PUBLIC HEARING
TOWN COUNCIL
JANUARY 12, 2026
6:00 P.M.

PRESENT

Mayor:	Roy M. Gladding
Vice Mayor:	Anita J. Latane
Council Members:	Katherine B. "Kay" Carlton
	Carolyn Barrett
	A. Fleet Dillard, III
	Kenneth A. Gillis
Town Manager:	Steve Wright
Assistant Town Manager:	James Knighton
Town Clerk:	Patsy K. Scates
Town Attorney:	M. Tolley Gwinn
Town Treasurer:	Tina F. Brock
Chief of Police:	Thomas D. Carter

ABSENT:

Council Member:	Troy L. Balderson

VISITORS:

Robert Tyler Lowery	Suzanne Derieux
Valerie Long, Attorney	Caroline "Lynn" Amos
Denise Hammond	Austin Trible
Beth Doan	Straton Beamer
Bill Woodhouse	Beverely Erickson
Warren Evans	
Cherly Evans	

A Public Hearing of the Town Council was held on January 12, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Tappahannock Municipal Building. The hearing was advertised in the Rappahannock Times for two weeks on December 24, 2025, and December 31, 2025, as required by Title 15-2-2204 of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended.

The purpose of the public hearing was to provide an opportunity for the citizens of Tappahannock to voice their opinion regarding the following two items.

- AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF TAPPAHANNOCK, VIRGINIA AMENDING SECTION 10-2 HUNTING OF THE TOWN CODE

The purpose of this Public Hearing is to receive public comment on an ordinance amending various provisions of the Town Code.

- An application from Bareford GMC requesting to rezone lots known as tax parcel 32B (20) Parcels 75, 76, 76 A and 76B. The lots are approximately 0.73 acres and are located at the 500 block of Dangerfield St. in the Town of Tappahannock. The applicant is requesting to rezone the property from R-3 Town Residential to CG-2 General Commercial.

CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Gladding called the meeting to order.

Mayor Gladding stated the first item of the public hearing is an ordinance amending Section 10-2 Hunting in the Town Code.

SECTION 10-2 HUNTING

Mayor Gladding recognized Town Manager Wright.

Town Manager Wright stated the purpose of amending this section of the code is to eliminate the piece that gives the town manager the authority to assign a temporary location specific permit to utilize a firearm within the Town limits. He stated that he and the Town's legal counsel reviewed the section and they agree that this is a liberal interpretation of the State Code section that authorizes this. He stated it's about designating subdivisions as areas either permissible for or precluding hunting and he feels with the density of the population in the town limits, there really shouldn't be any sections of the town that are

eligible for hunting. He stated that authorizing legislation does not allow for or even allude to the fact that the town manager has the authority to give a permit to a specified person.

Town Manager Wright stated he is recommending the council consider adopting an ordinance amending Section 10-2 Hunting of the Town Code to state the following:

Section 10-2 Hunting

It shall be unlawful for any person to have in his possession firearms of any type or description or a bow and arrows while engaged in hunting animals of any kind within the town limits.
(Code 1993, § 4-2)

State Law reference— Authority to adopt, Code of Virginia, § 15.2-1113.1.

Town Manager Wright asked if anyone had any questions.

Mayor Gladding asked for any public comments.

Tyler Lowery stated he agreed with not granting permission to hunt in the Town limits because of the population, but he asked how do you tell the difference between someone in possession of a legally owned firearm from someone who may be potentially hunting, since no hunting is allowed.

Town Manager Wright stated the town code indicates hunting with firearms or other weapons. He stated there is an action associated with it that indicates discharging for the purpose of hunting.

Mayor Gladding asked for any comments from the council or the public.

There were none.

BAREFORD GMC REZONING REQUEST

Mayor Gladding stated the next item for discussion is an application from Bareford GMC requesting to rezone lots known as tax parcel 32B (20) Parcels 75, 76, 76 A and 76B. The lots are approximately 0.73 acres and are located at the 500 block of Dangerfield St. in the Town of Tappahannock. The applicant is requesting to rezone the property from R-3 Town Residential to CG-2 General Commercial.

