

# The Capital

## Top Stories

### Opposition building to Target in Waysons

By E.B. FURGURSON III, Staff Writer

Some 250 south county residents packed a school cafeteria last night to take aim at a Target proposed in Waysons Corner, arguing it could be the leading edge of major development in a sleepy corner of the county.

Organized by a new civic group formed to fight what opponents labeled a "destination mall," the meeting drew plenty of vocal objections but no support. Petrie Ross Ventures Annapolis did not send a representative to the gathering in Lothian.

"We need development that protects the interests of the community overall not just the few," said Andrew Gaeta, an organizer of the new Lothian Civic Association.

Mr. Gaeta recently moved to an 80-acre home on nearby Greenock Road, and fears the country lane will be clogged by thousands of cars drawn daily to the center.

Although developer Walt Petrie did not attend the meeting, his company did provide a "fact sheet" that was handed out at Southern Middle School.

The plan calls for nearly 500,000 square feet of shopping and corresponding parking on about 27 acres just off busy commuter artery Route 4.

Only the initial phase of the project, a 128,531 square-foot Target and 559 parking spaces, has been presented to the county for approval so far. It is one of two new Targets planned in the county, with the other being developed in Parole.

The property has the required zoning for the project, but the approval process has been held up because the developer did not hold a proper public meeting. A new meeting has been slated for Aug. 15 at Waysons Bingo.

This morning, Mr. Petrie said he was looking forward to the meeting next month.

"We are hearing a lot of emotion with no facts to back them up," he said.

"People talk about a traffic nightmare ... or an environmental mess ...

"If they can show me that factually, we will listen and try to fix it."

Organizers of last night's meeting read from the South County Small Area Plan, a guideline for development in the area included in the county's general development plan in 2001.

Peter Perry, who was helped create the plan, pointed to one passage from the list of business development guidelines in that plan:

"Recognize that strip malls, national franchises and up-zoning are inconsistent with the rural character of south county."

Others expressed worries about traffic, environmental impact and other issues.

Jeff Shenot, president of the Friends of Jug Bayis worried that removing 27 acres of trees will affect birds, fish and water quality in the 1,400-acre Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary right across Route 4 from the project.

"Any time you do that, no matter how you treat storm water, it will have an impact," he said. "Water temperatures will increase, sediments too. Dissolved oxygen will decrease."

Patuxent Riverkeeper Fred Tutman spoke in more general terms on the potential impact of putting a big box shopping center directly upstream from a wetland sanctuary.

"The myth is we have to accommodate growth," he said, "The reality is we are asked to accommodate profits. We aren't against growth we are against the impacts of growth. Where is the balance?"

The project calls for restaurants, more stores and a bank in the second phase of the project. That had some local business owners worried.

"This is a wonderful (place). I just want to still be in business next year," said Robyn Day, who runs the nearby Countryside Deli and Market with partner Michael Griffin.

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