

AT A WORKSESSION MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE COUNTY OF JAMES CITY, VIRGINIA, HELD ON THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY, NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE AT APPROXIMATELY 8:20 P.M. AT THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER BOARDROOM, 101C MOUNTS BAY ROAD, JAMES CITY COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

1. ROLL CALL

Mr. Fred Belden  
Mr. A. G. Bradshaw  
Mr. Wallace Davis  
Mr. Martin Garrett  
Mr. John Hagee  
Mr. Alexander Kuras  
Ms. Carolyn Lowe  
Mr. Gary Massie  
Mr. Robert Magoon  
Ms. Willafay McKenna

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. O. Marvin Sowers, Jr., Director of Planning  
Mr. Larry Davis, Assistant County Attorney  
Mr. Larry Foster, Assistant County Administrator  
Mr. Allen J. Murphy, Jr., Principal Planner  
Mr. Don Davis, Principal Planner  
Ms. Sandra Barner, Planning Intern  
Mr. Wayland Bass, County Engineer  
Mr. Sanjay Jeer, Long Range Planner  
Mr. John Cofer, Consultant

OTHERS ATTENDING

Mr. Paul Small, AES  
Mr. Norman Mason, Langley and McDonald  
Mr. John Moneymaker, W.H.H. Trice & Company  
Mr. Bill Barner

2. NON-PSA DEVELOPMENT POLICY - A-1 AND A-2 AMENDMENTS

Mr. Sowers made introductory remarks to the affect that a number of questions had been posed to staff at the previous worksession. Effort has been concentrated on responding to questions considered to be the most crucial for purposes of deliberation and those on which information can be provided in a timely manner before the Planning Commission's March 14, vote. These include impact on real estate values and failures of private sewer and water systems. It was noted that a number of other questions had also been raised, but could not be addressed without three to four months or more of additional study, and staff felt that the information submitted thus far provided sufficient technical and legal background for the proposed changes.

Mr. Foster presented a memo from Mr. William Brown, Real Estate Assessments, regarding a survey of the impact of increased lot sizes on real estate values in other counties. In summary, his finding was that other counties had not experienced an overall loss of tax income due to property devaluation. Although specific parcels might be negatively affected temporarily, in general and in the long run, the total value of property had gone up. Reference was made to JCC's experience with more restrictive A-2 requirements instituted in 1985. Mr. Hagee stated that he did not see a connection between the proposed changes and the changes to A-2 because most A-2 districts are in the PSA.

Mr. Bass made a presentation on private septic sewer system and well failures in the County and provided the Commission with a handout. About \$20,000,000 has been spent in the last 20 years. Discussion followed as to the suitability of County soils for proper septic performance.

Mr. Magoon did not think the Commission should try to involve itself in the question because such systems are regulated by the State. However, other Commissioners felt that wells and septic are part of the infrastructure and the Planning Commission should be concerned.

Mr. Hagee questioned the applicability of the information being presented and if the failed systems were on lots smaller than one acre. Mr. Bass pointed out that some were larger than one acre, and other Commissioners commented from their own experience that the lot size does not determine whether there will be problems or not.

In response to a question from Mr. Massie, Mr. Bass stated that most well failures were shallow systems experiencing water quality problems, but that some were due to pipe failures, and that the best ground water quality is in north County. Mr. Massie stated that the plan should state that septic and well systems are acceptable, and that central sewers can negatively impact low lands.

Mr. Sowers observed that even with their diverse points of view, the Commissioners did seem to agree on the fact that the County should have more authority to review the development that takes place in A-1. The critical question seems to be the threshold number of acres that would make some kind of review automatic.

Mr. Magoon offered a handout which outlined a compromise of a five acre minimum lot size with a one dwelling unit per two acre density cluster provision by SUP with no minimum lot size. Mr. Massie asked Mr. Cofer if his original recommendation had been for three acres, and Mr. Cofer replied "yes."

Mr. Magoon stated that the well and septic issue was a State issue and that the County should initiate activity at the State level rather than try to locally control it. Ms. Lowe, Mr. Kuras, Mr. Belden and Mr. Garrett disagreed with this position.

Mr. Kuras pointed out that water and sewer are only one consideration for the proposed changes, and that ability of the road system to handle the traffic is equally important. He expressed concern about the impact of two acre lots on roads.

Mr. Garrett reminded the group that whatever they send to the Board stands a good chance of being diluted.

Mr. Belden stated that the Commission has been asked to comment on other issues, but has not yet done so. He stated that the Commission needs to come to the March 14 meeting prepared to vote. There are informational meetings scheduled between now and then for public input, which Commissioners are encouraged to attend. Commissioners should also cover any concerns about specific items such as uses with staff. In response to a question from Mr. Belden, Mr. Foster said another worksession was not scheduled before the March 14 meeting.


Mr. Edwards requested that the public hearing advertisement for the Board of Supervisors be written to allow different options to be considered.

Mr. Belden asked staff to prepare a one page staff position paper prior to the March 14 meeting.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Belden recessed the worksession 9:30 p.m. until the February 24 and 25, 1989, training session at Captain George's Restaurant (6:30 P.M.) and Recreation Center (9:00 A.M.), respectively.

  
Fred Belden, Chairman

  
O. Mark Sowers, Jr., Secretary