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“How did we get here?”

Chair Randall asks at the beginning of the Hiddenwood Lane hearing - in the face of no clear right decision for the supervisors.

BY REED CARVER

The problem, and proposed solution

Arcola was an agricultural region that is now changing rapidly. Rezonings as far back as 2014 began to shift the area from farming to industrial/data centers uses. These trends have sandwiched the neighborhood along one-lane gravel road Hiddenwood Lane between data centers, soon to be built data centers, and planned data centers.

Multi-lane road infrastructure is also in the process of being built, connecting to Hiddenwood Lane. The only residential border is in the environs behind Hiddenwood. It is another 72-home subdivision called Briarfield Estates.

Both communities are surrounded on three sides by construction, or current and future data centers.



Hiddenwood Lane community's discarded sign to their neighborhood.

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VOTED BEST OF LOUDOUN

For Hiddenwood, however, their only means to and from home is now through a construction site. The surrounding fields which are open, are in general, approved for future data centers. Substations and power lines for the centers occupy the land as well.

At the July 10 Board of Supervisors Public Hearing, 16 residential owners of the

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“There is really very little taste out there for the annexation”

—Council Member Chris Bertaut

BY VALERIE CURY

At its July 9 Purcellville Town Council meeting an update was provided on the Chuck Kuhn Valley Commerce Center annexation/boundary line adjustment proposal. At the council's work session on July 23, the council's majority voted to continue the annexation/

boundary line adjustment process to further enter into discussions with the applicant.

In a 4-3 vote Mayor Stan Milan, Vice Mayor Erin Rayner, and Council Members Mary Jane Williams and Kevin Wright voted to continue the annexation process. Council Members Chris Bertaut, Carol Luke and Caleb Stought voted against continuing discussions with the applicant.

If the Valley commerce Center is annexed into the Town of Purcellville, the county has indicated an additional 12.5-acre property—which is next to the proposed parcel (to the south west) would need to be part of the annexation.

At the July 9 meeting, town staff also indicated that there are additional properties along Purcellville Road that would also like to come into the town should the center be annexed.

The 117.07-acre property is located in the county

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Applicants, representatives, and residents listening to staff presentation of the Valley Commerce Center proposal on July 9, at the Purcellville Town Council Meeting.



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“ IT'S LIFE CHANGING

Finally! A local Doctor is helping cancer survivors live lives free from the constant pain and suffering associated with **Peripheral Neuropathy!**

Irreversible is not a word you want to hear from your Doctor but it's a common one if you've been diagnosed with Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy or CIPN.

John T. of Leesburg survived testicular cancer only to be living life in constant pain. He felt as though he were walking on pins and needles, becoming weaker and weaker every day. "I was beginning to be worried that one day I would be wheelchair-bound."

Nearly half of the patients who undergo chemotherapy will develop Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy or CIPN.

Chemotherapy meds travel throughout the body and attack cancer cells; sadly they can also cause severe damage to healthy nerves. CIPN can begin within weeks of starting treatment and can worsen as treatment continues. A high number of really unfortunate people will be forced to endure the symptoms associated with CIPN for months, or even years after they've completed chemo.

When asked how CIPN was affecting his quality of life, he responded, "It was difficult to even walk up and down stairs and do other things we usually take for granted."

The most common symptoms include:

- **pain, tingling, burning, weakness, or numbness in arms, hands, legs, or feet**
- **sudden, sharp, stabbing, or shocking pain sensations**
- **loss of touch sensation**
- **clumsiness and trouble using hands to pick up objects or fasten clothing**
- **loss of balance and falling**

For some, their nerves will recover over time. For most, the nerve damage is 'irreversible.' John had been told just that by a series of Doctors and specialists. Essentially they could cure his cancer but couldn't fix the damage done by the drugs used to cure his cancer.

Then John made a call to Rachal Lohr of FIREFLY |Acupuncture & Wellness right here in Ashburn. Rachal and her team are using the time tested science of Acupuncture and technology originally developed by NASA that assists in increasing blood flow and expediting recovery and healing to treat this debilitating disease.

After a series of treatments John was taking stairs with stride!

"We have a beach house and it's up stairs. This morning I walked right down the stairs and got in the car," John shared.

"I remember thinking 'That's become mighty easy for me', I didn't have to hold on to the handrail or anything! It's life-changing to have this mobility back!"

Again and again, we meet with patients who were once diagnosed as "untreatable" or "incurable" but after receiving Rachal Lohr's treatments are now living lives free from pain and suffering. For over 17 years she has been reversing the effects of CIPN and other varieties of Peripheral Neuropathy, including that is caused by diabetes without invasive surgeries and medications that come with uncomfortable side effects.

If you've recently beat cancer only to find that you're living a life in constant pain and discomfort or you're struggling with the same symptoms as a result of either Idiopathic Neuropathy or Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy, Rachal and the incredible team at FIREFLY can help!

Rachal Lohr is now accepting new patients but only for a limited time. In an effort to protect her patients, both current and future, she has made the difficult decision to limit the number of patients seen in her clinic.

Only 10 new neuropathy patients will be accepted monthly so call (703) 263-2142 now to schedule a consultation.

Visit FIREFLYAcuAndWellness.com to learn more and take advantage of their New Patient Offer!

Loudoun Sketch Club art exhibit begins Aug. 5 at Gallery One

An exhibit of work by Loudoun Sketch Club artists will open Aug. 5 at Gallery One in the Loudoun County Government Center in Leesburg. "Beyond Sketching" will be a wonderful display of local plein-air and studio works by members of Loudoun County's oldest arts organization. In addition to the art, information about the history of the club will be on display.

Member artists are serious artists working in a variety of mediums such as oil, acrylic, gouache, pastel, watercolor, sculpture, photography and pencil. Many are professionals with a wide range of experiences and notoriety, but the club is open to dedicated amateurs as well. The only requirement is a willingness to work and improve.

Loudoun Sketch Club President Pat Whittle said, "When we gather, an energy seems to envelope the group as ideas, methods and styles are shared. We are all striving to improve our art. Weaving together our diverse backgrounds lifts every artist in a way that welcomes, supports and inspires."

"Beyond Sketching" runs from Aug. 5 to Sept. 5. Access to Gallery One is through the public entrance of the Loudoun County Government Center, located at 1 Harrison St SE in Leesburg.

The building is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Enter through security and mention you are there to see the art in Gallery One, which is just to the right. Many of the pieces are for sale. Contact information for the art-



ists is available in a binder at the exhibit should you wish to inquire about a piece.

Founded in 1944, the Loudoun Sketch Club is a group of nearly 200 working artists who regularly gather to develop and promote their art through workshops, plein-air outings, art shows, and sales.

The Club welcomes artists working in all media and at all skill levels with an interest in advancing their art in the company of other artists. Those interested in joining or learning more about the Club can go to <https://www.loudoun-sketchclub.com> for further information.

Troop 711 honors three new Eagle Scouts



L to R: Alex Kyle, Soren McKay, Jude McKay.

On April 6 BSA Troop 711 held a Court of Honor at the Trillium Gathering Building in Purcellville and presented three scouts with their Eagle Scout awards. Only five percent of scouts achieve this top honor. Over the last 20 years 106 scouts from troop 711 have received this award, including these latest three - Jude McKay, Alex Kyle, and Soren McKay.

Troop 711 Committee Chair, and former Troop 711 Scoutmaster Scott Walker, delivered the Eagle Charge and Pastor Henry Lough of Blue Ridge Bible Church gave the benediction. Life-to-Eagle coordinator John Stock was master of ceremonies.

Jude McKay was a Senior Patrol Leader for over two terms during the toughest times of Covid-19 when the troop met virtually, as well as orchestrated socially distanced outings. Jude led and recruited new members and was instrumental in keeping the troop going during the transitional time.

Jude's Eagle project was constructing a shade structure for The Kids Club of Northern Shenandoah Valley, including working through the difficult permitting process.

Alex's is a well-rounded scout, whose achievements included hiking the

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Idle Thoughts

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

A lot is happening: War in Ukraine, Israeli retaliation against Hamas, the ascendance of China; our lousy economy; a nasty presidential election between two old guys (one of whom quit) and an assassination attempt; a wide gulf between Americans on issues like abortion, the open border and illegal immigration; the fentanyl that pours through from that border; crimes of all sorts.

Though I ponder these weighty problems, I don't really have a topic for today. Thus, I'll share some odds and ends that are floating in my mind. I'll start with something simple.

Good Governance

Politicians and bureaucrats should serve the people. What a radical concept! They should be wise, fair, honest and effective. In reality, though, those standards are seldom met. I'll deem our Supervisors and Staff honest and usually fair, but at times I'm not sure about their wisdom. Viz. The data center crisis and rapacious sprawl that threatens the west, both of which seemed to catch

them—and most of us—by surprise.

County Staff is amazingly effective in grabbing the reins of governance and directing it as they see fit. That's not necessarily good.

Another element of good governance is transparency. Supervisors do a good job of disseminating some information through newsletters but the County as a whole fails miserably in transparency: It treats FOIA—Freedom of Information Act—requests as intrusive irritants it will find some way to ignore. I've experienced this first-hand, several times.

Term Limits

We really see the need for term limits in the federal government, where geriatrics rule the roost. The longer they hold office, the more they seem to cater to big business and reelection is always their primary goal.

Term limits do cause a loss of some institutional knowledge, but that's not automatically bad. Virginia's governors get only one term and in many ways that's too short, but it's far better than the endless terms that legislators can

serve.

We truly need term limits for judges. Try this for federal courts: District Court judges—7 years. Circuit (Appellate) judges—10 years. Supreme Court justices—15 years.

