

http://www.fredericksburg.com/local/planners-praise-ladysmith-village/article_b96939a1-1464-5765-bca3-91509477d15f.html

Planners praise Ladysmith Village

By RUTH FINCH Sep 20, 2002

But project has problems, they caution

A plan to put 2,850 new homes in Ladysmith appears likely to win approval from the Caroline County Planning Commission, despite objections by some residents.

"If you have 2,850 homes, and every one has a man, woman and a couple of children, that's nearly 15,000 people," said Charlie Osborne, one of a half dozen residents to speak at a public hearing Wednesday. "Where are you going to get all that water? We've got a water shortage already."

Planning commissioners said they are concerned about having enough water for the proposed Ladysmith Village. They also worry that the cash proffers might be too small, the growth might come too fast, and whether architectural standards being developed will be too lax.

But overall, commissioners said they like the way developer Jay Jarrell has incorporated aspects of a land-use plan Ladysmith residents developed a few years ago.

"I think it is an outstanding project being proposed," Planning Commissioner Raymond Piland said. "If we are going to have development--and we are--doing it in this manner is in the best interest of the county."

Jarrell, who helped build the Spotsylvania County neighborhoods of Pelham's Crossing, River Meadows and Ruffin's Pond, is asking Caroline to rezone 550 acres on U.S. 1 and Durette Road to accommodate Ladysmith Village.

His plan calls for four individual communities of single-family homes, townhouses, apartments and dwellings built above storefronts. Roads would link the four communities to one another and to the commercial center of Madison Village, a separate golf-course community being developed to the south.

Like the developers of Madison Village, a neighboring 3,500-home development approved in January 2001, Jarrell has offered to pay the county \$2,250 per house to help cover the costs of extra roads, schools, utilities and police, fire and emergency services that those households will require. He has also offered to give the county a \$1 million library and a park with ball fields worth \$490,000.

But commissioners say they might want more.

"I'm concerned because what we are seeing now is a proffer made by another developer," said Virginia Scher, the commissioner who represents Ladysmith. "Those [Madison Village] proffers were signed almost two years ago. Is that still even close to a relevant figure?"

The commission delayed voting on the proposed neighborhood Wednesday. They want to first hold a work session with the developer Oct. 3, get a complete fiscal impact statement from the county, and learn more about how the neighborhood might affect the county's precarious water supply.

The commission will discuss the development again at its next regular meeting Oct. 15 before turning the matter over to the Board of Supervisors, which has final say on the rezoning.