Assistant Town Manager Knighton stated the proposed rezoning is a proposed zoning reclassification of a 0.73 +/- acre group of parcels located in the 500 Block of Daingerfield St. These four parcels are located at 517 and 523 Daingerfield St. These parcels have been requested to be rezoned from R-3 (Town Residential) district to the CG-2 (General Commercial) district.

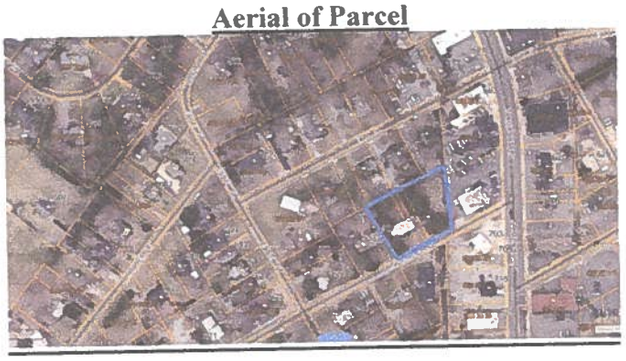
The property is currently zoned R-3, Town Residential and has been since 1993. These parcels, according to our records, were developed with single-family residence prior to the adoption of the zoning ordinance. 523 Daingerfield St. was developed with a single-family residence in 1965, later repurposed to a dentist office in 1993, which was a by-right use under the zoning ordinance at that time. This property was purchased by Bareford-Ball, Inc in January of 2022. 517 Daingerfield St. was developed with a single-family residence in 1947, purchased by Bareford-Ball, Inc in September of 2021.

The intent of the R-3 zoning district is "*to provide for medium-density single-family and multi-family residences and supporting uses. This zone is located in areas of the Town where medium-density single-family and multi-family development patterns are generally established or where services and facilities will be adequate to serve the anticipated population. The comprehensive plan should be used to determine the location and density (units/acre) of this zone. This zone is also intended to provide for minor infilling of existing neighborhoods consistent with their zoning and character at the time of enactment of this Ordinance. Such neighborhoods are relatively uniform in character and stable. The regulations permit future development consistent with existing character. Areas identified as having a stable and fixed character will be allowed to continue to exist and develop under the general regulations governing their design and construction or under the actual plat plans previously approved. In general, re-subdivision of lots in existing subdivisions to create additional building lots is not permitted.*"

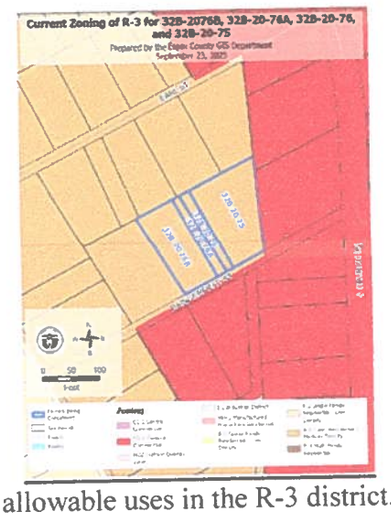
The applicant is requesting to rezone the parcel to CG-2, General Commercial for the purpose of creating additional storage lots for vehicles for Bareford GMC. The intent of the CG-2 zoning district is "*to provide for area-wide-oriented business with a variety of office and commercial uses that are not suitable for location in other zones. This zone is primarily automobile*

accessible and allows for more intensive uses than the CC-1 zone. This zone is adjacent to major transportation routes and is in locations where new development can be grouped with existing compatible development."

Aerial of Parcel

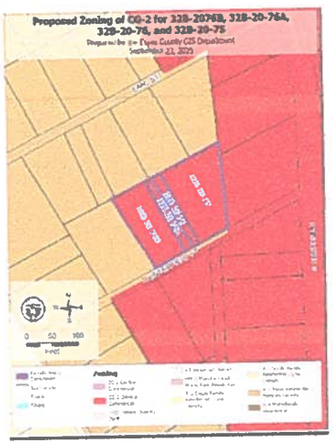


Current Zoning



*See attached a copy of allowable uses in the R-3 district.