Campaign Contributions

Good governance should start here.

Ban campaign contributions from corporations, unions, PACs and SuperPACs, partnerships. Allow contributions only from individuals and impose strict limits ... let's say \$10,000 for a presidential candidate and \$2,000 for a Supervisor. The challenge is that candidates will try to bypass these limits by forming cozy relationships with like-minded entities that push common issues. Think the DNC and Planned Parenthood or the RNC and the NRA.

HOAs

I've seen many real estate listings that add an exclamation point to one big selling point: "No HOA!" I'm not burdened by an HOA, but I'm quick to anger when I see an HOA-homeowner dispute in the news, on picayune disagreements such as the number of Christmas lights, or a flag they think is too big. These disputes

can become personal.

Loudoun's HOAs let the Board of Supervisors save time and hassle by handing neighborhood complaints off to HOAs. That's unlikely to change.

A solution exists. Let local governments create "HOA Appeal Board" to rule on homeowner appeals of HOA rulings. We already have the Board of Zoning Appeals, so why not an official body covering HOAs?

Design Cabinet

Loudoun has an official "Design Cabinet," comprised of architects, engineers, designers and such. Its purpose is to "promote high-quality ecological, urban, architectural and landscape design in the county." Lord knows we need help.

Loudoun lacks an urban area that would be a logical place for major buildings that can emphasize architectural expression. Thus, the Design Cabinet seems to consider mostly low-rise projects—shopping centers, churches, apartments, mid-rise commercial buildings and such.

This year's winners were presented to the public at a recent Board meeting and they looked deserving. Aside from data centers, Loudoun is a bedroom county

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Purcellville candidates unite to save small town

BY CHRIS BERTAUT, BEN NETT, BRIAN GREEN, SUSAN KHALIL, AND JON ARNBURG

Mayberry Not Metropolis. These three simple words have resonated with the majority of Purcellville residents. Citizens are weary of out-of-control utility costs, the pettiness and personal attacks emanating

from Town Hall, and the continual push for mass urbanization that threatens to destroy our small town community of neighbors.

Developers have successfully killed nearly every blade of grass in eastern Loudoun County, pouring as much concrete and asphalt as possible. Now, land speculators want to transform western Loudoun in similar fashion. They envision industrial parks, high-rise buildings, and big box stores that, they say, will bring in more tax revenue.

It will bring something else—an increasing transient population, more drugs, more crime, more traffic, and the destruction of small town life. Purcellville will be "Loudoun's rural

destination" no more.

We certainly embrace traditional American capitalism—not to be confused with the crony capitalism threatening Purcellville. We have great respect for business owners and understand the desires of developers to break ground on new projects and cash in on their investments.

However, those of us who live here (they don't!) are not obligated to sacrifice our quality of life for their personal enrichment. Sometimes, being progressive means holding on to what you have.

"Mayberry" is not about regressing to a bygone era. Nor is it about staying trapped in time. There are plenty of opportunities for economic revitalization, to include our historic downtown district. There are plenty of improvements to make in our infrastructure. There is plenty of work to do to streamline our business licensing procedures. It is absurd, for example, that it took a neighborhood coffee shop more than one year to obtain the

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Dominion has to rethink their vegetation management

Dear Editor:

Once again, Dominion Energy has demonstrated why it may deserve the reputation as the Commonwealth's worst corporate citizen. Everyone riding around

major highways and rural roads can see the dreadful blight of Dominion's "vegetation management."

The ubiquitous haphazard brown out of plants along our roads and roadsides results from Dominion's spraying herbicide supposedly along their right of way and "generally" not in managed lawn areas.

According to their forester assigned to the project in western Loudoun, they need to remove growth which would impact their poles and lines.

Clearly, very little of what is now burned-out growth: grass and bushes, would never

impact the poles or lines, and some victim growth shrubbery and wild flowers may well have been planted by owners on property lines near roadsides to mark corners or block lights.

The whole project raises questions. What authority approves the use of herbicide? What kind of permission is Dominion required to have and what landowner/consumer input is sought?

Why, is killing off roadside growth necessary in summer when the blight is especially unsightly against the abundance of green? If maintenance is necessary, why can it not be manual, confined to sites where it might impact service?

With the damage done, is there any way for Dominion to make restitution? Yes, with their machines and manpower, they can cut off and

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Del. Geary Higgins on preserving Loudoun through economics

BY REED CARVER

“Working as a public servant in local government has not always been easy, but it’s been rewarding.” Del. Geary Higgins (R-30) said in an interview on July 15. Everyone in politics must balance the public life, and then there’s your private life, but ... “unfortunately, all too often, it takes a backseat to your public responsibilities,” he said.

Higgins first entered politics in Loudoun in 2000. He was elected to and began by serving on the school board, because his three children were in the county’s schools at the time, and he wanted to have some influence in their education.



Blue Ridge Leader: How are you working to promote conservation abilities?

Geary Higgins: As a representative in Richmond, Higgins and the other delegates make state laws. He has been working to pass several bills to aid in conservation and preservation in 2024, he said.

There are some relevant bills which have passed, like HB 1395. This applies in the following situation: someone goes to the local governing body, be that the town council or supervisors, and applies for a permit to tear down, or significantly alter a structure. If that structure is within a locally established historic district, then there is a 30-day period required to pass before any action can be taken. That will give the governing body time to evaluate if this structure should be preserved as is, explained Higgins.

“It’s essentially a cool-down period,” Higgins said. This bill on delayed deconstruction can be read on Virginia’s Legislative Information System.

His own bill HB 1223 to restore the

funding level for land preservation tax credits (conservation easements) from \$75 million to \$100 million was killed in committee.

However, two other historic preservation bills he supported which did pass were HB 914 allowing local jurisdictions to establish historic district tax incentives, and HB 960 that increased the amount of state funding available for historic rehabilitation tax credits from \$5 million to \$7.5 million. These bills create tax incentives to preserve historic structures and preserve open space by putting land into conservation easements.

BRL: Can you describe your role on The Counties, Cities, and Towns committee?

GH: Higgins said he serves as a member of the “Counties, Cities, and Towns” Committee in Richmond. And, that all delegates are assigned to committees, but he is well suited for this one because of his experience as a supervisor in Loudoun, which began in 2011.

The goal of the committees is to look into the details of bills sent to the committee, using their particular expertise. A few “conservation” bills that came though the committee sounded

good, Higgins said, but on closer examination did not yield the results he was looking for.

For example, he said, there was a bill that purportedly was about “tree-conservation,” but it did not require the conservation of any of the existing trees. Higgins said this bill required the planting of small trees about six feet tall at development sites, but failed to preserve any of the native trees already there.

On his own road near Waterford, the property around Higgins was developed for residential uses, and while the construction equipment was coming through, they took down all the trees on both sides of the road. “There were plenty of scrub trees in there,” Higgins said, “but there were also some large native ones that were worth preserving.”

He did not support that “so called” tree conservation bill because it made no effort to conserve any of the existing trees, he also mentioned, “normally the first thing people moving into new

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Just like nothing (else) on earth: Carlheim Manor

BY TIM JON

I didn't remember many details, and I certainly didn't want any more information. I had no pressing reason to find out the who, what, where, when, how or why—and I didn't even really need to answer to this event's overall importance to Loudoun County, Virginia. Huh-uh. I was here for myself, and by myself; I had no interview scheduled, and no press conference to prepare for and carefully cover.



TIM JON

Having long since clipped all the tethers of the professional, local 'hard news' media swirl, I quite gratefully allowed the absolute freedom of a simple, personal visit to a familiar, historic landmark to soothe at least some of the charred edges on my long-embattled intellectual and emotional armor; because, you see, for 10 years I carried the sometimes insurmountable responsibility of ingesting and translating every local news story into something accurate, credible, compelling and comprehensible for the listening public. So, on this morning, I just stood in the rain and soaked up the palpable atmosphere on the grounds of

Carlheim Manor.

I stood there as long as I felt like being in that spot. And it was mighty pleasing.

This ancient (to most of us) stone structure represents—to me—one of a handful of local fixtures that give this community its very individual and attractive character. Dark, silent, off the main 'trade routes,' old beyond any personal memory, with silhouettes from



nearly any angle that leave me with a sense of brooding, biding its time while we mortals mill about the vicinity.

I know that's a pretty hefty introduction, but this is a unique place: the property itself originally commanded almost

a thousand acres, stretching to the Potomac River in the east, to the center of Leesburg in the south.

Take a close look at the Exeter neighborhood clubhouse, and the creamery ruins out at Red Rocks Regional Park. Those were part of the old Paxson estate, with construction on the mansion dating back to the early 1870's—a time when little such ambitious expansion was seen on this side of the Mason Dixon line, much less on this scale.

The Paxson family lived on the property for about 50 years—maintaining ownership until the lady of the house, Rachel, passed on in the Year 1921. She willed the estate to the benefit of 'needy children.'

Fast-forward to today and we see the property utilized by a well-known local organization—the ARC of Loudoun; they offer therapy and support for individuals with disabilities—as well as their families. The group also hosts a very popular, Halloween-themed event, and other fundraisers throughout the year.

Now, all's well that ends well, but that lengthy success story didn't get to this point without a few bumps. I recall some very concerned voices some 20 years prior to this writing—expressing worry that the mansion would be demolished and the property sold off for development. Yes, believe it or not, I had it on good authority that the board of trustees, at that time, had leaned in the direction of profit versus the wishes of the late Rachel Paxson.

