

COMMUNITY INPUT MEETING

IN THE MATTER OF:

ROYAL FARMS STORE

Route 24 and Philadelphia Road

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The above-captioned Community Input Meeting was held on March 1, 2016, commencing at 6:30 p.m. at the Harford County Public Library in Edgewood, Maryland.

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APPEARANCE:

LOU SCHAFFER, Project Manager for Frederick Ward Associates

On behalf of the Applicant, Royal Farms Store

Reported by:

Penny L. Comeau, Notary Public

P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MR. SCHAFFER: My name is Lou Schaffer. I'm the
3 Project Manager at Frederick Ward Associates. With us we
4 have Jack Whisted who is a development engineer for Royal
5 Farms and Gerry Powell who is a fellow Project Manager at
6 Frederick Ward.

7 This CIM has to do with the reconstruction and
8 redevelopment of the existing Royal Farms Store at the
9 intersection of Route 24 and Philadelphia Road. As you know
10 there's an existing store here (indicating), gas pumps up
11 here (indicating). Royal Farms' plans -- I should go back
12 as to why we are here.

13 The County law requires --and they have been
14 requiring about ten years now -- that all development
15 activities that generate more than 250 trips per day must go
16 through a Community Input Meeting to give the citizens,
17 people that are affected, an opportunity to offer their
18 thoughts on the project.

19 Plus, as of the first of last year, the County
20 changed the CIM law that requires that all meetings have a
21 stenographer available. So, when it gets to the point if

1 you have any questions or comments, please give
2 your name and address for her use, and then we will move
3 forward. Please ask any questions anytime.

4 The purpose of this new plan is to expand the store
5 and provide some additional pumping capacity. It is a
6 congested site at times. So Royal Farms wants to add some
7 additional gasoline pumps here (indicating), and they are
8 adding some tractor/trailer fueling stations over on this
9 (indicating) parcel.

10 This project is made up of three parcels of land,
11 one, two, and three (indicating), that will be combined by
12 record plat through the development process so that, when we
13 are finished the project, we will end up reconfiguring the
14 lot into three pieces of land. You will have one piece of
15 land here for the Royal Farms. You will have a strip of
16 land for a private road, and that private road will provide
17 access to Mr. and Mrs. Harris back here (indicating) and
18 provide for whatever type of development that may come up in
19 the future on the remaining lands.

20 This property is zoned multiple zonings,
21 GI for general industrial, CI for commercial industrial, and

1 R-2 which is low residential density.

2 Because of the private drive and the fueling
3 parking in the R-2 zoned land, this project is subject to a
4 Board of Appeals case asking for permission to use this area
5 (indicating) of land that you see here to be used for an
6 industrial use in an R-2 site.

7 The Board of Appeals case has been heard. We are
8 awaiting the decision. It is our understanding that at the
9 Board of Appeals case there were some negotiations with the
10 neighbors and with Royal Farms that, once that decision
11 comes out and we understand from the minutes exactly what
12 those agreements are, we will make sure they are implemented
13 into this plan.

14 This plan, after today's CIM and once that decision
15 comes in from the Hearing Examiner, will be submitted to
16 Harford County Planning and Zoning for a zoning review.

17 As you may know, the County process is that we
18 submit the plans to P and Z, and it goes before the
19 Development Advisory Committee which is also known as D.A.C.
20 D.A.C. is a committee of all the stakeholders in the County,
21 government officials, departments, that have anything to do

1 with this project such as Erosion and Sediment
2 Control, Stormwater Management, Highways, Water and Sewer,
3 Planning and Zoning, Health Department, Police, EMS, Fire.
4 They are all there, and they offer their comments to the
5 engineer on this plan and, if the plan meets all the
6 requirements of the Code, eventually an approval letter is
7 issued to the owner and, once he signs that letter, that
8 allows for that site plan to be good for two years, and it
9 has to be constructed within two years or it can get a
10 one-year extension, but it really only has a life of three
11 years from the day that it's countersigned to the day that
12 the plan expires.

13 So, most commercial properties, they don't stretch
14 out to that whole period of time, and Royal Farms is anxious
15 to renovate this store with their new model, larger store,
16 more attractive than what's there currently.

17 The site will have more than enough ample parking
18 per Code and, because of that, we will provide some special
19 paving in the additional parking areas that will be active
20 towards and we'll use as accredited towards our stormwater
21 management regulations.

1 Now, the site has an existing stormwater
2 management pond with water quality for the existing
3 developed store. So, what we need to do as engineers is to
4 provide additional tenure for the new impervious area and
5 water quality for the whole site.

