

# Public takes another swing at "Slugger amendment"

By Greg Pearson  
STAFF WRITER

A more stringent county sign ordinance will go to public hearing on Jan. 10 following a 3-0 vote by the Chesterfield Board of Supervisors last week. Supervisors Dickie King, Renny Humphrey and Don Sowder voted to set a public hearing for the ordinance, and Supervisors Kelly Miller and Art Warren were absent.

As proposed, the amended ordinance would limit signs on residential- and agriculturally-zoned property to no larger than eight square feet and no taller than five feet. The county sees the amendment as fixing a poorly written ordinance that allowed county critic C.L. "Slugger" Morrisette to put a 32-square-foot sign on his Beach Road property so motorists could read his criticism of several supervisors and the county administrator as they drove by.



Morrisette

Last June, the Chesterfield Circuit Court wrote that the language of the previous amendment did not prohibit signs that express personal opinions. Chesterfield Circuit Court Judge Cleo E. Powell dismissed the summons and \$100 fine against Morrisette.

Morrisette has said the real issue is free speech – that he has a constitutional right to inform those who pass by his property – but Powell's ruling did not address that.

When asked if board members who were criticized by Morrisette's signs should recuse themselves from the vote because of a potential conflict of interest, County Attorney Steve Micas said, "No."

While County Administrator Lane Ramsey and the county attorney's office proposed the amendment change, the planning commission recommended against it last month by a 2-1 vote with one abstention. Midlothian Commissioner Dan Gecker called it a "free

speech" issue.

## Remands

The county board also remanded two zoning cases back to the planning commission for further review.

Humphrey asked that the rezoning request by Robert Sowers for 484 homes on 220 acres between the Swift Creek Village and the Holly View community off Bailey Bridge Road receive more study. Chesterfield Transportation Director John McCracken said the developer did not want to pay to construct a small section of a new north-south connector road that was outside of his development. Sowers has agreed to pay for almost all of the road as part of \$7.5 million in proffers he is paying for the rezoning.

When completed, the community will add an estimated 257 children to Chesterfield schools.

While the planning commission voted 4-1 to support the rezoning, the planning department opposed it because it "fails to address the impact... upon transportation facilities."

"We want to rework some of the proffers," acknowledged development attorney Jim Theobald.

A revised rezoning request by Wintervest, LLC was also remanded on a motion by Sowder, who called the action "appropriate."

The developer wants to increase the amount of multifamily housing at Midlothian Town Center and reduce the square footage previously approved for retail. The New Urbanism project will be in the northwest quadrant of Winterfield Road and Midlothian Turnpike in the village of Midlothian.

At the planning commission's meeting last month, both commissioners and the planning department said the developer did not provide enough information to evaluate the application. Almost everyone at that meeting except the developer wanted to defer the case. Ultimately, the planning commission voted against recommending the increase in multifamily and the decrease in retail due to lack of information.

The supervisors remanded it back to the commission for more review.

# Chesterfield names county employees of the year

Chesterfield County gave out awards to 34 employees last week during the Board of Supervisors meeting—one for each department in the county government.

They are: **Katherine Bernhard** (for the Commonwealth's attorney's office); **Janice Blakley** (county administration); **Michelle Blanks** (juvenile probation); **Robert Brandt** (sheriff's office); **Judy Burnett** (purchasing); **Kristin Carlson** (library); **Kim Chewning-McCarthy** (youth group home); **Pamela Cimburke** (emergency communications center); **Faith Davis** (risk management); **Lisa Duffy** (juvenile detention); **Paul "Frank" Dunbar, Jr.** (planning department); **Susan Edwards** (cooperative extension); **Jim Einhaus** (Chesterfield University); **Joanie Ferron** (human resource management); **Patricia Glazier** (youth planning and development); **Pamm Goode** (mental health support services); **Cheryl Hays** (fire and emergency medical services); **Mary Beth Henry** (public affairs); **Steven Jenkins** (utilities); **Lynda Kyle** (registrar's office); **Faye Lewis** (environmental and security management); **Rosa Martinez** (health department); **Beverly Minnetree**, (county attorney's office); **Latanya**

**Mobley** (community corrections services); **Rebecca Parker** (parks and recreation); **Janice Parks** (general services); **Kevin Payne** (accounting); **Robin Salo** (budget and management); **Binford Sloan III** (environmental engineering); **Kim Taylor** (internal audit); **Clay Walden** (real estate assessment); **Brittiany Wynne** (treasurer's office); **Mark Younce** (police department); and **David Zimmerman** (information systems technology).

## John Tyler forms new honor society

John Tyler Community College recently announced the formation of the Beta Omicron Omicron Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) International Honor Society. PTK is an honor society that recognizes academic achievement of community and junior college students. Growing student enrollments prompted the college to submit a petition for the new chapter, which will operate out of the Midlothian campus. The Tau Rho Chapter of PTK will continue to represent the college's Chester campus.

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Be clear about what the consequences will be should your teen choose to drink alcohol.

Substance Abuse Free Environment Inc. (SAFE) is a nonprofit community coalition in Chesterfield County. Its mission is to engage our community in working together to prevent substance abuse. For more information, call (804) 796-7100 or visit our Web site at [chesterfieldsafe.org](http://chesterfieldsafe.org).