



Comments Regarding Barrel Oak Resort Special Exception Requests
October 17, 2019

My name is Lori Keenan McGuinness. I am a resident of Marshall, in the Scott District, and the Chair for Fauquier County of the Goose Creek Association, representing over 600 members in Fauquier and Loudoun Counties.

The Barrel Oak property lies within a watershed that contains wetlands and tributaries of the Goose Creek, a headwater of the Potomac River and part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. It is important to protect these precious headwaters.

The Barrel Oak Resort (or Sanctuary) application is incomplete and any approval would be premature. The applicant has not fulfilled the requirements for obtaining Special Exceptions because the application lacks:

1. A Preliminary Soils Investigation to determine the appropriateness of septic and sewer facilities and their impact on the watershed;
2. Hydrogeological and well draw down studies using realistic, revised estimates of water use to determine the impact of the Barrel Oak water requirements on the surrounding wells;
3. An up to date Traffic Impact and Safety Analysis to determine the impact on Grove Lane, which is not a major collector road, of a possible doubling of traffic during events; and,
4. Building and development plans to determine the layout and structure of the resort, with the resulting impact on noise, view sheds, storm and water run-off.

The noise impact should not be underestimated as the recent public meeting demonstrated that the County is not equipped to control the disturbance to the neighborhood of existing winery event noise. The impact of additional events in tents late at night at Barrel Oak, with amplified music reverberating off of the resort's walls, will only exacerbate the disturbance to the neighborhood.

Without the elements that are required for granting Special Exceptions, there can be no conclusion that the application is consistent with the neighboring RA zoned properties, or that the health of the Goose Creek watershed would be preserved. The burden of meeting the requirements for Special Exceptions is on the applicant, not the County, and the applicant has not met that burden. The Zoning Ordinance requires satisfying these tests and analyses as part of the

application, not prior to approval of a Site Plan or the issuance of building permits, as precious County and other resources are being wasted by pursuing an incomplete application.

Further, if there were an “urgent need” for more accommodations for transient visitors in northern Fauquier County, Barrel Oak would not request that the Special Exceptions be granted for up to ten years with permits for five years. It doesn’t take five to ten or more years to satisfy an urgent need.

Fauquier has plans, the Comprehensive Plan and the Rural Lands Plan. Fauquier needs to implement those plans, not eviscerate them for a highly speculative and incomplete application.

This summer I was fortunate to visit the emerging, world class wine region in the Willamette Valley of Oregon, where the hotel/motel/and resort accommodations are in the nearby town of McMinnville, so that the town and the wineries thrive together.

Marshall is our McMinnville and it is poised, as the near-by service district, to provide the infrastructure for any true demand for commercially sustainable accommodations.

I encourage the Planning Commission to follow the Fauquier Plan to protect and preserve our rural lands and our community.

Thank you.