I remember that the Town Council stepped in and made a quick zoning change to create a protective historic district for the property. My news archive lists one of the supporters of the motion at one of the critical meetings who produced a petition with almost eight hundred signatures, so I would gauge that—after a series of emotional press gatherings and lengthy government sessions—the neighborhood achieved its goal.

So, things do sometimes turn out for the better, at least up to this point.

And you'll remember at the outset—I stated that I didn't much care about all that stuff anymore? Well, maybe I do—just a little. Or, a bit more.

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Three reasons why social media shouldn't be your therapist

BY MICHAEL OBERSCHNEIDER, PSY.D.

With technology being so present in our lives these days, it can be tempting to turn our friends into virtual therapists when we are in a bad place or need help. And while it's perfectly fine to reach out to friends on-line for general support, it's entirely another thing to seek guidance for larger mental health problems.

If you personally struggle with depression, anxiety, or alcoholism/substance use, or if your marriage is in trouble, or if your child isn't doing well, etc., your problems won't be adequately addressed on social media with a comforting comment, a "Like" or an empathic emoji. In fact, if you follow bad advice, your problems could

get worse.

According to the Pew Research Center, nearly 70 percent of Americans currently use social media with YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and TikTok being the top five platforms. But just as WebMD and Wikipedia shouldn't be your cardiologist,



Ask Dr. Mike

By Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D.

dermatologist or pediatrician—Facebook shouldn't be your therapist.

Keep the following three points in mind the next time you find yourself

wanting to turn to social media to address a more serious problem.

1. Mental health treatment is private, but social media sites aren't:

Psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and counselors are all bound to uphold the guidelines put forth by the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. HIPAA is in place to protect the confidentiality and security of healthcare information. Like Las Vegas, what you say in therapy stays in therapy, and HIPAA makes sure that happens. But what you share on social media is anything but private and there is no guarantee

that your public postings will be treated with respect or held in confidence. People you don't know at all may be able to access or read your public postings and comments, and what you put out there could go viral.

When you say something to a screen or in virtual reality or when you post something on-line, it may seem less real, but whatever you put out there for the public to view could remain there for a very long time. While your therapist will use the information you share with him or her in therapy sessions to understand and help you, the same cannot be

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Supacell Episode 1: An Exhilarating Introduction to Netflix's Newest Heroes

BY NAOMI FRASER

Suspenseful, heart-pounding, and deeply human, the pilot episode for Netflix's latest series, *Supacell*, takes audiences on a thrilling ride. The episode captures your attention within the first two minutes and holds it till the end. Set in present-day South London, *Supacell* follows the lives of five strangers who unexpectedly discover they possess superhuman abilities. Armed with their newfound powers, the novice heroes must unite to prevent a tragedy lurking on the horizon. Starring Tosin Cole, Josh Tedeku, Eric Kofi-Abrefa, Nadine Mills, and Calvin Demba as the leading five, *Supacell* delivers a captivating viewing experience you don't want to miss.



Rating: 4.5/5

The *Supacell* writing team's skill in crafting realistic characters with unique and fleshed-out

personalities is a major factor in the show's success. While superhuman feats and epic battles are fun to watch, strong characters drive stories and keep fans coming back for more. By the end of the pilot episode, I felt well acquainted with each of the five leads, understanding and empathizing with their struggles, priorities, desires, and needs.

The time the writers spent developing these characters pays off, and I'm excited to see where they take the heroes next. In crafting people audiences can root for, fight with, love, and even hate, the writers of *Supacell* have laid the foundation for a solid television series that will endure the test of time.

Supacell's writers also excel in building suspense. The pilot opens with a fast-paced, horrific scene that cues us to a major threat awaiting our heroes. As we leave this scene and enter the main

characters' seemingly normal lives, the constant sense of danger stays in the back of our minds.

We know the characters are heading down a hazardous road, but there's nothing we can do but watch with bated breath as we wait for something to blow. The suspense builds even more as the audience becomes privy to hidden surveillance cameras, superhuman prisons, and the five main characters unknowingly crossing paths. All these elements seamlessly come together to heighten anxiety and keep viewers glued to their seats. We know something big is coming, but there's no way of knowing when or where it will occur.

On a more personal note, I must touch on my deep appreciation of *Supacell's* inclusion of an all-Black cast. As a Black woman who adores a good superhero story, it is exciting and refreshing to see a show within that genre centered on people who look like me.

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Youngkin celebrates approval of Virginia Broadband Proposal

Gov. Glenn Youngkin has announced the release of the federally approved Virginia Initial Proposal Volume 2 that will enable Virginia to access its allocation of \$1.48 billion through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program under the National Telecommunications and Information Administration federal Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act.

This approval puts the Commonwealth firmly on the path toward accessing funding for administration of the BEAD program to support Virginia's goal to close the digital divide and deploy high-speed, affordable internet networks to areas without broadband. Virginia was the first state in the nation to submit all required BEAD plans to access funding.

"Virginia's historic investment in broadband infrastructure is one key ingredient which helped drive our ranking as America's top state to do business in 2024. With the resources we are securing today, we can close the digital divide and ensure all Virginians have access to high-speed internet," said

Youngkin.

"Today's announcement is a key step in our efforts to provide high-speed internet access to the remaining unserved regions of the Commonwealth ensuring all Virginians have the opportunity to prosper."

The BEAD program is a \$42.45 billion nationwide program to expand high-speed internet access by funding planning, infrastructure deployment, affordability and adoption programs. The Department of Housing and Community Development will administer the Commonwealth's \$1.48 billion BEAD allocation to build upon the work of the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative. As funding for universal broadband access is being delivered, DHCD will also utilize these funds to invest in efforts promoting affordability and improving adoption of this critical service.

"In today's digital world, broadband is critical infrastructure that is necessary for Virginians and Virginia business to thrive," said Secretary of Commerce

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 »

Eickelberg appointed to Virginia Treasury Board



On Wednesday, July 3, Virginia Governor, Glenn Youngkin announced the appointment of Loudoun County Treasurer Henry C. Eickelberg to the Virginia Treasury Board.

Virginia State Treasurer and Virginia Treasury Board Chairman David L. Richardson said, "Our Commonwealth heavily relies on the financial expertise and fiduciary oversight the Treasury Board members provide. I am confident Treasurer Eickelberg will be a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11 »

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“HOW DID WE GET HERE”, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Hiddenwood Lane community, which totals approximately 29 acres, were advocating for the rezoning of their assembled properties. They are seeking to rezone from Countryside Residential to Planned Development-Industrial Park (PD-IP).

The ultimate goal for these residents is to create an “escape route” by selling the Hiddenwood Assemblage for data center development.



The only road Hiddenwood Lane residents have to access their homes.

Chuck Khun of JK Technology owns a significant amount of the parcels surrounding Hiddenwood Lane. He also owns the two parcels of land in front of Hiddenwood, as well as land near the Briarfield subdivision to the northwest.

According to the July 10 county staff report, there is potential for an interparcel connection with the JK Technology Park #2 parcel to the south, and the Hiddenwood Assemblage, if the rezoning occurs.

Michael Romeo, Senior Land Use Planner with Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh, who represents Hiddenwood, said he could not divulge the offers for the land, when asked for prices by Supervisor Juli Briskman (D-Algonkian).

“But, you can realize that data center property is going for upward of four million an acre in the county,” said Briskman. “You guys say it’s not a windfall,” she continued.

Solution shortcomings

The area is the Suburban Neighborhood Place Type, which means that only 15 percent of the land should be converted to industrial uses. The primary use is residential, with a height for all buildings limited to four stories.

County staff said the proposal is inconsistent with the place type. They recommend denial for two reasons: impacts to surrounding neighborhoods [Briarfield] are too damaging, and the project clashes with the 2019 Comprehensive Plan.

Public comments

Eighty to 90 residents from both neighborhoods spoke at the hearing, those from Hiddenwood advocating for the potential sale to save their quality of life, while those from Briarfield were vocal about their situation getting worse because of the sale.

Twelve-year Briarfield resident, Sheeba Namburi, was concerned about the safety of her children. Recently, in the winter months, a large coil of cable from the construction site appeared on the street. Someone was trying to steal it during the night, but was alarmed by a barking dog and dropped the spool. She said that the data center sites attract people who don’t live in the neighborhood. She is afraid to let her children play outside.



Data center construction as seen from Hiddenwood Lane.

If this project is approved, Briarfield residents said, their singular neighborhood will be surrounded on three sides by data centers. Many of the Briarfield speakers said they constantly hear the air-cooling systems for the data centers, and they are breathing the dust raised by the construction. Blasting used in construction was alarming to many residents, who felt their houses shake at moments they were not expecting it.

“The sound was deafening, you had to be there,” said a resident. “I feel like Carl from the movie *Up*,” another said.

Several Briarfield children spoke about the loss of open space, and their parents making them go inside to avoid the heavy vehicle traffic and dust. Several of them have asthma. Smoke and heat result from this intense land use, and they also cited radiation from the computers as a poorly understood, but concerning impact.

To a greater degree, the residents of Hiddenwood find their situation unsustainable, with data centers right up

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 »

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Vineyard Square: “Let’s take a straw poll to move forward with that” –says Stought

BY VALERIE CURY

At the end of the July 23 Purcellville Town Council Work Session Council Member Caleb Stought asked Mayor Stan Milan to add a presentation by Casey Chapman of his revised proposal for the Vineyard Square Project to the September council agenda. The request was made even though the same presentation had already been presented on Sept. 26, 2023, at a former Town Council Work Session. The town council does not have any meetings in August.

Stought said Casey Chapman proposed a new project, and he wants Casey to “bring that back in September—and do a straw poll to move forward with that.”