6 So, as we go through this process, we will have to
7 submit to the County a concept stormwater management plan
8 which has been completed for their review and approval and,
9 of course, this plan will not get approved until the County
10 approves that concept stormwater management plan.

11 Once all the zoning work is done and we get the
12 approval, then we can move forward with construction of
13 construction plans and architectural plans. Those plans go
14 through various departments for review, erosion and sediment
15 control, stormwater management, commercial water and sewer
16 access, State Highway access. There's all types of criteria
17 that we need to meet to get this plan to move forward
18 towards construction.

19 Once the plans have been signed off by the County
20 and approved, bonding is posted and permits are issued and
21 construction will start and the store will be shut down

1 during the construction process, very similar to
2 what they recently completed up at Route 7 and Mountain
3 Road.

4 With that, are there any questions? Is there
5 anything you want to ask or I can help you with?

6 MS. CROOKSHANKS: My name is Betty Crookshanks,
7 2020 David Drive, Edgewood, Maryland. I am a partial owner
8 of the Harris property.

9 I want to know why on 24 -- why can't they put the
10 driveway going on 24?

11 MR. SCHAFFER: That's a good question.

12 Route 24 when it was constructed and plats
13 recorded, the legislation to create that road, it was
14 envisioned as a denied access road. What that means is that
15 the State Highway will control wherever the entrances are on
16 that road, and they'll only allow those entrances for public
17 roads.

18 In 42 years of doing this work, I only know two
19 cases where the State Highway allowed a break in that
20 denial. One of them was up here at Upper Chesapeake
21 Hospital, and the other one was where the Box Hill South

1 development is.

2 MS. CROOKSHANKS: You know it is going to be so
3 dangerous. I mean, I hate what they're doing, and you and I
4 both know, they can change any rule they want to. They have
5 done it to us from way back when. They illegal rezoned.
6 They have done so much that it is just a joke. Saying you
7 are free anymore is a big laugh, I'm telling you.

8 The last hearing, the lawyer was so crooked that he
9 told my family that, if we spoke up, he would make sure that
10 our property was -- what did he say --

11 MS. SHUNK: He would show the property at times
12 that was not -- the zoning people would make it hard for us,
13 in other words if we chose to speak up and contest it.

14 MR. SCHAFFER: Well, I'm sorry to hear that because
15 that shouldn't be said.

16 MS. CROOKSHANKS: My sister doesn't hear well, so
17 she didn't hear what he said. So, then after other people
18 complained, he had the you-know-what to stand up and say
19 the lady that lives there isn't complaining. I just had
20 to say this. I couldn't say it this last time. I'm
21 furious. It's just not right. It's not right.

1 I don't see why they cannot -- I mean,
2 Eugene and Sue selling their property -- I don't care about
3 all that. That's progress. I can understand that, but
4 you're going to have one accident after another after
5 another. We already have such a mess there. I don't see
6 how anybody could look at that and think that is a good
7 idea. It's crazy. I mean, it's crazy.

8 MR. SCHAFFER: Well, I can't disagree with you with
9 regard to your thoughts on Route 24, but I do --

10 MS. CROOKSHANKS: They're going to be coming onto
11 7.

12 MR. SCHAFFER: Yes, I do --

13 MS. CROOKSHANKS: If they could come out on 24 --
14 but they're coming out on Route 7.

15 MR. SCHAFFER: I do know, as I said, from many
16 years of experience that to break that denial of access onto
17 Route 24 is extremely difficult, not to mention going
18 through the engineering process, the legal process, and then
19 paying the fee to the State Highway. Upper Chesapeake paid
20 close to 3 million dollars to get a public road connected to
21 that, and that was eventually done. That was eventually --

1 MS. CROOKSHANKS: Why should it cost that
2 much?

3 MR. SCHAFFER: Pardon?

4 MS. CROOKSHANKS: Why should it cost that much?

5 MR. SCHAFFER: I would love to know that answer. I
6 don't know. The State is very difficult to deal with.
7 State Highway is -- they are the biggest thorn in our side.
8 You know, we're working the County. We can work with you
9 folks. We do this all the time to work out issues. You
10 just can't work them out with the State. It's a very
11 frustrating process.

12 I know that Governor Hogan has put some new people
13 in there and trying to make things more uniform, but the
14 denial of access, breaking that, that just won't happen.

15 MS. CROOKSHANKS: I wonder how many people are
16 going to have to die before they change it. I mean, I'm not
17 being --

18 MR. SCHAFFER: I understand.

19 MS. CROOKSHANKS: It's the truth. If you go in
20 the store, you have to see it. There's no way that there
21 should be -- especially tractor/trailers coming out of

1 there.