Proposed Zoning Map

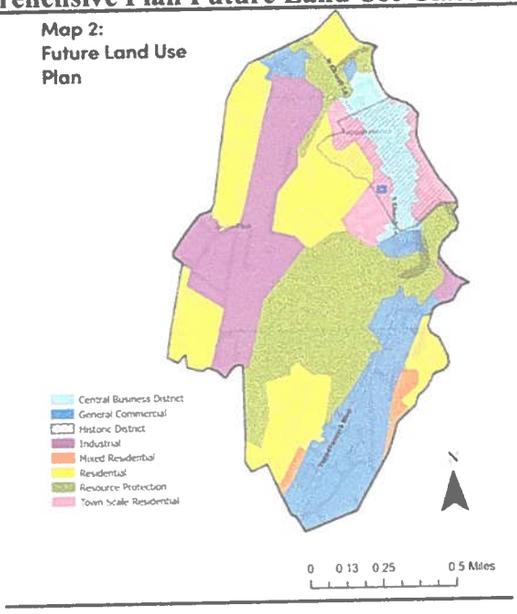


*See attached a copy of allowable uses in the R-4 district.

Assistant Town Manager Knighton stated the current use is vacant residential housing and the proposed use is expanded car storage. He stated the current zoning map showing these parcels zoned as town-scale residential. He stated during this process it was discovered the parcel across the street is zoned CG-2 and is before the Planning Commission as a rezoning request right now. He stated on the 1975 zoning map and on the 1993 zoning map that parcel is zoned R3 and any documentation he found in his research all shows that that parcel was R-3 up until the adoption of the newest zoning map in 2023.

He stated he did not believe from his research that it was the Town Council's intent to rezone that residential property as CG2. He stated he has noticed a couple other areas in that general vicinity with an error and will reach out to those property owners as well to discuss, but he wanted to make sure the council was aware of the zoning error on the latest adoption of the zoning map.

Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Classification



The Comprehensive plan future land use map classifies the parcel (general location of parcel outlined in dark blue) as Town Scale Residential.

The Comprehensive plan describes the **Town Scale Residential** land use classification as "*Town Scale Residential includes those existing residential neighborhoods which exhibit urban characteristics, such as a close proximity to the Downtown core, and a manner of addressing the street which instills an urban feel. These existing areas generally exhibit recognizable historic qualities and are subject to pressure for changes in land use. In addition, this category includes existing and proposed developments with urban densities. Densities in existing Town Scale Residential areas range from four to six dwelling units per acre.*

The purpose of the Town Scale Residential classification is to recognize the unique problems associated with existing urban residential neighborhoods, particularly older neighborhoods, and to provide appropriate areas for infill development at similar densities.

In the case of the former, the primary aim of the Town Scale District is to protect the existing character of those residential neighborhoods from encroachment by adjacent nonresidential uses and from incompatible intensification of residential uses within that may have a deleterious effect on its character and quality."

Comprehensive Plan Guidance

Although the future land use map in the Comprehensive Plan doesn't directly show the subject parcels in a future land use commercial category but instead shows them in a residential category, more specifically, Town Scale Residential, this future land use map should not be used to make site specific determinations. These parcels are bordered by the Central Business District land use category described as, "*The Central Business District, which has historically been the center of commerce and business in Tappahannock, contains a mix of public institutions, as well as business, service, and commercial establishments which comprise a significant portion of the Town's economy.*

The Central Business District is an urban area with the dominant feature being architecture; i.e., buildings enclosing spaces and the spaces are places of intense human interaction. Privacy in urban environments requires enclosures, patios, or rooms. In order to provide the intensity and diversity of choices that make urban centers people-magnets, high densities are essential. It remains the classic urban design type of environment in which buildings define and enclose spaces. The Central Business District in Tappahannock is an example of an urban environment whose scale is in keeping with the rural qualities of the County in general. A mix of commercial shopping facilities, service industries, offices, public and institutional buildings, other intense non-residential uses, and Town scale residential are typical uses.

The purpose of the Central Business District designation is to recognize the unique role of the Central Business District in Tappahannock's land use and to continue to provide for a compatible mixture of commercial, cultural, institutional, governmental, and residential uses in a compact, pedestrian oriented, traditional Town center that serves as the focal point for surrounding residential areas. The primary land use and community facility objectives for the CBD are to maintain and enhance the CBD as a center of

governmental, professional, and mercantile activities in the Town and County in the face of changing consumer preferences."

