

## **Mixed-Used Development Proposed**

### **County To Consider Rezoning Massanetta Springs Road Site**

*JENNY JONES, Daily News-Record, October 26, 2005*

The southwest corner of the intersection at Massanetta Springs Road and U.S. 33 could become home to a development like no other in Rockingham County.

The Hine Group LLC, a Virginia limited liability company, along with an affiliate entity known as Preston Lake LLC of Port Jefferson, N.Y., has contracted to purchase 145 acres of the Preston Farm properties, according to a statement prepared by The Hine Group LLC and Preston Lake LLC.

Together, the entities plan to develop a mixed-use center, the statement says, which provides both residential and commercial functions on the site at Massanetta Springs Road and U.S. 33.

Included in the proposed development would be 466 town homes and single family units as well as a commercial area that would have a "Main Street" appearance, the statement says.

#### **Before The Board**

To build the proposed development, Preston Lake LLC has placed a rezoning request for the property.

The company wants to rezone about 21 acres from general agriculture to planned commercial development and about 125 acres from general agriculture to planned residential.

All of the property is in the urban growth area, meaning it is slated for near-term commercial and residential development on the county's conceptual land-use plan, said Rhonda Henderson, director of planning for the county's Department of Community Development.

The request has already gone before the planning commission and will now go before the Rockingham County Board of Supervisors for consideration during the board's regular meeting tonight.

The supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. in the board's chambers of the Rockingham County Administration Center. The rezoning will be brought up during the second half of the meeting at 7 p.m.

If the request is granted, Preston Lake will become one of several developments, including the Angler subdivision, which could include more than 350 homes in Elkton, to be built in the eastern part of the county.

Chairman of the Board Pablo Cuevas said Preston Lake seems well-planned.

"I am going to be very curious about what kind of [offers to improve the nearby roads and infrastructure] they're going to come up with, and the time table" for which they plan to build, he said.

#### **Road Capacity**

One thing Hine Group LLC agreed to do, says its manager, Richard Hine, is improve Massanetta Springs Road to help accommodate additional traffic generated by the development.

Hine said he has also agreed to rebuild the road from U.S. 33 to the Massanetta Springs Conference Center.

Timmy Fitzgerald, assistant residency administrator for the Virginia Department of Transportation, said the department is pleased with proposed improvements. "We've been talking to the engineer, and there's going to be some improvements made that will help move traffic," he said.

Those improvements include installing right and center turn lanes into the entrance of the newsubdivision and commercial center and widening the road from 18 feet to 24 feet of pavement with an additional 4 feet of shoulder room, Fitzgerald said.

"He is trying to do what he needs to do," he said. "It's really going to help things."

### **Phased Development**

Hine Group plans to begin construction in mid-2006 on the community that it says will draw on the "New Urbanism" style, which focuses on pedestrian and non-motorized modes of access to and from residential and commercial areas.

"It's a very effective use of land," Hine said. "We think it's something that's going to enhance Rockingham County."

The development's commercial areas would include retail shops, offices and third-floor condominiums and would be built according to market demand with an anticipated build-out of 24 months, according to the statement.

"The commercial center at Preston Lake will provide local residents with a community shopping venue designed to meet their retail and service needs with pedestrian, bike and vehicle access provided totally on site," the statement said. "A variety of shops and services, selected to cater to the needs of the residential community, will be clustered along the corridor in a well landscaped, traditional downtown setting, connected by convenient walkways."

The residential portion of the development, which would include housing for everyone from young professionals to retirees, would be constructed in five phases, according to the statement. Each phase is anticipated to take 12 months but would depend on market demand.

The development "is intended to cater to a broad range of owners, and not to be limited to an exclusive set of upper income owners," the statement said.

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