2 MR. SCHAFFER: Well, that's why their entrance,
3 their exit goes all the way up, to try to get as much
4 separation from the intersection. The first entrance here
5 will be reconfigured to be just a right-in only. That means
6 you can't make a left-hand turn and, if they don't want
7 to go in that entrance, then they will come up here
8 (indicating) to really the main entrance, and that will
9 allow the tractor/trailers to move around, go where they
10 need to go. They can come in this (indicating) entrance.
11 We've done the turning analysis with the trucks to make sure
12 that they can go anywhere on this site and not interfere
13 with other users.

14 MS. CROOKSHANKS: Will there be a light there?

15 MR. SCHAFFER: Not at this time. The light is
16 another one of the State Highway rules. They have a
17 criteria called a traffic light warrant analysis and,
18 literally, an area has to be failing with no possible
19 resolution for correcting it before they would even consider
20 a light; not to mention, they take a look and they have a
21 certain criteria now. I believe it's 500 feet between

1 traffic lights and, of course, there is a light
2 right there at Continental Drive.

3 Sorry I couldn't help you, but I gave you the facts
4 as I know them.

5 MS. SHUNK: My name is Polly Shunk. I live at
6 2609 Philadelphia Road. I am the little house down there
7 that's behind everything.

8 MR. SCHAFFER: Okay.

9 MS. SHUNK: My brothers and sisters own that piece
10 of land. There's five of us. It is under the name of
11 Harris, and we all own that together. It was left in an
12 estate from my parents for us.

13 Now, I live in the home place but, when you come
14 up, if you come from 24 and turn onto Route 7 and you put
15 your blinker on to turn into our driveway, if you are at
16 that second entrance going into the Royal Farms, they pull
17 right out in front of you because they think that blinker
18 means you are going into Royal Farms; but by the time you
19 get past that driveway, it's too late to put your blinker
20 on because our driveway is there. That has always been a
21 problem.

1 My niece was hit there and injured very
2 badly about five years ago because she made the turn onto 7,
3 put her blinker on, and two cars pulled right out in front
4 of her and she got hit there. There are accidents there all
5 the time that happen.

6 I tell my children and everybody: when you go
7 to turn in my driveway, slow down the minute you hit 7, and
8 don't turn that blinker on until you get past that entrance
9 to the store.

10 Now, when they make this larger, it is really going
11 to be bad.

12 MR. SCHAFFER: well, when they make this larger,
13 that confusion is going to go away because your entrance and
14 the driveway here will be one and the same. So there is no
15 -- there will be no ability for people to be preconceived.

16 MS. SHUNK: That's another big problem. That
17 driveway has always been, like you just said, a private
18 driveway. Now, all the sudden, it's Norris Road again. I
19 have lived in that house all my life. I have been
20 there 68 years. I know what has gone through there and what
21 hasn't.

1 In the 1930s and '40s, there was a canning
2 factory down on that road right across from our house and
3 they had access -- Norris Road took you from Route 7 to the
4 railroad tracks so the people for the canning factory --
5 when the canning factory closed down in the early '40s, the
6 road became non-existent.

7 I have never -- as long as I've lived there, I have
8 never ever heard anybody say anything about Norris Road.
9 State Roads have never come down and cleaned our road or
10 done anything for us. They don't even trim the trees very
11 often unless you beg them because, every time there's an
12 electric storm and the wind is blowing, we are out of
13 electric on that driveway. There was four homes in there.
14 It takes them forever to get in there and repair it.

15 Now, two weeks after we had our last meeting, here
16 comes the tree trimmers down the driveway. They were there
17 to trim Norris Lane, Norris Road. Never in my 68
18 years have they ever come in there and called that Norris
19 Lane.

20 I was hoping the Engles (phonetic) would be here
21 tonight. They bought the property down behind us. When

1 they wanted to put their business in there, Norris
2 Road did not exist anymore and they couldn't do it. They
3 had to make access through the industrial park. They wanted
4 to do that because that was a private drive.

5 Now that the County is going to make some money in
6 this store and the revenue is going to be better for them
7 there, all the sudden, Norris Lane exists again. This is
8 crooked. It's not right, you know.

9 I love Harford County. I have been here all my
10 life and I love it, but my nephew had to go -- about ten
11 years ago, he wanted to build a home between my house and
12 the second house in and they had changed the zoning. We all
13 went to court, about 80 of us, to prove they did that zoning
14 without our knowledge, and we did prove that it was wrong.
15 So they gave him the right to build a home in there if he
16 wanted, but he could have no changes in it. Once that home
17 was built, it had to stay like that forever. There would be
18 no variances that they could give him later on if he wanted
19 to add a garage or a pool or anything else. So he didn't do
20 that. He didn't build it.

