lengths are based on safety (ability to get out fast) and traffic flow. (Milt Herd)
- One size doesn't fit all? Are the rural lands different enough to warrant different treatment? Agricultural Enterprise Zone Designations include organic farming, horse farming or other uses compatible with the current land use. (Hamlets in river areas?) (RK)
  - o Agricultural economic development programs exist but apply usually to whole rural areas. (Milt)
  - o Community Character Areas could receive different treatment? (RC)
  - o Designating enterprise areas would be non-residential incentives. (JB)
- It is really hard to look at only residential development in a vacuum. We need to have a parallel study going on looking into schools, shopping, etc. (RC)
- What is our final product? (JS)
  - o We will be making recommendations to the PC and BOS. Not specific details or we'd be making them without the community's input. (JB)
  - o We need to reduce the scope and focus on the deliverable. I think the ABCD options are a good framework. Personally, I like a combination of options A + B. (Garry Massie)
  - o I would like to treat this as a homework exercise to digest all of these materials. (RK)
  - o We will need enough specifics and detail in our final product for the ordinance to be a product of this Committee. (Tammy Rosario)
  - o Option "B" comes from the public. (GB)
  - o Be clear on why you like or dislike certain choices/options for the Board. Cluster has been an option by SUP in the ordinance since 1989 and we've only had one cluster built. There are strings attached to this option with requirements that act as disincentives. (Marvin)
- I like options A, B, and C. Increase owner's options. (RC)

### **Design Guidelines**

- The clusters that worked best were centered on a focal point and had private roads. There were three things that I found made certain clusters successful:
  - 1- A central feature/focal point around which the house was situated.
  - 2- Inclusion of a water feature that is both functional (fire safety) and aesthetic.



- 3- Common land management – from active farms (where houses are situated on a ridge line looking down on the farms) to HOAS. All worked well and functioned without major problems.
- 4- Value of cluster is more homes on better land. (JS)
- Who manages the drain fields? (GB)
  - o Drain fields in Loudoun are individual and are the homeowner's responsibility. (Milt)
  - o A positive to voluntary cluster would be situating the houses and the percolation areas more strategically. Maybe an incentive could be to allow treatment in-a-tank and other newer technologies. This would allow development on previously un-buildable lands. (JS)
- The comprehensive plan addresses the rural lands as different types of open spaces: forests, open fields, farms, etc. The design guidelines would need to address these differences – i.e. central feature in forested land. (Marvin)
- The hills in some of the cluster examples we saw on the bus trip added an aesthetic that could be achieved in JCC by the surrounding timberland. (JS)
- Ravines and peninsula shaped lots also may restrict the common space as a central focal point. To achieve the design guidelines, we need the flexibility to apply them to lots of different sizes, shapes, topography, tree cover or absence of, road visibility, etc. (Marvin).
- There needs to be a carrot with any stick. (GM)
- We need JCC staff support person to act as a liaison to the landowners - someone who they can go to and ask questions about cluster options that pertain to their land. (Victoria Fahringer)
- Look at Marlbank Farms in York County for example of cluster design. (Jim Daniels)
- Look at private street standards. (RC)

The meeting ending with the following public comments:

**Public Comments:**

*Charlie Crawford*

- JCC is not ready to change the rural lands. The Comprehensive Plan makes it an uphill battle against citizens to achieve their goals. Owners are afraid that their rights are being taken away. You can't satisfy everyone, but I think you should hold off with this decision until you are able to reach a greater consensus. There is too much at stake. The public clearly is for no change. If voluntary clustering is an option, we need a dedicated staff person to help the public understand how it affects them on an individual basis. Final decision should be up to the public and should be presented to them once again.

*Eugene Hoffmeyer*

- This interference by JCC is forcing owners to sell quickly to developers. They feel that the government is trying to restrict and limit their rights. Families would hold onto their land if they were assured that they could retain its value. The conservancy should pay



for the land if the Comprehensive Plan respondents want lower density. It is hypocritical that a school is currently being built outside of the PSA.

*Andy Bradshaw*

- BOS and the PC are looking for specifics from the Steering Committee so that the ordinance is a product of the committee. One size does not fit all. There needs to be flexibility to account for different land acreage, topography and conservation values (hunting lands, agriculture, forest, and view sheds). This can't be all about the public input as the public at the workshops only represents one segment of the community. The steering committee was carefully selected for this study and carry great value in their thoughts.

*Mark Rinaldi*

- Residential is only part of the equation and I am hearing you say that this will be addressed soon. Consider mixed-use development in a hamlet (dentist office in first floor of house with dwelling above). Also, there is a rail line being proposed that will run through the rural lands. There may be an opportunity to intensify development in certain areas that are located near transportation/major roads.

The committee chairman then asked for and received a motion and second for the meeting to adjourn, with all voting in favor.



James City County  
Residential Development in Rural Lands Study  
**STEERING COMMITTEE AGENDA**

wednesday february 15, 2006 | 4:30 pm

- 4:30      **OPENING - Public Comments**  
Approve Minutes from January 25th Steering Committee Meeting
- 4:40      **HOMEWORK REVIEW**  
Consultant Summary  
Steering Committee Observations
- 5:00      **REVIEW DRAFT SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS**  
Review Draft Recommendations Matrix  
Process and Exceptions Recommendations  
Steering Committee Discussion on Final Recommendations
- 5:30      **REVIEW DRAFT DESIGN GUIDELINES**  
Site Analysis  
Design Elements  
Infrastructure/Utilites
- 5:50      **REMAINING SCHEDULE**
- 6:00      **CLOSING - Public Comments**
- 6:15      **ADJOURN**