Under the land use chapter, the Comprehensive Plan lists the goal of *"Produce a sustainable livable environment for all residents of Tappahannock by providing for a balance in land use patterns that promote preservation of the character, contribute to the efficient service delivery and an attractive coexistence of harmonious land uses."* Listing objectives to *"Expand and enhance the U.S. 17 Commercial District in the Town"* and *"protect residential neighborhoods from encroachment by commercial and industrial activities and through traffic."*

Chapter 7 Economic Development, lists the goal of *"provide and maintain a positive environment that fosters economic and employment growth."* With one of the objectives of that chapter being, *"encourage commercial and industrial development while supporting the preservation and expansion of existing industries in order to strengthen and diversify the economic base and provide necessary jobs."*

Transportation Impact

The general development plan attached to your packet was sent to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for a preliminary review of impacts associated with the proposed entrances and traffic. VDOT responded with the following comments; *"we have reviewed the referenced rezoning application as received on September 23, 2025, and we have no comments at this time. The Department, however, reserves the right to make comments at the time of an official site plan review for these parcels, which may include but not be limited to entrance spacing, sight distance, geometric design, drainage, pavement design, and all other applicable entrance design items."*

Should this rezoning request be approved, a full site plan will be required to be submitted for review to VDOT, which will include appropriate measure for safe ingress and egress to the parcel off of Daingerfield St.

Fiscal Impact

According to the Essex County Commissioner of the Revenue's (COR) office, the land value of these parcels is currently assessed at $93,400. In discussions with the County's COR office a comparison of existing commercial properties in the vicinity was used to develop a potential assessed value of land should they be rezoned to CG-2. Using assessed values for existing commercial properties in the vicinity the potential assessed value for these four properties should increase from $93,400 to approximately $125,000. That number does not include any proposed improvements (no improvements are proposed) and their assessed value. The Town has a set real estate tax rate that is static regardless of the use of the property, that tax rate is $0.09 per $100 which means if these numbers hold true this development would pay approximately $113 dollars in strictly real estate taxes for the land not including improvements. There will also be initial fees for connection to Town water and sewer and bi-monthly bills, should this service be needed.

However, those fees generally offset the cost to provide services for those utilities. The Town would also collect the personal property taxes associated with any vehicles registered within the Town limits. There is expected to be no fiscal impacts associated with cost of service for public safety due to this rezoning should the property be developed with a parking area for car storage.

Environmental Impact

Based upon the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Overlay map, none of these parcels fall within the Resource Protection Area (RPA) but they do fall wholly within the Resource Management Area (RMA). Therefore, for any construction project that proposes over 2,500 square feet of land disturbance, storm water management and erosion and sediment control plans are required at the time of site plan submittal and will be reviewed by the County and DEQ.
These parcels are not in a FEMA designated special flood hazard area.

Staff Comments

While the future land use map does not show the specific parcels in question as commercial, they are bordered by commercial property currently and in the future land use map. This rezoning request is not supported by an objective in the land use chapter of the Comprehensive Plan which reads, to *"protect residential neighborhoods from encroachment by commercial and industrial activities and through traffic."* However, with the addition of proffers and additional screening a strong attempt to protect the surrounding residential properties has been made. There are other objectives listed in the land use and economic development chapters of the Comprehensive Plan that do encourage the expansion of commercial uses along the Route 17 corridor. Specifically, *"Expand and enhance the U.S. 17 Commercial District in the Town"* and *"encourage commercial and industrial development while supporting the preservation and expansion of existing industries in order to strengthen and diversify the economic base and provide necessary jobs."*

Assistant Town Manager Knighton indicated that, should the Town Council approve this request, staff would remind you to approve it with the attached proffers provided they are agreeable to Council. I will also take this opportunity to remind you proffers are voluntary and provided by the applicant. They cannot be requested by staff or Council. (See attached proffers)

Assistant Town Manager Knighton asked for any comments or questions.

Mayor Gladding recognized Valerie Long, Attorney with Williams Mullen representing the applicant, Bareford GMC. She stated that they appreciate the opportunity to present the application.