21 But we know they have done things that are

1 dishonest before. It shouldn't be like that.

2 MR. SCHAFFER: All right.

3 MS. SHUNK: You know what I asked for? I'm the one
4 that didn't speak up because I didn't hear what they said.
5 We were so worried about our children. It's bad enough that
6 the kids walk to the end of our driveway to catch a school
7 bus and I have little grandchildren from kindergarten up to
8 eleventh grade that catch the bus there sometimes.

9 Because of the traffic turning off 24 and being in
10 a hurry to get to work, when the school bus stops there to
11 pick the kids up, you hear brakes squeal all the time.
12 People run those lights on that school bus all the time.
13 I know that for a fact because I drove Route 7 for 37 years
14 as a school bus driver -- 32 years.

15 So, anyhow, it's dangerous. They have got to have
16 a way that those kids can come up our driveway and not be
17 walking on the parking lot to the Royal Farms Store.

18 Now, they told me that they would put a sidewalk
19 in. That sidewalk is not going to be a lot of help when you
20 got tractor/trailers turning in there and not paying
21 attention to what they're doing; and you and I both know

1 that tractor/trailer drivers are not always the most
2 awake people in the world.

3 So, it's very upsetting to us that they could use
4 24. There would be no big problem with that if they could
5 just get them -- but, because they want to charge some
6 ridiculous amount of money to make access there -- why does
7 it have to cost that much? You are talking about probably
8 saving lives if they come right in and out of there.

9 As far as another light, you got the light on 24
10 and you've got the light at the school. We had to put a
11 light at the school because buses were sitting there turning
12 and getting hit.

13 So the school, Old Post School, William Paca School
14 is right there at the industrial park. They have a
15 light there. There is no way they are going to put another
16 light in there. There is no way people can stop in there.
17 So, that's out of the question.

18 So, I don't know what they are going to do. I
19 don't know how they are going to do that and, as far as I
20 know right now, I am going to be the only one left in
21 there whenever the green house and the red house are torn

1 down. My home will be the only one left until the
2 Engles decide what they are going to do with their property
3 back there.

4 But if we can use that road for Royal Farms, the
5 Engles should be able to use that road for their business,
6 too. They couldn't do that eight years ago or ten
7 years ago, you know. I don't understand why it's all
8 right for one person and not another person.

9 MR. SCHAFFER: I appreciate what you are saying.

10 MS. SHUNK: I am not against Royal Farms rebuilding
11 or doing what they need to do, but they need to find better
12 access. That corner is so busy right now. There's
13 accidents there all the time, and there is no reason.
14 Then you have got the school right there with all these
15 school buses. Old Post William Paca is one of the biggest
16 elementary schools in Harford County. So, you got all those
17 school buses to worry about twice a day.

18 Like I said, I drove there. I know the idiots in
19 the morning that come up behind that bus and they're in and
20 out behind you and they pass and, when you get to the red
21 light, they are one car in front of you. They're going to

1 take the chance on hurting someone, but that's the
2 way that people are.

3 MR. SCHAFFER: That's the way they drive today.
4 You're right.

5 MS. SHUNK: But there's got to be a better way.
6 We have got to be able to work something out to have a
7 better way to get in and out of there. It is the
8 same way with people coming out of that Clearview Drive.
9 The traffic is terrible when they're trying to come across
10 there. If you sit in that middle lane to make a turn, your
11 life's in your hands because you don't know who is coming.

12 I come up Route 7 toward 24 and get in that middle
13 lane to come in my driveway and you got somebody coming down
14 24 that, if there's a truck in front of them, all the sudden
15 they come in to go to Clearview Drive, and I'm sitting
16 there and we're facing each other because there is not a
17 long enough span in there for them to get by each other.

18 So, there is already problems there. The State
19 Roads need to be totally aware of how bad that is and, until
20 they come in and talk with some of us that live there and
21 investigate, they don't know what they're doing. They need

1 to see that.

2 MR. SCHAFFER: Okay. Thank you for your
3 comments.

4 I would like to say that -- I would like to support
5 the government somehow, but I can't stand here and do that.
6 I understand what you're saying.