On Sept. 26, developers Sam and Casey Chapman presented what they called a “new vision” for Vineyard Square in Historic Downtown Purcellville. At the time

they said they are scaling it down since they have been listening to feedback from the community for their 21st Street project.

The Chapmans added that instead of the approved six-story retail plus 40-condo project—which has been approved with active permits for 14 years—they would like to split the project into multiple buildings rather than one large structure.

They envision splitting off the front building, which could be for retail, commercial, office, or boutique hotel. In the back via O Street, they want to construct four buildings at four stories each. Instead of 40 condominiums, they would reduce the number by a total of four—from 40 to 36. They also said they would lower the height of the buildings overall by 20 feet. The proposal offered no information about the footprint or square

footage.

According to one of their older presentations their whole project totaled 171,000 sq.ft. of mixed use.

A change in an approved design would call for a whole new application submittal and a new site plan. This application should include public discussions, public hearings, comprehensive plan and zoning amendments—at both the planning commission and town council levels. Multi-family dwellings are not allowed in the Downtown C-4 Historic District. Two apartments per structure are currently allowed in this district, and the permitted height is two and a half stories and 35 ft. high.

If they want to change their approved plan—which expires in June 2025—they would have to go through a completely new application. This was confirmed by town planning staff at the time of their

new concept. The Chapmans, however, said they want to keep their current approval as a baseline for their new changes and site plan. This way they would not have to go through a public process. Their current uses are not allowed in the C-4 District.

Stought received from Vice Mayor Erin Rayner’s campaign the total of \$10,178 in campaign donations since 2022. He also received \$1,500 from one of the owners of the Vineyard Square project. From 2020 to present day, Rayner has received a total of \$72,467—an amount of which \$24,950 came from donations from the owners of Vineyard Square, their affiliates, and a relative and one of their employees who contributed \$10,000.

During Stought’s campaign last year, one of the owners of the Vineyard Square project also held a fundraiser for him.

EICKELBERG APPOINTED, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

strong contributor to that effort.”

Eickelberg said, “I want to thank both Governor Youngkin and Treasurer Richardson for their confidence in me. The Treasury Board oversees a number of programs critical to the daily operations of not only my office as Loudoun Treasurer, but virtually every other Treasurer’s office across the

Commonwealth. I’m looking forward to working with Chairman Richardson and the other board members in overseeing these important programs.”

The Treasury Board is a policy board in the executive branch of state government established under §2.2-2416 of the Code of Virginia. Among its powers and duties, the Treasury Board exercises general supervision over all

investments of state funds, administers the *Security for Public Deposits Act* and the *State Non-Arbitrage Program*, and makes recommendations to the Governor on proposed financing arrangements.

The board also approves the terms and structure of certain bonds or other financing arrangements paid from state appropriations, establishes

guidelines for bonds or financing arrangements, and approves the financial terms of lease purchases for state agencies.

The Treasury Board oversees and advises the business activities of the divisions of Cash Management and Investments, Debt Management, and Operations of the Department of the Treasury.

DEL. GEARY HIGGINS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

residential developments do is plant their own trees.” He also acknowledged preserving existing trees can increase the property values.

BRL: How do we mitigate the tension in western Loudoun between rural residents, and commercial uses like breweries, wedding venues, etc.?

GH: To keep western Loudoun rural, we have to find ways to make it work economically. So, between economic interests and conservation interests, the question becomes, “How do we strike a balance?” Conventional farming is getting tougher and tougher in western Loudoun, he said.

“To preserve open space, landowners have to have ways to be able to monetize their property, so that it pays for itself and housing does not become the best only use. Farmers are businessmen. They have to make the land pay for itself, if they can’t, they’ll sell out to residential [uses]. “If you take away their options,

they will cash out.”

So, if we want the land to have some agricultural uses, he concluded, “people need alternatives other than houses.”

He recalled a farmer he knew in western Loudoun who had over 300 acres. “The farm is not just your income, but the value of your farm is your line of credit to do business when times are tough.”

“If you take away value from the farm, through zoning changes, you take away his ability to do business.” He was forced to sell, rather than lose his land value and now we have 78 houses and almost 800 car trips a day on a gravel road, Higgins said.

Conservation easements are also another option to preserve land. In this case, the owner of the property can get tax credits based on the value of their property, because the County will not have to provide the same level of services required for residential development to that piece of land. This is one area in which Higgins wants to help, since the state level is where the funding

comes from to make easements.

“We can fight that [growth] pressure by throwing up a stone wall, but as the pressure builds, it will eventually give way. Or we can find ways to make it work.”

If economic balances are not found, “you know what we’re going to look like? Fairfax.”

BRL: How specifically are you going to deal with tensions between residents and commercial uses?

GH: Some of the work on the committee allowed them to set slower speed limits in towns, but Higgins said his role is limited at the state level, and he strongly believes that decisions about local zoning should be made at the most local level possible, not by people in Richmond.

He does not support the bills that would attempt to roll over local governments by means of the State Corporation Commission.

BRL: What about the noise disruptions

from breweries and party venues?

GH: “There are a few bad actors, that will push the limits, but they need to be considerate of their neighbors, and that’s part of what the county was trying to do with the noise ordinance.” [that is a maximum of up to 55 decibels and silent after 11 p.m.] But, dealing with those types of situations is a local issue, he said.

But, “there is also a possibility in local zoning that if you abuse your rights, you can lose them,” he said. “We don’t want to correct the bad behavior of a few by destroying the whole industry.” That would just leave western Loudoun open to complete residential development. Remember Loudoun County is number one in the state for agritourism. Visitors come to Loudoun to visit, spend their money and go home.

Higgins said he has always tried to strike that balance. “However, fewer options will only lead to more residential development.”

Proposed data center Greenlin Park will deal with steep slopes

BY REED CARVER

Greenlin Park, a potential data center, was discussed by the Planning Commission on May 28. The 81.17-acre property is owned by Chuck Kuhn through JK Land Holdings. It is located south of Leesburg, on the west side of Sycolin Road. Shreve Mill Road and the Dulles Greenway make up the other borders of this parcel.

This region, on the descent from Leesburg to Ashburn, (the Sycolin road corridor) was once the site of several early eighteenth-century mills, like Hogelands Mill. It was owned at that time by William Shreve, Jane D. Wildman, and William Cross. It was called the “mill tract,” and one branch of Sycolin Creek runs through the property on its way to Goose Creek.

Site details and concerns

As nation-wide companies like Amazon are shifting their focus to invest billions in the budding AI market, demand for data centers is still strong. The Sycolin Road corridor is increasingly being populated with data centers.

“It’s a core use in the place type, so, if not here, where?” Planning Commissioner Dale Polen Myers (At-Large) asked.

“My biggest concern is the road improvements,” said Commissioner Mark Miller, (Catocin District) “and I want that to continue.”

“As long as that’s what is accomplished, that’s what is supposed to go here.” Miller commented, referring to data centers. “Whether it was intended or not,” Sycolin Road has become a data center corridor, he said.

The commissioners said that Sycolin Road is narrow, two lanes, and winding. They worried that as more drivers see it as an alternative to get from Ashburn to Leesburg, they will encounter construction traffic.

This site is more challenging for construction, because of the presence of steep slopes on the property, and the slopes have to be leveled out with fill dirt.

According to topographical maps compiled by Wynne Saffer, typical elevations of the slopes vary from 275 to 400 feet, for a difference of 125 feet, between the creek level and the tops of the slopes.

The representative of the developer, Sasha Brauer with Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh suggested in the meeting that they will mitigate the impacts to steep slopes by planting trees. Extensive re-grading will be needed. A civil engineer was present to discuss the water management, but the commissioners did not raise the topic that day.

Gem Bingol with Piedmont Environmental Council was the only speaker

from the public. She said the challenge with steep slopes is that the forest is the main thing holding poor soils up on the hills. She said slopes generally have poor soil, and if trees are removed, rampant erosion can result.

Some, like Jason Sheridan in a social media post have expressed concerns over the presence of mature oak trees, “likely 200+ years old,” that could be cut down.

Brauer said construction will leave over 12 acres of tree conservation area. She said they will also provide 50 percent of the land as open space.

The commissioners were concerned about the fact that land under low power lines, as they ran from the substation to the center, was being factored as open space. “All the generators and stuff you want to do, keep it out of the woods,” Commissioner Ad Barnes (Leesburg) said.

Another concern is the loss of habitat for the endangered Wood Turtle. A habitat study will need to be done to find any turtles, and understand the extent of the damage.

According to the staff report, “the proffered study ... allows the applicant to exclude the County while conducting the habitat study, limits the ability of the County to ensure appropriate protective measures are implemented, and permits the applicant to delay any protective measures until after the property is cleared.”

Barnes recommended to move this application to the July 11 Work Session for further discussion, however, it was on the agenda for July 30.



Leesburg’s future growth may exceed water usage limitations

BY GRACE BENNETT

The Town of Leesburg has already once this year exceeded its water treatment capacity, and the expansion of high-demand projects such as data centers may trigger the need for expensive utility upgrades.

During a presentation in late 2023, staff pointed out that an increase in funding for water treatment systems was already needed due to a variety of factors—most notably inflation following COVID. Mike Maker, Rate Consultant for the town, listed off a few more causes for the need: “staffing, cost of living adjustments, electricity, and chemicals greater than inflationary increases.”

Director of Public Utilities Amy Wyks confirmed, saying that the costs of chemicals “have more than doubled and tripled over the course of 2020 to 2023

due to COVID and the economics.” As a result, “the current rates that started in 2024 are not sufficient and doesn’t [sic] meet the cash on hand and the debt service covered ratio for the Town.”