Valerie Long presented the council members with the following power point presentation.



Bareford GMC
rezoning Presentati

Valerie Long discussed the longevity of the family owned business, the goals of the rezoning request, the land use compatibility, the proposed zoning on a zoning map, comprehensive plan alignment, the land use map, comprehensive plan map showing undeveloped areas within the town, a general development plan map showing the proposed buffers, the site sketch for Bareford Ball by Eastern Land Surveying, safety and site improvements, residential harmony, the proffers, the economic impact, and housing trends.

Valerie Long stated in summary the rezoning meets the recommendations of the comprehensive plan, consistent with adjacent properties, supports a historic locally owned business, supports high paying jobs in Tappahannock, and improves public safety, health and welfare of the community. She also stated that the business community supports the rezoning. She respectfully requested the council's support.

Valerie Long asked for any comments or questions.

Council Member Barrett wanted to clarify that the parcel known as the "Wolcott Dentist Office" was never zoned commercial. Rather, it was used as a commercial office by right.

Council Member Dillard asked Valerie Long if she would agree that there are competing interests within the comprehensive plan.

Valerie Long stated that with many comprehensive plans there are often a variety of goals and objectives and you could point to one parcel and find language in the plan that supports a change in use or not. She stated in other places those same goals and objectives that support a use here wouldn't support a use over there, so it is really about balance.

Valerie Long stated there is certainly language in the comprehensive plan that has been noted about protecting residential neighborhoods from commercial encroachment. She stated they understand but at the same time, it also talks about the importance of expanding and supporting the enhancement of the highway corridor. She stated they do not believe this is a commercial use encroaching into the neighborhood because the area across the street is already commercial and one of the parcels has been commercial use for many decades even though it's not zoned commercial and the other parcel that has been a residence until four or five years ago is surrounded on three sides by commercial uses, on two sides by commercial zoned land.

There was some discussion regarding the "EVANS" property located directly across the street from the proposed Bareford Buick rezoning request in the process of their own rezoning application with the Tappahannock Planning Commission to correct an error in which the parcel was zoned CG-2 Commercial on the updated 2023 zoning map where previously it has been zoned R-3.

Council Member Carlton expressed her concern regarding the traffic flow on the street and in the alley.

Valerie Long feels the traffic would be potentially less than a resident and less than the traffic of a commercial use building. She stated given the proximity of these parcels in the alley to the existing dealership property she does not believe it will create an impact, given the existing volume of trips, which is very low. She stated she would assume that VDOT would have raised that concern if there was one. She thinks it will be a nominal increase in the alley during business hours, but not enough to create any adverse impact.

Mayor Gladding stated if the proffers were approved with the rezoning application, then those proffers would stay with that property even if the property was sold. If the property was sold and the new owner wanted to build a restaurant (for example) a request for a rezoning amendment would be made to the Town to amend the proffers and remove the restaurant from the list of excluded uses.

Mayor Gladding asked for any comments from the council members.

There were none.

Mayor Gladding stated the council will hear public comments at this time. He stated if you want to speak to raise your hand and come to the podium and state your name and address.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Robert Lowery, 605 Essex Street, expressed concerns regarding the proposed use of the property if rezoned. He questioned what assurances or limitations would exist on the use of the property, including long-term vehicle storage, employee parking, and traffic impacts. He cited existing issues with vehicles parked for extended periods and congestion related to the repair business and urged the Town to consider traffic and neighborhood impacts.

Denise Hammond, 533 Earl Street, spoke in opposition to the rezoning. She described her long-term residency and appreciation for nearby businesses while emphasizing that Wright's Triangle has consistently been designated as town-scale residential in the comprehensive plan since 1991. She cited the purpose of town-scale residential zoning as protecting existing neighborhoods from encroachment by non-residential uses and expressed concern that rezoning would erode neighborhood character and residential integrity.

Beth Doan, 708 Essex Street, speaking also on behalf of Jamie Gomes, 524 Earl Street, opposed the rezoning. She described increased congestion and traffic impacts already caused by the adjacent dealership, including blocked streets and safety concerns. She stated that the residential properties could be rehabilitated as homes and that rezoning would permanently remove housing potential, increase noise and traffic, reduce property values, and further erode neighborhood character.

