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## **District 1 Update: September 2024**

### **OVERVIEW OF COUNTY-WIDE ISSUES**

#### **School Speed Check Zones**

Last May, Sheriff Montgomery presented an initiative to the Board, to install speed check cameras in five school zones. Bruton High School is one of the zones.

On August 26, the first day of school, the cameras went active. The next 30-days is a trial period to get the public used to the cameras and work out any bugs in the system. Speeders during the trial period will receive a warning letter from the Sheriff's Office.

Effective Wednesday, September 25, civil citations will be issued with a fine of \$100 for anyone exceeding the posted speed limit by more than 10 miles per hour.

There is no cost to the County for the cameras or their installation. Only a small portion of the funds collected from the fines will go to the vendor. The rest will go into the County's general fund per State Statute.

Current traffic data for the County is showing a positive impact on speeding. Earlier this year the Sheriff's Office recorded 3,725 speeding violations of 10 mph or more over a five-day period.

During a recent four-day period following implementation, the number of violations had dropped to 822 with about 70 percent of the violations occurring in the York High School zone on Route 17. The Sheriff's Office will be paying greater attention to this troubled speed zone.

For District 1 residents, the Bruton High School section of Rochambeau has a camera installed. The speed limit during school hours is 45 mph.

## **FLASHVOTE**

**Have you ever wished for a quick and easy way to comment on important issues that come before the County Board of Supervisor.**

**I support having as many York citizens sign up for this program as possible. In that way, the Supervisors will have a better understanding of how the citizens are responding to key issues.**

**York County is working with FlashVote to gather resident input through scientifically developed surveys. The survey questions are designed to be unbiased and the data from the survey is reported statistically to help County officials make informed decisions.**

**I consider this an outstanding tool that can help each of the Supervisors to set policy.**

**FlashVote gives you a voice in local government. Often Supervisors only hear from a small number of concerned citizens on an issue. One vote every four years from regular citizens doesn't do you or the Supervisors much good. A lot can change between elections, and it is good to receive citizen input on significant issues from time to time.**

**To participate in FlashVote, you must sign up at**

**<https://www.flashvote.com/yorkcountyva>**

**You can also sign up by calling or texting 775-235-2240.**

**Here's how it works:**

**Sign up takes less than one minute and your input is always kept anonymous**

**Personal or demographic information collected by FlashVote is never shared with the County or anyone else.**

**When residents sign up, they can determine how surveys are received – whether by email, text or phone call.**

**They will receive a notification whenever there is a new survey, and they will have 48 hours to participate before voting closes.**

**Once a survey is closed, everyone who participated will automatically receive a summary of the overall results and be able to see how their responses compare to the group.**

## **PUBLIC ALERT SYSTEM**

Here's another new system being introduced by the County.

What I particularly like about the new system is that you can control what alerts are received. If you only want a severe weather alert, that's what you can select. If you only want it by text message, again, you have that option within the system.

York County has launched a new emergency notification system called Rave Alert. This platform uses state-of-the-art technology to allow County officials to provide timely, accurate information directly to residents during emergencies.

Rave Alert replaces the County's current system, York Alert.

Rave Alert is designed to enhance public safety by delivering real-time alerts and notifications through multiple channels, including text messages, emails, voice calls, and mobile app notifications on a variety of situations, such as severe weather, public safety threats, and important community updates.

Registration is free and now available. You can enroll in the Rave Alert system by visiting

<https://yorkcounty.gov/4333/RAVE-Alert>

## **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.

- Our most recent work session focused on zoning code, and the permissible businesses within Commercial or Industrial zones.

## **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, overstaffed or in need of additional resources. The study will also help to determine if there should be a shift of resources between departments.

Following review at a Board of Supervisor workshop, Berkley Group, consultants completing the survey met with each Supervisor in late August to address specific concerns and consider modifications to the process.

## **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 Rob 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.

Will Sroka, Legislative Director for Congressman Wittman, confirmed that they have been in contact with National Parks and are reviewing the data provided by AH Engineering to the County.

### **Update on Schools**

School is back in session. Portable classrooms have been constructed at Waller Mill elementary (6 classrooms, 150 children), to offset over capacity at Magruder Elementary.

Busing changes proposed by the York County School Board last May resulted in a redistribution of students between the two Elementary Schools.

Magruder is now lower by approximately 110 students, with Waller Mill receiving 70 additional students. A portion of the Magruder students (living on Yorktown Naval Weapons Station) are now being bused to York Elementary, Middle and High.

I'm not a huge fan of Portable classrooms. I view the cost of installing a Portable, followed by the cost of building permanent facilities as paying for the same result Twice! Our BOS will meet with the School Board in late October for a work session. This is the message I will be delivering. With rampant growth in the Upper District, we need to be designing, constructing and opening permanent buildings. Queens Lake middle is scheduled for expansion in 2028, but Waller Mill is not scheduled until 2031. In my view this is too slow. I prefer to see both expansions move forward to 2028.

### **Fenton Mill Residential Development**

Fenton Mill Residential Development has begun construction. The project located behind Fire Station #5 on Newman Rd is now owned by Forestar Group, with D.R. Horton constructing the homes. This 298 home development replaces the originally contested subdivision (Mid Atlantic Realty submission for 836 homes).

## **York 64 Trade Center – NorthPoint Mega Warehouse**

I reported on NorthPoint Development in earlier Newsletters. For those who have not previously read about NorthPoint, they had proposed an Amazon type distribution warehouse complex, comprised of five buildings totaling 2.4 million sq ft of floor space. The proposed plan for this operation is the equivalent of 11 Lowes Home Improvement stores in one location. NorthPoint has plans to build this warehouse along Lightfoot Road, on the old Williamsburg Pottery property.

At my request, VDOT provided an independent review of the applicant's Traffic Impact Assessment and concluded that a high-capacity parcel distribution warehouse operation is inappropriate for this site and has eliminated that option for the Developer.

NorthPoint have not responded or communicated with York County since September of last year. It's not clear that the sale of the land will progress given the decision provided by VDOT.

The next Industrial Park expected to see commercial development is in King's Cross – an area next to Cheatham Annex off Penniman Road.

Three possible site plans have been submitted to the County for opinion and review. Several of the same issues as with NorthPoint are present, traffic density, size of warehousing, current condition and width of Penniman Road.

As one of the proposed plans includes the possibility of a Data Center, we will also have to take a close look at the proposal. The Planning Commission is due to review new ordinances for Data Centers in its upcoming meeting.

## **New Businesses**

The number of new businesses in York County continues to grow, with 19 new businesses licensed in August.

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

- United Performing Arts LLC, a commercial based business providing personal instruction located on Musket Drive.
- Roberston Lawn Care LLC, a home-based business offering professional lawn care, located on Holcomb Drive.
- Dogbird LLC, an STR (Short Term Rental) recently approved by the Board of Supervisors located on Deer Path Road.

**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:

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