



CITIZENS FOR FAUQUIER COUNTY

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August 29, 2011

Fauquier County Board of Supervisors
10 Hotel Street
Warrenton VA 20186

Gentlemen:

On August 24, the Citizens for Fauquier County Board of Directors entertained a presentation by Monday Properties representatives Andrew McGeorge and attorney Hank Day concerning the latest proposal for a project known as Catlett Farms, LLC.

After reviewing the new Proffer Statement made available to you and County staff on August 19, and after considering the information supplied by the Applicant on August 24, we find we cannot support this latest proposal. We wish to set forth our reasons for taking this position.

1. Our fundamental objection to the new proposal remains the same as before: Its approval would involve a significant health and financial gamble for Fauquier County by permitting drain fields on soils that Virginia Tech and County soil scientists have studied and found to be unsuitable for that purpose. The Applicant continues to describe its proposed sewage treatment plant as “just like the one at Vint Hill”; however, the Vint Hill plant releases pure, potable water into South Run by grandfathered permit, while the proposed Catlett Farm, LLC development’s plant would release effluent into shallow drain fields on unsuitable soils, adjacent to the floodplain of Cedar Run, an impaired stream by State definition. As you know, Cedar Run is in the Occoquan Watershed, providing water for most of Northern Virginia. As the soil scientists stated in their reports to the County, if this system fails, the County will be accountable.
2. The Applicant’s plan to site houses on both sides of and between two major gas pipelines (Colonial and Transcontinental) would create a risk of horrific damage to life and property. As we have previously advised you, massive pipeline explosions are a legitimate concern. We have experienced them in the past, in one case on a pipeline that crosses this same property. There are older pipelines going back several decades. This fact suggests that Fauquier County would be wise to consider writing an ordinance restricting development in areas close to gas pipelines.
3. The Applicant does not state how many apartments are proposed in the mixed use area in addition to the 225 single-family and attached houses proposed. The Proffer proposes “225 single family and attached and detached residential units, *not including residential apartments located in the mixed use area.*” The number of apartments should be specified in the development plan, since that number could have a significant impact on water, sewer and other County services.

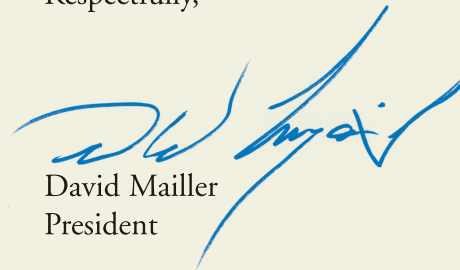
4. The Proffers state that the County must pay for the collection system of the proposed sewage treatment plant serving the current residents of Catlett and Calverton. This cost was estimated by the Applicant's representatives at our meeting to be at or near \$18,000 per house. According to the Proffers, if the County does not act in accordance with the Proffer Statement's schedule, the County would lose its option to hook up to the phase 1 sewage treatment plant and would end up paying not only for the collection system to current village residents but also for the County's portion of the phase 2 sewage treatment plant. The Proffers state that the County must come up with the funds for the collection system for the current residents of Catlett and Calverton and begin construction of the collection system BEFORE the Applicant begins construction of the phase 1 sewage treatment plant (80,000 gpd). If the County did not follow this plan, the Applicant would apply phase 1 to its development and would not be required to complete phase 2 (80,000 gpd), leaving the County obligated to build both the collection system and the portion of the treatment plant that would serve Catlett and Calverton under phase 2. Accordingly, the County needs to consider now how it would finance the collection system for service from the proposed sewage treatment plant to the current residents of Catlett and Calverton.
5. The County has an ordinance requiring Service District residents to hook up to sewer systems when such are available in Service Districts. Currently, the Catlett/Calverton Service District is exempt from this ordinance because there is no sewer system in place there. How would the County reconcile this situation equitably going forward under the Applicant's plan? Clarification of this issue should be a precondition for approval.
6. The Applicant plans to drill wells to supplement existing Catlett water supplies, yet no hydrological study has been undertaken to determine if sufficient water is available to service all the development units proposed. The community needs to be assured that this additional water demand does not deplete or affect existing, surrounding wells in the area. We therefore recommend that a hydrological study be a precondition of the Board of Supervisors' further consideration of the application.
7. The Applicant offers no monetary proffers for the impacts of the development on County services. Local schools are already at, or over, capacity. New schools would have to be built, and other County services would have to be financed by County taxpayers. The proffers they offer benefit the developer rather than alleviating the tax burdens of such large residential and commercial developments on County taxpayers.
8. We appreciate the Applicant's efforts to propose context-sensitive solutions to possible transportation problems in the development area, particularly those that would substitute roundabouts for two signalized intersections along Route 28. We would hope that the Board would require the Applicant to exhaust all private options for acquiring the properties needed for these solutions as a precondition of approval of the application, rather than calling upon the County to exercise its eminent domain authority.

9. Serious studies of the Catlett and Calverton areas of greatest historic relevance to students and scholars of the Civil War and Native American cultures should be a precondition of Board approval of the application. The Applicant's provision for studying a handful of nearby Civil War-era graves is most welcome, but makes no reference to the known presence at the proposed development's core of Civil War battle encampment and ancient Native American settlements of tremendous archaeological significance.

CFFC is not institutionally predisposed against Fauquier County's development. It is rather focused on channeling that development into areas equipped to deal with its logistical, educational and fiscal consequences, and assuring that the County's taxpayers don't have to shoulder either State- or locally-imposed costs that should be absorbed by the developer.

In this context, the latest Catlett Farms, LLC proposal is fatally flawed. We believe that the Board of Supervisors should seek alternative means of assuring that the citizens of Catlett and Calverton will have access to affordable sewer service.

Respectfully,



David Mailler
President

cc: Susan Eddy
Kristen Slawter
Henry C. Day, Esq.