Bill Woodhouse, 518 Earl Street, opposed the rezoning based on his 35 years of experience in the automobile business. He cited vehicle size increases, delivery truck congestion, employee parking on residential streets, and inoperable vehicles stored on existing lots. He suggested alternative management solutions and use of other commercially zoned properties owned by the applicant. He stated that surrounding residents oppose the rezoning and requested preservation of the residential atmosphere.

Warren Evans, 524 Dangerfield Street, opposed the rezoning, citing health and safety concerns including increased traffic congestion, danger to children and pedestrians, air, noise, and light pollution, loss of housing stock, changes to neighborhood character, and negative impacts on property values. He stated the request prioritizes private economic gain over public welfare and requested denial.

Suzanne Derieux stated opposition to rezoning, noting that alleys in Wakefield were designed for residential access, not commercial use. She spoke of a "slippery slope" leading to further commercial encroachment if the zoning is changed and urged the Council to prioritize neighborhood protection over commercial revenue.

Caroline B. Lynn Amos, 518 Earl Street, opposed the rezoning and requested the four parcels remain zoned R3 residential. She stated the homes could be renovated and noted deterioration since their purchase. She cited alternative commercially zoned properties owned by the applicant and explained that CG2 zoning would permit uses incompatible with residential living. She referenced statements by Town staff regarding appropriate placement of commercial uses and requested denial of the request.

Austin Tribble, 520 Faulkner Circle, spoke in support of the rezoning. He described the historical importance of long-standing businesses to the Town's growth and economy. He stated that the rezoning would improve aesthetics, eliminate blight, and provide necessary space for a long-established business. He urged Council to approve the request.

Cheryl Evans, 524 Dangerfield Street, opposed the rezoning. She discussed rehabilitation of residential properties and housing demand, described zoning mapping errors, and clarified that nearby properties cited as commercial were permitted uses, not rezonings. She emphasized the intent of R3 and CG2 zoning districts under the zoning ordinance, stating that CG2 is not intended for encroachment into established residential neighborhoods. She urged respect for residents and denial of the request.

Straton Beamer, 622 DeShield Street, opposed the rezoning. She provided historical context on Virginia zoning mandates and emphasized the responsibility of local government to protect established residential neighborhoods. She stated the subject homes are inhabitable, disputed claims that nearby properties were

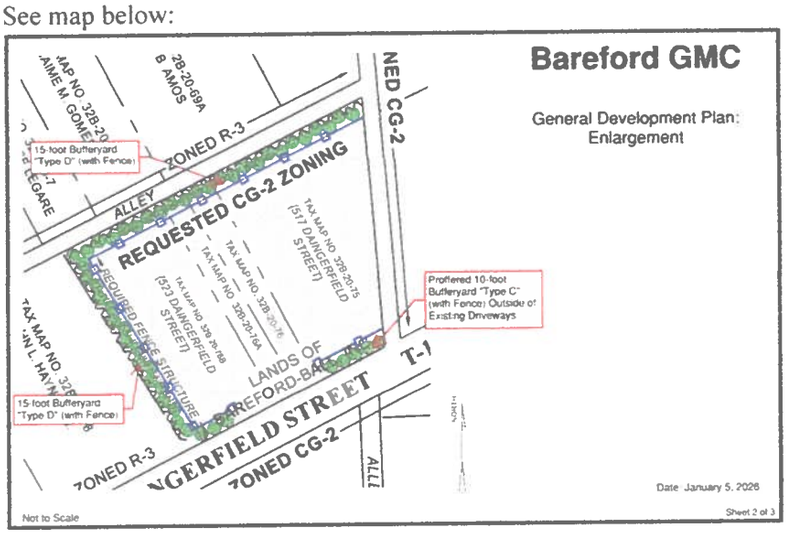
commercial, and warned that rezoning would allow future uses beyond current proffers. She requested denial and correction of zoning map errors.

Beverly Erickson, 642 Lewis Street, spoke in opposition and referenced petitions signed by neighborhood residents. She stated there was strong, widespread concern among residents regarding rezoning and fears of continued commercial encroachment into residential areas.