Staff worked to find precisely what percentage increase in rates was necessary to sustain and improve water and sewage treatment systems. Initially, a 10.8% increase was calculated, but by adjustments to the Capital Improvement Plan and deferrals of projects, it was altered to a 4.1% rate increase. Staff proposed the new five-year rate plan to the town council, stating that any lower rate increase would not be financially sustainable. Every dollar would count towards combatting inflation and new costs as well as making much-needed progress on improvements.

At the time of the November 2023 meeting, the town council expressed hesitance on the proposal, and the public hearing was left open. But the discussion over rate increases proved to be foreshadowing for a later meeting taking place on July 22, 2024.

On this later date, Amy Wyks stated in a Semi-Annual Report for the capacity of utility plants that an increased number of data centers and other high-capacity water user projects could push water demand above its limitations.

The town uses an average of 4.2 million gallons

of water per day (mgd), the amount permitted by the water plant being 12.8 mgd. Two new data centers approved at Microsoft’s Compass Creek campus, however, are allocated to pull up to 1.23 mgd and discharge nearly .62 mgd wastewater.

That—combined with a nearly 2 mgd water demand increase since last summer and a wastewater peak above its 7.5 mgd treatment capacity at least once this year—has urged staff to request funding for utility improvements. Specifically, they are asking the council to authorize a \$1.7 million contract. The contract would permit beginning the design of sewage treatment system upgrades to address the solids processing capacity concern, which might otherwise reach its limit by 2028.

While it would be preferable not to increase the utility rates to cover the costs mentioned in late 2023 and to upgrade the current systems, current buildout projections risk requiring water far above limitations. These projections increase daily demand to 6.2 mgd with 10 mgd potentially needed during peak periods.

So, in addition to the contract, Wyks has advised discretion in providing water treatment to future Leesburg projects. “Council should not extend water and sewer services at this time to potential development projects (residential and/or commercial)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 »

Kaine visits Loudoun to talk about Appalachian Trail road crossings

BY GRACE BENNETT

On July 13, Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA) met with county and Appalachian Trail representatives at the Bear's Den Trail Center to discuss the dangers of road crossings for hikers. The intent of the meeting was to raise awareness and propose solutions to the safety concerns between traffic and pedestrians.

COMMUNITY

The Appalachian Trail runs for about 2,200 miles from Georgia through Maine, roughly 544 miles of which are within Virginia—and the highway crossings involved can be perilous. Conditions on Rt. 7, 9, and 50 are especially noted by hikers for having low visibility and fast-moving, heavy traffic. “Rule Number One for hiking the Appalachian Trail,” said one commentator, “don’t get hit by a car.”

Each of the three routes in question has been under consideration for safety improvements. The Rt. 7 Appalachian Trail crossing at Snickers Gap, though, has the largest potential for constructing a bridge or “elevated walkway.” This particular structure would be located in Clarke County near Bluemont, the closest landmark being the Pine Grove parking lot.

The project has garnered much local momentum, but at the moment, it is stuck in the funding stage—it would need to raise enough to cover its \$5.4 to \$7.2 million design and construction estimate before it moves forward.

The potential Rt. 7 bridge has been given a rendered design proposal. It would likely be constructed of steel, complete with three piers with a ten-foot width and a span of 360 feet across the four-lane highway. This design appears to be the cheapest proposal—having fewer maintenance issues than a tunnel would—and is compliant with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It would also be engineered to reduce the length of sharply turning trails along steep slopes, called switchbacks, on the highway’s north side. The design would necessitate a slight realignment of the trail on the

south side and the construction of a 450 square foot retaining wall.

Since the property on which the bridge would be built is government-owned, construction costs and time would be reduced to a potential four to five years. Short-term improvements to the crossing have been proposed in the meantime.

Representatives have listened to feed-



back from hikers on the nerve-wracking experience of crossing the highway. “I remember that crossing and several others that were pretty perilous, especially with fog or less-than-optimal visibility,” said one.

Paved footpaths along the highway’s shoulders, a raised concrete island in the median, and high-visibility trail crossing warning signs are a few of the suggested improvements until funding can be obtained by the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Clarke County Board of Supervisors for the Rt. 7 bridge.

The Appalachian Trail crossing at Rt. 7 is not the only crossing in question, however—hikers need to make their way over the two-lane Rt. 9 at Keys Gap about five miles north of Hillsboro, too. Heavy traffic and low visibility define the experience. “Be extremely careful crossing Rt. 9 at Keys Gap,” one hiker warned. “There are no sightlines for either you or the motorists.”

Advocates hope to also construct a bridge across Rt. 9 as well as establishing a safer path for hikers to resupply at the Sweet Spring store nearby. If a bridge cannot be developed, the community has suggested at least implementing a marked crossing with lights.

The final major Virginia road causing

concern for hikers is the Rt. 50 crossing at Ashby Gap. Similarly to Rt. 7, this highway is four lanes at the point of the Appalachian Trail crossing, but bridge construction there would be more difficult. The road has limited right-of-way for one. And the higher potential need to reroute the trail in accordance with a bridge would make construction more challenging.

Other improvements supported by the VDOT include narrowing the view of the roadway with lane delineators to slow traffic and adding pavement markings and flashing light arrays to identify crossings.

Senator Tim Kaine—committed to the issue since he has hiked Virginia’s portion of the Appalachian Trail—expressed optimism about the financial concerns with improvements. He believes that it would not be difficult to gain federal funds from the National Parks Service, supported by the Great American Outdoors Act and the Infrastructure Bill. The US Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Department of the Interior could also make contributions to the various projects.

Having received much trail funding from appropriators in a recently completed budget plan, Kaine points out that many monetary sources are available—and community funding by individual representatives would bolster the project.

Sandra Marra, the president and CEO of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, agreed with Kaine’s optimism. She and Kaine remarked on the possibility of state funding to round out the budget since many small businesses and local towns are oriented around the trail.

The communities of Round Hill, Hillsboro, and Bluemont—along with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club—are working with representatives to mend the conditions of Virginia highway crossings. Hikers can hope to see improvements to visibility and pavement markings in the near future with a potential bridge under way.



Nett selected as Officer of the Year

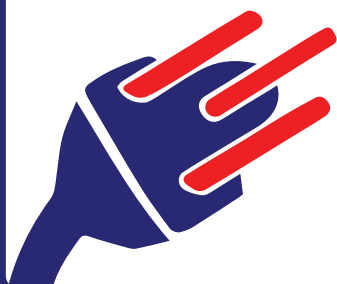
The Purcellville Police Department has announced that Officer Carl Benjamin Nett was recently selected as the “Officer of the Year.” The Officer of the Year award is an anonymous, peer-selected award. Officer Nett joined the Department in 2022. He graduated from the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy in December of 2022, where Officer Nett received the Director’s Award for Academic Excellence in recognition of outstanding academic achievement.

Officer Nett joined the Purcellville Police Department with over 20 years of national security and law enforcement experience. He began his career with the Presidential Protective Division of the U.S. Secret Service, graduating from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Artesia, New Mexico and the Secret Service Training Academy in Beltsville, Maryland.

He then supported the National Clandestine Service of the CIA, to include a warzone tour in Afghanistan. In addition, Officer Nett spent ten years leading a Pentagon mission at U.S. Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay.

During his time with the Purcellville Police Department, Officer Nett

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Virginia general fund revenues FY24 finish \$1.2 billion over forecast

Virginia's general fund revenues ended fiscal year 2024 \$1.2 billion over the official revenue forecast. For the full fiscal year, overall general fund revenue collections grew 5.5 percent, well above the 1.3 percent increase assumed in the official forecast.

The official forecast incorporated \$525 million of excess revenues received through April, and \$22 million of adjustments related to the military retirement income tax subtraction.

The \$1.2 billion surplus fully-funds contingent spending on shared priorities incorporated in the enacted budget including the additional \$90 million in funding for the recently restored Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program.

"Preliminary year-end results demonstrate that robust job growth produces record revenues that allow us to make continued investments in shared priorities," said Youngkin.

"Record revenues underpinned by Virginia's strong job growth continue to show there is plenty of money in the

system to make critical investments while cutting taxes to bring down the cost of living for hardworking Virginians. We will stay focused on driving the policies that earned Virginia's recognition as America's Top State for Business and unleashing job growth and opportunity for all Virginians."

"Revenue collections ended the fiscal year well above expectations. Not only did collections exceed estimates embedded in the current Appropriation Act by \$1.2 billion, revenues also exceeded our December projections by \$1.7 billion," said Secretary of Finance Stephen Cummings. "With this strong performance, our excess collections are sufficient to meet all identified investment priorities including additional funding for accelerating Interstate 81 improvements, water quality improvements in the Chesapeake Bay, and meeting our commitments to the education of our military heroes, Gold Star families, first responders, and all those who have served their nation and their Commonwealth."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 »

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"THERE IS REALLY..." CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

on Purcellville Road north of Rt. 7 and northeast of the Town of Purcellville. It is currently zoned Joint Land Management Area -3, meaning one house per three acres totaling 39 homes.

The property is bordered by agricultural production, large residential lot residences, other vacant parcels and residential properties—all within the county. The Valley Industrial Park and the Mayfair community are on the opposite side of the street and are part of the Town of Purcellville.

According to an archaeological survey which was done on the property, a small cemetery is located in the southeast quadrant.

Nearly four years ago, then Mayor Kwasi Fraser's town council voted against a similar annexation proposal for the same property. The proposal included industrial, commercial and 160 homes.

The proposed project was called the Warner Brook annexation proposal. The annexation request was denied after a multi-year process of charettes, numerous council discussions, community input and public hearings. Prior to Kuhn's purchase, the property was owned for decades by the same family. This was the only annexation request for the property.

