

Takeaways from Rockland Community Meeting

May 4, 2023

North Warren Fire Hall, Front Royal

Community members expressed their concerns loud and clear at a recent meeting about the rezoning request at the Shenandoah Valley Golf Club in Rockland. If approved, the rezoning could result in 286 additional homes and 12 acres of commercial land.

The proposal is clearly a bad idea:

- **Comp Plan** – This proposal goes against the comprehensive plan and the future land use map because the land is currently zoned agricultural and is intended to *remain* agricultural. The comp plan calls for dense development like this to go near Front Royal with municipal water and sewer.
- **Traffic** – 286 homes, a proposed sit-down restaurant and other commercial uses would result in much higher volume of traffic on the narrow, curving roads. More traffic could also impact response time of emergency vehicles.
- **Quality of Life** – residents value the green, open space of their community. If rezoned from ag to suburban residential, an age-restricted planned residential development is proposed which allows up to four homes per acre.
- **Rural Character** – Rockland is surrounded by three important designations highlighting the rural character and commitment to agriculture:
 - Rural Historic District – Rockland is one of only 37 such districts recognized for its history and landscape.
 - Ag-Forestal District – Rockland is the oldest ag-forestal district in the commonwealth and the largest in Warren County.
 - Conservation Easements - landowners voluntarily gave up their development rights and agreed to permanently protect nearly 8,000 acres.
- **Infrastructure** – the definition of sprawl is allowing dense development to occur in areas that lack municipal water and sewer and in areas not intended for such growth.
- **Precedent** – the comprehensive plan is the vision of growth/protection that the community agrees to for the next 20-30 year. Approving a rezoning that's at odds with the comprehensive plan is a bad idea, and it creates a precedent that makes it easier to do so again in the future.

Community members raised additional concerns. You can [read the full notes from the Rockland community meeting here](#). You can also [view the meeting presentation](#) and [application packet here](#).