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District 1 Update: August 2024

OVERVIEW OF COUNTY-WIDE ISSUES

Review of the Property Assessment

As mentioned in previous months, I have asked for a review of the District by District average assessment values from our Assessment office.

Land values across the County have increased by a small percentage with the exception of District 3. The County has confirmed that the taxable property assessments in District 3 were higher and in line with the other districts; however, the overall total was offset by the Board of Equalization decision to reduce the Plains Marketing and Colonial Harbor properties. These and other changes occurred as the businesses reduced their overall operations.

Additionally, the reduction in total assessments was driven largely by a \$240M reduction in the Naval Weapons Station property value (which is exempt in any case).

The County has satisfactorily demonstrated to me why I was observing the differences in total assessment value and taxes paid by District.

VA General Assembly subcommittee on Gaming

The Subcommittee on Gaming met on June 17th. On their agenda was a request for Casino Gaming on Cruise Ships while docked in Offshore waters of the Commonwealth.

I wrote to each member of the subcommittee as well as our Delegate and Senator, to express concerns that York County has with the presence of large cruise ships in the Chesapeake and the impact that this gaming proposal might have.

The subcommittee adjourned for further review. There has been no update from the subcommittee.

Review of Zoning Ordinances

At the request of the BOS during our February offsite meeting with County staff, Staff have begun to review and bring before the Board several changes to our Zoning Ordinances.

Examples include the Home-Based Business Zoning ordinance, Landscape, Buffer and Greenbelt Regulations, Warehouse Sizing within Industrial Parks, and Data Center regulations.

This follows a series of Workshops and Public meeting discussions on Short Term Rentals (STR). The following changes were approved for inclusion in the Zoning Ordinance and Policy procedures for STRs:

- When located in single-family residential zoning, STRs must have appearance of a single-family detached residence and typical residential accessory structures
- The Board will receive and consider comments from nearby residents when considering applications for STRs
- The owner should reside either in the home or in an adjacent premises. If residing in an adjacent premises, the owner should reside within 3,000 feet of the STR
- A property owner may not operate more than one (1) STR within York County
- New STRs (other than those located within Yorktown Village) should adhere to the following distance standards:
 - STRs located in low density zones should not be located within one-half (0.5) mile of another STR
 - STRs located in medium density zones should not be located within a one-quarter (0.25) mile of another STR
 - STRs located in high density zones should not be located within 750-feet of another STR

Organizational Assessment & Staffing Study

At the request of the BOS, during our February offsite meeting with County staff, the County Administrator was asked to conduct an independent staffing assessment, utilizing an external consultant to evaluate overall York County staffing levels and assess whether we are right sized, or in need of additional resources. The study will also help to determine if there should be a shift of resources between departments.

Following recent review with the Consultant, the Board has questioned whether the process, as determined by the County, should be modified, whether the competency of staff in each department is adequate to meet current and future needs, and whether members of the public should be included in the interview process.

The review is expected to be completed by late October.

DISTRICT 1 SPECIFIC ISSUES

Queens Lake Dam, Spillway and Lake Funding

I continue to pursue funding for the Queens Lake Dam and Spillway repairs to prevent environmental damage to Queens Lake estuary and a major loss of property values for residents of Queens Lake.

A resolution was endorsed by the BOS on August 6, requesting the help of Congressman Wittman to address the Department of the Interior (National Parks) for compensation related to the drainage area controlled by the Colonial Parkway to begin to address the cost of dredging for the lake.

New Businesses

The number of new businesses in York County continues to grow, with 15 new businesses licensed in June.

The latest business Licenses to be approved in District 1 include:

- Old World Baking LLC, a home-based bakery located on Dennis Drive.
- James Allen Smith LLC, a home-based business offering Design Consulting on Royal Grant Dr.
- En Pointe Dance Academy LLC, a commercial dance studio on Mooretown Road.
- Williamsburg Private Custom & Travel Massage, operating as a home-based business, conducting massages only at the home of clients. (Note: The York County Home-Based Business Ordinance prohibits the operation of a massage parlor within residential zoning.
- Gaines Visual LLC, a personal service photographer, home-based business on Hubbard Lane.

I value your input, Please become a regular recipient of this newsletter.

I value your input and am happy to address questions or concerns on these or any other topics for the district. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

You can reach me at my email address shared above.

Click on the link above to request my monthly newsletter or copy/paste the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSez8_XXEx7rgRR2XXobA1uRJK-cRUXFMd_D-Oa_T7eeNer1Jw/viewform