Over two years ago, the new owner Chuck Kuhn held a community meeting at Patrick Henry College to present a new proposal that he submitted to the county for a rezoning of the property. At that time Kuhn wasn't asking the Town of Purcellville for an annexation request, but said he would submit a request to the town for annexation if the town so desired.

The well attended meeting was filled with citizens expressing their desire to leave the property as is—zoned JLMA-3 and developed at its by-right/allowed use of 39 homes.

Shortly afterwards then Mayor Kwasi Fraser said a town annexation would go nowhere as "the community does not want it."

A recent survey of residents in the area resulted in 93.44 % of community members saying they were opposed to the annexation.

In 2023, Kuhn filed a request with the county for a Zoning Map Amendment to rezone the 117.07-acre property from JLMA-3 to Planned Development – Industrial Park zoning district. "A Zoning Modification is also requested to amend the road standards and water and wastewater standards to permit the use on the property," according to a Sept. 1 2023 memorandum from the Department of Planning and Zoning.

Loudoun County Planning and Zoning has already weighed in on the proposal. They have recommended denying a rezoning of the property from JLMA-3

to Planned Development Industrial Park (PD-IP).

"Community Planning finds the proposed rezoning and development of a business/industrial park on the subject property is inconsistent with types of rural business, land development pattern, and design characteristics anticipated for the Purcellville JLMA Rural Neighborhood Place Type," according to the Community Planning Memorandum Sept. 1, 2023.

The memorandum further states, "Community Planning cannot support the rezoning request due to fundamental conflicts with the land use and land development policies of the 2019 GP for the Purcellville JLMA Rural Neighborhood Place Type."

The memorandum recommended the developer go to the Town of Purcellville to apply for an annexation/boundary line adjustment if they wanted to continue to pursue their proposal. The proposal would ultimately then be subject to a vote by Purcellville's governing body.

In his presentation at the July 9 town council meeting, Town of Purcellville Town Planner Jordan Andrews said multiple times, "That application has not been denied." Andrews was referring to the developer's rezoning proposal with the county.

Loudoun County Senior Planner Rachael Iwanczuk said the project hasn't been resubmitted by the applicant. "We are still waiting for additional submissions by the applicant. The applicant is waiting to see what happens with annexation [into the town] before they resubmit [with the county]."

Andrews also said the difference between the county's and the town's application is that "the county application has the Northern Collector Road."

Given the improbable viability of the project's rezoning at the county level—the Northern Collector Road would unlikely be an issue.

Both the county and the town have yet to take the Northern Collector Road off of their respective transportation plans, despite repeated efforts from Council Members Chris Bertaut, Carol Luke and the Purcellville Planning Commission.

Each time a motion by Council Member Chris Bertaut was made to take the Northern Collector Road off the Town of Purcellville's Town Wide Transportation Plan, the motion failed with Mayor Stan Milan, Vice Mayor Erin Rayner, and Council Members Caleb Stought, Mary Jane Williams and Kevin Wright voting against it.

Stought has said that he first favors a traffic study, even though a traffic study was not done to put the NCR on either the town or county plans.

If the applicant should proceed with their rezoning request in the county, it would be difficult to achieve their desired

density. It is uncommon to have one big communal septic system for the site, and the feasibility would depend on the appropriate soil type—and could diminish density.

If each proposed parcel were to have its own individual well and septic system, this too would be a challenge, as it could decrease the proposed industrial density. This situation assumes that the Board of Supervisors would vote to approve such a rezoning request for a JLMA-3 property.

If the property is annexed into the town, the applicant is planning on 1,274,892 sq.ft. of M-1 industrial uses like long-term storage, according to a May 6, 2024 memo from Michael Romeo, Senior Land Use Planner with Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh PC.

Upon a potential annexation, the applicant is seeking any by-right uses, and any uses permitted by special exception or special use permit. The allowed building height would be 45 ft, and up to 60 ft.—if at least 100 ft. from any lot line.

In a memo dated Aug. 24, 2023, VDOT told the applicant to correct the lower figure they were using of 3,537 weekday vehicle trips to 4,297 weekday vehicle trips for the proposed site. However, currently the applicant and town staff are still using the lower figure.

The 2030 Town's Comprehensive Plan states that the town does not wish to annex additional land. At the July 9 meeting Andrews said, "However the plan describes that should an annexation appear prudent or necessary—several considerations should be taken into account: community input, infrastructure, and costs and benefits, impacts and compatibility."

Andrews pointed out that the town does not have the water to supply to the Valley Commerce Center should the project be annexed into the town. He said the applicant has expressed a willingness to incorporate an offsite well. Water usage predicted for the site is up to 255,000 gallons per day. But Andrews said the applicant does not envision water usage being that high.

In a May 6, 2024 response letter to

Jordan Andrews when asked if the applicant had a plan to offset water uses Romeo responded, "There are currently no plans to offset water usage; however, it is anticipated that the individual businesses may provide bottled water for employees as an amenity, which can help to offset the public water supply."

Andrews said the applicant has indicated a dedication of right of way "to include widening Purcellville Road for turning lanes on their two primary entrances. They have indicated a willingness to contribute a traffic signal at their primary entrance.

"Their secondary entrance is currently depicted in their concept development plan, opposite Mayfair Crown Drive. It is a right turn out, right turn in only."

Andrews said the applicant has "additionally indicated they're willing to include enhancements to signaling at Hirst and Hatcher."

Justifying her support of continuing the annexation processes, Vice Mayor Erin Rayner said that if the Valley Commerce Center project were to go back to the county for a potential rezoning and they approve it, "what can go in? We are not in control anymore."

The property—which is in the county—is already "controlled" through county zoning, which is one house per three acres and is in character with the rural nature of Purcellville. If the town should annex it and "control" it—the density would increase to 1,274,892 sq.ft. of industrial usage.

Council Member Chris Bertaut said the JLMA-3 use on the property is pertinent "because annexation would have to be approved by the majority of the citizens in the town."

Mayor Stan Milan said that two years ago, when Kuhn presented his proposal to town and county residents, "the residents said they did not want houses on the property and now they do. "Now it's flipped to say houses—so next month it might be put horse ranges or put airports."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 »



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"THERE IS REALLY...", CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

At the July 23 Town Council Work Session, numerous speakers said they did not support the annexation, and urged council to support the by-right use on the property of 39 homes.

Pasquale DiBari said the annexation of Valley Commerce Center would open a Pandora's box. He did not want Ashburn to extend into Purcellville. "We moved to a rural area," and he said the JLMA protects Purcellville's small-town charm.

Audrey Young said the proposed business park isn't supported by Purcellville's

Comprehensive Plan. "Citizens don't want annexation," she said.

Developer Casey Chapman said he supports the proposed industrial complex and the town needs to "incorporate new ideas."

Council Member Carol Luke said the JLMA-3 should be maintained. Council Member Chris Bertaut said, "There is really very little taste out there for the annexation that is currently before this town council." He asked why there was "so little consideration to what the citizen's want?"

"Foisting an annexation proposal into

the hands of the town's administration, does nothing to ensure that a majority of our town's citizens have been heard on this matter," he said.

Regardless, the council majority voted to direct staff to enter into private discussions "with the applicant to draft a Memorandum of Understanding pertaining to, but not limited to, issues associated with water sources, usage modeling, and traffic studies for the purpose of determining whether or not to continue with the application in the Annexation Process."

VIRGINIA GENERAL FUND, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

Analysis of Fiscal Year 2024 revenues based on preliminary data:

- Based on preliminary data, Fiscal Year 2024 revenues exceeded the Chapter 1 Forecast (May 2024) by \$1.2 billion and were \$1.7 billion higher compared to the December 2023 forecast.
- Higher than expected revenue collections are primarily attributable to increased net individual income taxes and higher than projected

sales and use taxes, partially offset by lower than forecasted corporate income taxes.

- Individual income nonwithholding collections and refunds, combined, contributed \$1.1 billion to the surplus. A portion of that surplus is attributable to the timing of receipts and refunds related to the elective Pass-Through Entity Tax.
- Payroll withholding grew 4.8 percent, exceeding the forecasted growth rate of 3.8 percent.

- Sales tax collections decreased 0.5 percent as compared to the annual forecast of a 4.6 percent decline.
- Net corporate income tax collections declined 6.1 percent compared to the official estimate of a 9.0 percent increase due largely to the timing of refunds.
- A complete accounting of all final revenue sources will be available after final year-end close and will be released on Aug. 14 when Youngkin speaks at the Joint Money Committee Meeting.

"HOW DID WE GET HERE", CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

to their front doors. They said that rezoning was necessary to allow them to move on with their lives somewhere else.

Kaleb Calhoun, said that a buffer, proposed for the Hiddenwood houses, would be inadequate. "This rezoning is the only release for Hiddenwood, if you have any compassion ...," another resident said.

The houses on Hiddenwood are worth very little now. "We wanted to sell our homes at the start of this, but let's be honest, who in their right mind would purchase a home? ... It's the end of the road for Hiddenwood," said resident Dannyaal Khan. "We wanted to purchase a home and grow with it, but unfortunately we've been pushed out of it."

"Hiddenwood will forever be in an industrial park. Any other option [than rezoning], would leave them [Hiddenwood] at a significant financial loss," said another speaker.

In addition, there are tensions between the residents and the workers, as they both vie for the same road spaces, and become irritated with each other. Citing from experience, Lea Bell said a construction worker shouted vulgarities at her.