Assistant Town Manager Knighton stated when the Town has a zoning case before them, we generally do a staff's presentation, the applicant's presentation, comments from the public, and then generally he will have an opportunity to come up and rebuttal or answer any comments or questions that may have arisen during that period, as well as the attorney may be able to answer some questions and some comments that other citizens may have. He stated the proffers do run with the land regardless of whether the property is sold or not and it effectively becomes zoning regulations that will govern that specific property until they are removed through a public hearing process.

Valerie Long, Attorney stated she would like to clarify a response to Council Member Carlton's questions regarding the alley that goes straight and onto Earl Street. She stated she refers to the alley as the "northern alley" since the alley is north of the lots. She stated that alley would remain open and vehicles would be brought back and forth and right now it can be used to access the back of these residential parcels, but the buffer yard that would be required along that boundary, fencing and the plantings, will effectively cut off the use of that alley.

See map below:



Valerie Long emphasized how Bareford GMC is a locally owned, multi-generation family business that has operated in the Town since 1947 and is among the oldest and largest locally owned businesses in the community. She reported the dealership outperforms some competitors in larger markets, which was attributed to customer loyalty, service quality, and long-term commitment to the Town. She stated that proffers are legally binding on the property and applicants. She reported that the concerns over the congestion on Earl Street and the condition of the properties and the lighting are being addressed. She stated the dilapidated structures will be removed and the area will have a fence and dense landscaping installed. She stated the lighting will be shielded down and the light poles will be shorter so the lighting will not spill over onto the neighboring parcels, into the alley or in the street. She reported the fencing and buffering would mitigate visual and lighting impacts, and the rezoning would not increase traffic on Dangerfield Street and will arguably reduce it from what could be there if they were two single-family homes, two apartments or four apartments which exist on the adjacent parcel. She concluded by noting the applicant's economic contributions to the Town through tax revenue and wages, stating that the dealership provides well-paying skilled jobs and supports local economic stability.

Council Member Dillard asked Ms. Long to guide him to where in the comprehensive plan where one of these properties on the corner was appropriate for new development.

Valerie Long stated on page 25 of the updated 2014 comprehensive plan:

Comprehensive Plan: Undeveloped Areas Highlighted the following in her presentation:

There are approximately 158 acres in total that are potentially buildable and outside of environmentally protected areas.

Valerie Long stated that she feels the very forward-thinking nature of the comprehensive plan in identifying the objectives of the land use and the sustainable living livable environment for all residents by providing for a balance in land use patterns that promote and preservation of the character contribute to efficient service delivery and an attractive coexistence of harmonious land uses. She stated if you just look at all the uses that are allowed in CG-2 you might think the uses aren't compatible in this area, but when you proffer out all those uses and you impose the lighting and the buffering and you say we're only going to have those uses that are about the automobile and we're only going to build a parking lot, you make it more harmonious.

Council Member Dillard stated the council members have heard concerns about potential maintenance shop, a wash bay, and a painting booth. He asked where in the proffer statement there are going to be no improvements on the property other than fencing?

Valerie Long stated proffer number one says it has to be in general accord with the general development plan. She stated as of right now Bareford GMC is planning to use it as a parking lot and it will be part of the dealership. She stated those uses already have a home on their existing parcels and on their other parcels. She stated this will free up space around the service bay, around the customer service entrance, the service bays on Earl Street and the service bays that are interior to the site.

Council Member Carlton stated the council has heard about congestion on Earl Street and Daingerfield when it comes to unloading these trucks. She asked if the parking lot was going to help elevate these concerns or will a certain section be used for loading and unloading to help with congestion.

Valerie Long stated if they can use this land for parking then it could open up space on the main parcels by the dealership where the service entrance is so rather than taking up space on Earl Street, they'll have more space internal to their existing dealership. She stated the goal is to give them more space so they can accommodate everyone but also respect the neighbor's concerns and their interests.

Council Member Barrett asked if the applicant will absolutely not put a building in this parking lot to work on vehicles or anything else in the future.

Valerie Long stated the applicant wants to use it for a parking lot.

Mayor Gladding asked for any other comments or questions.

There being none the meeting was adjourned.

Roy M. Gladding, Mayor

Patsy K. Scates, Town Clerk