7 Any other comments?

8 MR. SHIELLS: James Shiells, 1401 Clearview Road.
9 I wonder if you could explain your map a little
10 bit.

11 MR. SCHAFFER: Sure.

12 MR. SHIELLS: That (indicating) is my house.

13 MR. SCHAFFER: Here (indicating) is Clearview
14 Drive.

15 MR. SHIELLS: Where is the entrance going to be?

16 MR. SCHAFFER: Right here (indicating). It's
17 basically going to be across from your house.

18 MR. SHIELLS: And the trucks are going to come in
19 --

20 MR. SCHAFFER: They are either going to come in
21 this (indicating) entrance --

1 MR. SHIELLS: Oh, they're going to come in
2 the main entrance.

3 MR. SCHAFFER: Possibly. Probably. They are
4 truck drivers. You can paint arrows all over the place,
5 but they are going to come however they come. I think the
6 ones coming this way (indicating) will end up going
7 this way. I think the ones coming towards the intersection
8 will probably come in here (indicating).

9 MR. SHIELLS: This (indicating) is the road; right?

10 MR. SCHAFFER: Yes. Currently, the existing
11 driveway is right where my finger is.

12 MR. SHIELLS: You know where that red light is that
13 they had replaced it with the traffic circle, and then you
14 could have had right turns and come around that way.
15 Traffic circles work.

16 MR. SCHAFFER: Yes, they do.

17 If no one else has any comments, I would like to
18 thank everyone for taking the time to come. Yes, sir?

19 MR. SHIELLS: When do you think the construction
20 will start?

21 MR. SCHAFFER: Probably not till towards the end of

1 the year. Typically, a development going through
2 what we call the entitlement process, which is where we are
3 now, then going through construction drawings and the
4 permitting process normally takes about a nine- to
5 twelve-month period.

6 MR. SHIELLS: How long would the store be closed
7 when they are redoing it?

8 MR. SCHAFFER: Six months.

9 MR. SHIELLS: That long? Same spot though; right?

10 MR. SCHAFFER: It's pushed back a little bit. The
11 store is currently right here (indicating). I will just
12 draw it. So, it's pushed back to open up the space in the
13 front.

14 MR. SHIELLS: About 20 feet or so?

15 MR. SCHAFFER: Yes. I think it's 20 feet.

16 MS. SHUNK: Where is the carwash going to be?

17 MR. SCHAFFER: The carwash is behind the store.
18 That is this building here (indicating).

19 MS. SHUNK: It would be between the store and the
20 existing pond back there?

21 MR. SCHAFFER: Correct.

1 MR. SHIELLS: Probably one of the reasons
2 the State wouldn't want to give a private road is because 24
3 is a dual lane and it makes it kind of complicated.

4 MR. SCHAFFER: Yes. Their whole idea -- when they
5 originally designed Route 24, their thoughts were, they
6 didn't want any roads connecting to it. They wanted no
7 traffic lights, and they just wanted to go from 24 to Route
8 1, but then the reality came in that you couldn't do that.
9 So they went back and actually redesigned and, you know,
10 controlled intersections.

11 That's a pretty typical case with most State roads
12 of that nature.

13 MS. SHUNK: How will we know when the zoning goes
14 through? Are we going to be notified by mail?

15 MR. SCHAFFER: The process will be that, once we
16 submit our plan to the County, the County will post the
17 property and also advertise the property in the newspaper,
18 the project in the newspaper, for two weeks. They will send
19 you a notice like you got for the CIM, but it will come from
20 the County telling you when the D.A.C. meeting is.

21 Now, as far as when the plan gets approved and the

1 status of the plan, if you go to their website,
2 they have a -- they keep the statuses current on the
3 website, all the information about the plans, so you will be
4 able to keep track of it at that point.

5 All right, folks. If that's it, we will definitely
6 from an engineering perspective take into consideration the
7 things you are talking about particularly when it comes to
8 the school bus. We will see what we can do there to make
9 things as safe as we possibly can.

10 I would like to thank everyone for coming. It's a
11 beautiful spring evening out. And this will end our CIM.

12 Thank you.

13 (The proceedings were concluded at 7:05 p.m.)

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1 CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC/REPORTER

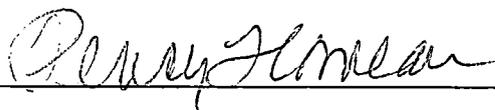
2 STATE OF MARYLAND,

3 COUNTY OF HARFORD, to wit;

4 I, Penny L. Comeau, do hereby certify that the
5 within proceedings were recorded stenographically by me and
6 then transcribed from my notes in a true and accurate manner
7 to the best of my knowledge, ability and belief.

8 I further certify that I am not related to any of
9 the parties to this proceeding and have no interest in its
10 outcome.

11 As witness, my Hand and Notarial Seal this 14th day
12 of March, 2015, in Bel Air, Maryland.

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14
15 

16 Penny L. Comeau, Notary Public

17
18 My Commission expires 4-21-16.