Music teacher Andrew McGinley said,

"This has ruined Hiddenwood as a residence." He quoted another teacher who said the situation was absolutely dangerous. "The quality of life is appalling," he concluded.

The HOA president of the Briarfield neighborhood was not comfortable with the solution. "I don't find it just, if one community alleviates their problems at the expense of another," he said.

Ankita Kamath said that approval means transferring the problem Hiddenwood faces right onto the Briarfield residents, just pushing the same problem to someone else.

"We don't want them [Hiddenwood] to be a human buffer. We really want to give them a solution, but that solution is not building a data center. We don't want the solution to be for us to be the human buffers," said Ravi Budigelli, from Briarfield. "There's got to be another solution, no matter how expensive it is. You've got to do right by them and right by us."

"The two communities are really not similarly situated," said Pam Cave, speaking on behalf of Hiddenwood residents. "They [JK Technology] can build whatever they're going to build right up to the homes. ... It has nothing to do

with financial windfalls, it has to do with being similarly situated, somewhere out from under this situation ... They only have one way in ... because of decisions made by this board they cannot sell their property. No one will buy it. It would be fair and just, under these circumstances, that you all approve the application."

Board of Supervisors Chair Phyllis Randall (D-At Large) made a motion to move the issue to the Sept. 17 meeting for action. "If nothing else, we should all come away knowing data centers have a cost," she said.

Supervisor Mike Turner (D-Ashburn) said, "This has been one of my worst decisions on the board," referring to his vote on JK Technology Park #2, the parcel in front of Hiddenwood. "I want to personally apologize to Hiddenwood residents."

"I have a hard time believing a data center is the solution to a data center, so it's tough," he said. "The whole Board is wrestling with this one."

The important question to ask in September, according to Chair Randall, is: what other use can the Hiddenwood property have that would not require a rezoning?

OPINION: IDLE THOUGHTS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

and housing is paramount, but no residences made the Design Cabinet's merit list. That's not good.

Predictable Houses

Most of our new houses fall into the "Neo-colonial" genre and don't excite me. However, I acknowledge that most other housing types would not fit the context of their Loudoun surroundings. Imagine a Victorian house in a cluster subdivision, or an ultra-modern, flat-roofed house in a former pasture. Victorian houses fit in Waterford and Hillsboro but probably not in Middleburg or Ashburn.

I think we're stuck with neo-colonials but they bother me and I've tried to figure out why. I started by thinking about some graceful residential areas elsewhere such as Mountain Brook in Birmingham, Buckhead in Atlanta, or River Road in Richmond. Leesburg's Historic District is also delightful.

I like these places, which have some commonalities: Older and traditional houses, diverse design from architectural form to ornamentation, exterior materials and roofs, mature trees and so forth. They don't flaunt their size, which is the opposite of most new houses here. Patterns of gables and roofs are simple, again the opposite of what we see in the more expensive new houses here.

Of course, mature landscaping can't be rushed. Nor can the age of a house. One notable exception is Habersham in Beaufort, South Carolina where the emphasis was on replicating the look of an old and appealing neighborhood. Design diversity was one of its primary goals.

Google any of these places, especially Habersham, and you'll see what I mean.

Most production homebuilders here lack the taste and imagination to tackle something like Habersham, so here are some easy tips for them: Eliminate "signature" details like identical mailboxes or identical little brick columns at driveway entrances. Spend some money for more and larger new trees. Most of all, eliminate the "neo" and focus just on "Colonial."

In his career developing office buildings, Charlie Houston was deeply involved in all areas of design, from site planning to elevator interiors, from architecture to lobbies and so on.

LEESBURG'S FUTURE GROWTH, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

outside the town's corporate limits or Joint Land Management Area with exception of Compass Creek," she stated in her report. "In addition, Council should remain cautious in agreeing to any future Boundary Line Adjustments

until consumption data and demand trends are better known."

If a water plant's demand reaches 80% of its capacity during three consecutive months, an expansion project or explanation of limited-service area growth must be submitted to the Virginia

Department of Health. Similarly, if a wastewater plant's average flow exceeds 95%, then a plan of action for compliance must be submitted to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

With these two realities in mind, staff is urging the contract to be seriously

considered so as to prevent shortages in water utility services—especially during this particularly dry season of 2024. The town council is to be briefed on July 29 about the town's water and sewage treatment capacity status.

Wexton marks Disability Pride Month using new AI voice model

Late July, Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton (D-VA) delivered a speech on the floor of the House of Representatives to recognize Disability Pride Month, celebrated each July. Wexton utilized her new AI voice model for the first time on the House floor to share how she has fought throughout her career for disability rights and accessibility issues, and

how that has now become a personal fight for her since her Progressive Supranuclear Palsy diagnosis last year.

“I hope that when people see me continuing to do all I can to keep living my life and doing this job I love as best I can, they understand and appreciate the courage, resilience, and spirit that so many Americans of differing abilities

demonstrate each and every day. I hope I can be a voice — even an AI voice — for Americans facing accessibility challenges and other disabilities, because too often people only see us for that disability. And in truth we are so much more,” said Wexton.

The AI voice model was created through ElevenLabs, a software company

that specializes in developing natural-sounding speech synthesis software using deep learning. The model was generated consensually using a collection of previous public speeches from Rep. Wexton provided by her team. Any additional questions about the ElevenLabs technology can be directed to press@elevenlabs.io.

Leesburg town council approves Westpark Tech Applications

The Leesburg Town Council approved rezoning and special exception applications for Chuck Kuhn’s Westpark Tech development at its meeting on July 23.

The site fronts Clubhouse Drive and is surrounded on three sides by open space owned by Loudoun County. The property is the former site of the Westpark Hotel and Golf Club. By-right development on the property would have been limited to the construction of a hotel due to existing proffers on the site.

The applicant, Clubhouse Dr. LLC, sought a rezoning from B-3 (Community Retail/Commercial District) to PEC (Planned Employment Center). An accompanying special exception application will allow for the construction of an 86,400-square-foot flex industrial building subject to certain conditions, including that the site cannot be utilized for a data center.

The applicant has agreed to demolition of the existing clubhouse building once their site plan application with the Town has been approved.

As a condition of the Council’s approvals, the applicant has committed to filing a site plan application with the town within four months and a diligent pursuit of site plan approval to bring about the demolition of the clubhouse building.

“I am pleased that our staff has been able to work collaboratively with the

applicant to bring forward a project that works best for the site, keeping in mind the close proximity to nearby residences,” stated Community Development Director

James David.

“We are committed to expediting review of the applicant’s site plan application

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

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OPINION: PURCELLVILLE CANDIDATES UNITE,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

necessary permits and licenses to open its doors to the public. We can do better.

As candidates for Purcellville Mayor and Town Council, we welcome the support of all who love Purcellville as their home, and all who cherish Purcellville as a great place to live, to work, and to raise a family.

The Town of Purcellville elections are non-partisan. Taxes, safety, traffic and growth do not have a party.

We are committed to taking on the challenges affecting our town—the skyrocketing utility costs (water and wastewater rates), for example, which are driving many residents out of town and which threaten to negatively impact our property values.

For this slate of candidates, continually raising rates without a search for meaningful alternatives is not an option. We must, and will, reduce general fund spending to pay down the debt on our wastewater facility in order to minimize further rate increases. We must, and will, preserve the character of our town—Christmas and July 4th parades, baseball games at Fireman's Field, flag-lined streets on Memorial Day and Veterans

Day, community festivals, and close-knit neighborhoods free of the ravages of cut-through traffic brought about by overdevelopment as our main arteries become clogged.

This November 5th, voters must decide whether they want the continued utility rate increases and unlimited commercial growth advocated by our opposition, or a return to fiscal responsibility and managed growth as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan.

The five of us are running as a slate because we are committed to reducing spending, increasing government transparency, and managing growth in keeping with the aesthetics of our town. You can learn more about us at <https://mayberrynotmetropolis.com/meet-the-team>.



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Restaurant week set for Sept. 4-8 in the Town of Purcellville

Purcellville is set to sizzle this September with the launch of its Inaugural Purcellville Restaurant Week. Sponsored by Silas Redd, owner of Mister on Main and Nostalgia Boutique, this highly anticipated event promises to showcase the vibrant and diverse culinary scene of this charming small town.

From Sept. 4 to 8, local food enthusiasts and new visitors alike will have the opportunity to embark on a gastronomic adventure like no other. Save your receipts to get a special deal from participating boutiques during this inaugural event. Restaurants and boutiques can sign up for free at www.PurcellvilleRestaurantWeek.com.

While Purcellville may be known for its quaint streets and close-knit community, it also boasts a surprising variety of dining options that cater to all tastes and preferences. During the Inaugural Purcellville Restaurant Week,

participating eateries will offer special prix fixe menus, exclusive dishes, and unbeatable deals, allowing patrons to savor the town's best culinary creations at an incredible value. From farm-to-table fare to international delights, Purcellville's restaurants are ready to impress and delight.



Redd has continually sought innovative ways to draw attention to Purcellville's unique offerings. The Inaugural Purcellville Restaurant Week is his latest endeavor to celebrate and promote the town's thriving dining and shopping scene.

"I am thrilled to launch the Inaugural Purcellville Restaurant Week to highlight the incredible dining and shopping options we have right here in Purcellville," said Redd. "This event is designed to showcase our restaurants and local businesses. It also provides an opportunity for locals, new residents, and visitors alike to discover and enjoy what our

quaint town has to offer."

As a way to expand the local "dine and shop" mentality, select boutiques will offer discounts or specials during restaurant week, with proof that they have dined at a participating restaurant. So "save those receipts," said Redd.

