

Committee members

I write in support of HB 3211 that would designate the entire Stafford Triangle formally as Urban Reserve. I have been involved with land use issues and vision planning of the Stafford Hamlet for many years, serving 3 two year terms as a director and as its Chairman in 2013. In addition, I have been a member and director of the Stafford Land Owners Association. I have lived on 4.7 acres in Stafford for 39 years.

Since its inception, the Hamlet has struggled with what level of development should occur, with the assumption that development would indeed happen and the citizens wanted some significant input into the process. The Hamlet's Bylaws stated the necessity of making a community vision plan.

Unfortunately, a vocal and majority contingent made sure no substantive planning was undertaken. There was a successful effort to produce its Values and Vision Statements, which sets general principles for long range land use and a strong preference for maintaining a pastoral setting. No detailed, long range planning was accomplished until 2013, when a formal Planning Committee undertook community outreach and determined specific, but differing, preferences for increased density, by neighborhood. The developed neighborhoods, understandably, preferred no or limited development within their area and the entire Stafford Hamlet. The undeveloped neighborhoods, comprising the vast amount of open land, but with very few voters, desire zoning changes that allow both reasonable development and adherence to the Values and Vision Statements.

So much progress was made by the Planning Committee and a board favoring completion of the community vision plan, that they were thrown out in the election at the end of 2013!

At the beginning of 2014 a proposal was made to allow those neighborhoods favoring some development to proceed with long range planning and allow those neighborhoods favoring no planning to be excluded from such. The proposal was not allowed a vote. Any real long range planning by the Hamlet has stagnated. Results of exhaustive outreach is well-known despite efforts made to keep this data from reaching the county.

The only solution that I can see is to certify the Urban Reserve designation for Stafford and continue with **professional** planning that could lead to a model green community. It is long overdue and more important today as the county needs additional employment and high end residential land.

Sincerely,

Mike Miller