

DRAFT MINUTES
Commission on Local Government
Public Hearing
Town of Front Royal – Warren County
Voluntary Settlement Agreement
7:00 p.m., November 18, 2013
Warren County Government Center
County Board of Supervisors Room
220 North Commerce Ave
Front Royal, Virginia 22630

Members Present

John G. Kines, Jr., Chairman
John T. Stirrup, Jr., Vice-Chairman
Harold H. Bannister, Jr.
Cole Hendrix
Bruce C. Goodson

Members Absent

(See note below)*

Staff Present

Zack Robbins, Senior Policy Analyst
Ed Lanza, Senior Public Finance Analyst

***Mrs. Wanda C. Wingo's term on the Commission expired on December 31, 2012; however, pursuant to Va. Code Section 15.2-2902, Mrs. Wingo continues to serve as a temporary member of the Commission for the limited purpose of participating in the final reports on the Commission's review of the proposed Town of Front Royal – Warren County voluntary settlement agreement. This matter is currently pending before the Commission, which Mrs. Wingo fully participated in prior to the expiration of her term. Mrs. Wingo was ill, and unable to attend the public hearings and oral presentations that were held on November 18, 2013 in Front Royal, Virginia.**

I. Call to Order

A. Welcome

Commission Chairman John G. Kines, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. on November 18, 2013 in the County Board of Supervisors Room at the Warren County Government Center, in Front Royal, Virginia. Mr. Kines explained that the Commission is present to review a proposed voluntary settlement agreement between the Town of Front Royal and Warren County. He further explained that the proposed agreement provides for the

Minutes

Public Hearing

7:00 p.m., November 18, 2013

Page 2

annexation to the Town of Front Royal of approximately 604.7 acres of territory located in Warren County; to include the acceptance of certain proffered conditions upon the rezoning of such territory; and for other matters.

B. Advertisement

Mr. Robbins indicated that the public hearing was advertised by notice published in the *Warren Sentinel* on October 31, 2013 and again on November 5 and the *Northern Virginia Daily* on October 29 and November 7. In addition, he stated that notice of the public hearing was mailed to the local governments contiguous to, or sharing functions, revenue, or tax sources with, the Town and the County.

C. Introduction of Commission Members and Staff

Next, Mr. Kines introduced the members of the Commission and provided biographical information on each member. He also introduced the Commission staff.

II. Commission's Review

Mr. Robbins explained that the Commission on Local Government is directed by law to review proposed annexations and other local boundary change and transition issues – as well as negotiated agreements settling such matters – prior to their presentation to the courts for ultimate disposition. He further stated that, upon receipt of notice of such proposed action or agreement, the Commission is directed to “hold hearings, make investigations, analyze local needs and make findings of facts and recommendations” regarding the issue to the affected local governments. With respect to a proposed agreement that is negotiated under the authority of Section 15.2-3400 of the *Code of Virginia* – such as the one proposed here – Mr. Robbins said that the Commission is required to report, in writing, its findings and recommendations as to whether the proposed settlement is in the best interest of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Robbins indicated that the public hearing is intended to afford the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed agreement. He also announced that the Commission has agreed to keep its record open for the receipt of additional citizen comment through December 2, 2013 and will close its record as of that date. He further indicated that the Commission will endeavor to render its report to

Minutes

Public Hearing

7:00 p.m., November 18, 2013

Page 3

the affected local governments prior to the end of January 2014.

III. Receipt of Testimony

Of the approximately 33 persons who attended the public hearing, five citizens addressed the Commission during the public hearing.

Mr. Dan McCarty, property owner within the Shenandoah River Estates community of Warren County, opposed the agreement. His primary concern was road access to the community during the construction of the East-West Connector. If traffic were routed to his property via Route 606, it could double the time it would take to travel to the town. Upon completion of his testimony, Mr. Kines reminded him that if the property is rezoned, there would be another opportunity for the public to provide input.

Mr. Mike Challis, property owner within the Shenandoah River Estates community of Warren County, opposed the agreement. His primary concern was road access to his property. He also had concerns about the water supply to the annexation area if it is developed.

Mr. Stan Brooks, resident of the Town of Front Royal, opposed the agreement. He stated that when the region was mandated to develop growth zones, the area proposed for annexation was not included. He stated that the annexation area has a number of challenges to face before it can be developed. He also questioned whether the voluntary settlement is a good deal for the County. Mr. Brooks continued by saying that the East-West Connector can be built without the annexation. He also expressed concern that that the Town did not conduct an economic or traffic impact analysis of the proposed annexation and rezoning.

Mr. Mike Malone, property owner on Jim's Lane in Warren County, stated that the best way to make an impact on traffic congestion is to provide access to Interstate 66 via Shenandoah Shores Road.

Ms. Ramona Bowden, property owner within the Shenandoah River Estates community of Warren County, opposed the annexation. She was concerned that the development would destroy the beautiful views from Mary Shady Lane.

Mr. McCarty re-addressed the Commission and stated that he would rather not see any new housing in the region.

IV. Closing Remarks

Mr. Kines expressed the Commission's appreciation to the speakers for the comments they provided.

V. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

John G. Kines, Jr.
Chairman

Zachary Robbins
Local Government Policy Manager