Redd added, "I like the idea of a domino effect when it comes to local businesses. When someone dines or shops somewhere local, and they have a good experience and tell others about it—then

next time they bring a friend or a family member along. It's really about a combination of repeat business and continuously introducing new people to all our town offers."

Restaurants and boutiques interested in signing up for free for the Inaugural Restaurant Week go to www.PurcellvilleRestaurantWeek.com or email Silas Redd at PurcellvilleRestaurantWeek@gmail.com. For a list of participating restaurants and boutiques, please visit www.PurcellvilleRestaurantWeek.com.

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Administered by Loudoun County Area Agency on Aging, Loudoun County Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Services

YOUNGKIN CELEBRATES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

and Trade Caren Merrick. “This approved proposal lays out our strategy to connect all across the Commonwealth and ensure no Virginian is left behind.”

The next step in the BEAD program involves finalizing and ensuring all locations lacking access to high-speed internet and not part of any existing state or federal deployment projects are included in the program. Following the approval of locations by NTIA,

Virginia will initiate the application phase later this year. During this phase, broadband providers will have the opportunity to submit applications to extend their services to these unconnected regions.

“Virginia has been a national leader in the broadband arena, and the approved

proposal lays out a comprehensive approach to connect all Virginians through state and federal resources,” said DHCD Director and Chief Broadband Advisor Bryan Horn. “We applaud the collaboration of our broadband partners to develop a strong proposal that addresses both connectivity and affordability.”

Since 2017, Virginia has allocated over \$935 million in state and federal funding to extend broadband infrastructure to over 388,000 locations in 80 cities and counties across the Commonwealth. These investments have leveraged an additional \$1.1 billion in matching funds from local governments and internet service providers.

For more information about Virginia’s broadband efforts, visit dhcd.virginia.gov/broadband.

TROOP 711, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

eighty-five miles at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico and having earned thirty-nine merit badges on various subjects. Alex has aided numerous fellow scouts as they move through their rank advancements as well as coached his fellow scouts on many outings.

Alex’s Eagle project was removing a fence as part of the renovation for Loudoun Heritage Farm Museum in Sterling.

Soren McKay was a senior patrol leader and assistant troop chaplain for over two

terms and is an excellent speaker. Soren earned forty-four merit badges of various skills, and has even eaten a snake on a wilderness survival campout.

Soren has assisted fellow scouts in merit badges as well as rank advancement. He also was instrumental in helping Troop 711 achieve the Journey to Excellence Gold award in scouting, a remarkably high honor.

Soren’s Eagle project included leading a group constructing storage shelves for the Kids Club of Northern Shenandoah Valley.

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SUPACELL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Supacell joins the growing list of groundbreaking shows and movies that meaningfully represent people of color in genres from which they historically faced exclusion. I hope *Supacell's* success will inspire more filmmakers and writers of color to create stories that challenge the status quo and help usher in a future where the concept of a Black superhero squad will no longer be a novelty.

While there is much to love about the *Supacell* pilot, the episode does possess some flaws. I found the special effects, for instance, cheesy and underwhelming. If you turn on *Supacell* expecting a Marvel-caliber production, you will be

disappointed. While the quality of the effects did not ruin my viewing experience, I am concerned about how the remaining episodes will fare as the heroes begin using their powers more. I can only hope that the quality of the story will outweigh any lackluster visual effects.

With that being said, I still believe *Supacell* has earned the praise it has garnered over these past few weeks. Captivating, suspenseful, and raw, the pilot reels viewers in and drums up excitement for the remainder of the season. If you're in the mood for an intriguing and fresh superhero story, I strongly recommend giving *Supacell* a chance.

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THREE REASONS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

assumed for those in your social media world.

2. Your therapist is professionally trained to help you, but your on-line connections aren't:

A therapist undergoes several years of advanced schooling and is trained and credentialed to assess and treat mental health problems. Unlike an on-line friend, a good therapist doesn't just listen to you supportively but also endeavors to develop and implement evidence-based strategies to diminish symptoms or problems and

WESTPARK TECH, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

to meet both the Council's and the nearby community's stated desire to see the former clubhouse building demolished as quickly as possible."

The motions to approve the rezoning and special exception applications both passed by a 5-2 vote, with Vice Mayor Neil Steinberg and Council Member Kari Nancy opposed.

More information on the project can be found by accessing the town's eTRAKiT system at www.leesburgva.gov/etrakit.

increase emotional stability and wellness. While most therapists aren't medical doctors, they know about psychiatric medications and are better suited to help with that topic than a friend. They can also likely assist with a referral to a psychiatrist if medications appear to be necessary.

It's also important to remember that a social media influencer isn't the same thing as a therapist. That person may or may not have the credentials and knowledge to offer up strategies or to make formal recommendations for serious emotional or psychological problems. Thus, before taking advice from a social media influencer, it's best to investigate their background. Just because someone on social media is charming, engaging and intelligent, doesn't mean you should be taking their advice.

There's a new phenomenon, dubbed "Instagram therapy" or "social media therapy," which essentially involves people sharing on-line what they've learned from their therapist and/or providing information to help others. While I certainly see value in reading thought provoking or positive

emotional healing or wellness messages, memes or anecdotes on-line—I caution folks not to overly rely on social media when it comes to addressing serious mental health problems.

3. Your therapist is neutral, but your social media friends aren't:

Therapists treat symptoms, and they also listen to a lot of different things from their clients during the course of therapy. In therapy, patients may express their strong and sometimes negative thoughts and feelings on various topics. While there is no harm in sharing your views with your therapist on larger topics such as relationship, parenting concerns, workplace stress, etc., sharing your views on these sorts of topics on social media could possibly make things worse.

I've also seen many of my clients' relationships strained, and even ended, due to political positions and disagreements. With this being a presidential election year—it's probably best to think twice before posting something that could upset or create conflicts for you on social media.

What could you do if you find yourself

turning to social media too much for your emotional needs? I often encourage my clients to reach out to friends directly if they need support. Having an in-depth conversation with a close friend or family member, in person or over the phone, will likely be a lot more beneficial than turning to social media. If your emotional and psychological problems are serious enough, seeking professional help may be the best thing to do.

Lastly, if you're concerned about someone you care about who's over sharing personal information on social media, I also recommend you reach out to them directly for support. Keep in mind that posting information about emotional and psychological problems or functioning can be a red flag signifying something serious. It's also possible that a post that reads as concerning isn't; perhaps the post is a venting moment and nothing more. Reaching out privately and making yourself available when you read posts that cause you immediate concern is a good thing to do to figure out what's going on.

Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D. "Dr. Mike" is a clinical psychologist in private practice. He can be reached at 703-723-2999, and is located at 44095 Pipeline Plaza, Suite 240, Ashburn.

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LETTER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

remove all the brown out visible from the roads. They are quite capable of such an operation; they were requested to use manual maintenance at least in the historic and rural roadway districts of Loudoun, but the forester was unfamiliar with such designations.

The question now remains who can

persuade/convince/require Dominion to try to erase at least the most obvious of the blight, the dead growth stunning residents and tourists alike in some of the most scenic areas of Loudoun and elsewhere.

Obviously, landowner calls to the number Dominion sent out via postcard had no effect because it was the wrong

number. Are there any public officials who take on the task of correcting this outrage and preventing it in the future?

Most residents think we know the answer. What a shame that a powerhouse like Dominion would be the kind of corporate citizen that willfully violates the environment.

Anna Dees, Middleburg

JUST LIKE NOTHING (ELSE), CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Now the drizzly morning I last visited the property, I couldn't help noticing a solitary crow perched on the roof of Carlheim Mansion. It sure gave me the once-over.

And, no, I don't really believe that was the spirit of Rachel Paxson hovering about to keep an eye on things. But I've learned a lot over the years. Some during my radio news days in

Leesburg (never say anything you don't want the whole world to hear)—some prior to that in professional theatre and restaurants (always show up – and be ready to work)—and some more recently in my current job as a rural mail carrier (just hang in there, this too will end).

One lesson I'll always remember: don't ever mess with a Lady's dying wishes.

NETT SELECTED, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

has utilized his investigative skills to pursue financial fraud cases. He is currently working to educate the citizens of Purcellville about common scams, in an effort to mitigate vulnerabilities. "We're the safest town in Virginia," said Nett. "My goal is to make us the most scam-proof town in Virginia."

Nett also enjoys participating in the Books & Badges program at the

Purcellville Library, allowing the chance to engage with our younger residents, and he is a regular participant in other community policing events.

"I'm honored to be recognized by my peers as Officer of the Year," said Nett. "My co-workers are an outstanding group of professionals. As a resident of the Town of Purcellville, I'm thankful for their dedication to duty and commitment to the citizens of Purcellville."

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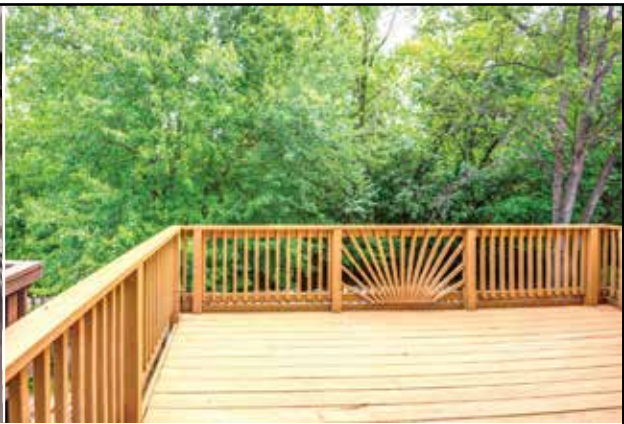
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