

## **Classic NIMBY on Distribution Center plan**

The “press release” by Karri Messina of Fox Head, while well intended, is typical of many citizens who are ill-informed of the history of Hanover County, lack basic comprehension of economic development and governance in Virginia. Allow me to make the following points:

- The subject property was rezoned in 1995, before there was even a Fox Head subdivision.
- Homes can physically be built anywhere.
- Manufacturing, assembly and distribution facilities can't be built just anywhere. Location, workforce, utilities, roads, taxes and how receptive is the community are but a few of the issues evaluated in locating a facility.
- Hanover has a targeted growth rate of 2.0% annually, far more modest than Chesterfield and Henrico have experienced.
- Hanover does not provide utility service to the whole of the county, unlike Henrico and Chesterfield ... but has designated only parts of the county for such service which must include residential, commercial and industrial areas.
- Hanover consequently has protected it's rural nature, farming history and bridled it's growth based on its Comprehensive Plan.
- The Hanover County Board of Supervisors is to be commended for its support of the Comprehensive Plan; otherwise, there would be the potential of development of all kinds, anywhere and everywhere in the county.
- It has been the goal of the county to provide a 70/30 residential/non-residential tax base to provide stability in the tax rates while addressing the needs of its citizens. When was the last time the tax rate rose?
- The county government (unlike Henrico) does not maintain or provide most of the funding for roads ... the state does. The state never has enough money for road building and consequently, only builds roads long after the need is evident, not before.
- The Rutland Shopping Center was not the cause for the \$20 million road improvement on Atlee Station Road ... that project had been forecasted on the Comp Plan for 20 years, even before there was a Rutland Center. The Rutland Center ultimately paid for a portion of the road extension.
- Road access is a key factor for a distribution center. Locating between two interstate interchanges is ideal. If you want to enjoy trees you do not own, then locate beside a Recreational Park, not an Industrial Park ... you can find those on the Comp Pan too.
- This Distribution Center will have 25 acres under roof + loading/unloading areas + parking + expansion plans + stormwater retention + buffers. You can't just put something this massive just anywhere.
- The center will likely operate 24/7, which means its impact on peak traffic will likely be less than the 300 homes in the Fox Head subdivision.
- Speaking of workers. When was the last time you were in a state-of-the-art distribution center? They are very sophisticated, highly automated and require particular skill sets from

employees to operate and manage them. No, they aren't nuclear scientists, but they aren't minimum wage workers either. The jobs being created will pay wages and salaries significantly above minimum wage and significantly higher than the regional median income.

- There is a good chance some of the cars in your daily commute won't be leaving the county to work but staying here where they live, joining other distributions centers such as Amazon, Vitamin Shoppe, Supervalu and Virginia ABC Warehouse.

Hanover has worked very hard not to become a bedroom community. Unfortunately, there have been many beds filled with folks who don't appreciate the struggle or understand the battle (competition) and can't see beyond their back yard. The problem is not about the effort of the county but the lack of comprehension of the citizen.

Kudos to all who made this site selection happen, especially the economic development team, county administration and the board of supervisors ... they could have put houses there but preserved this valuable land for the right opportunity.

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