

Vote

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Kerry Hutcheson with Dollar General said the project would yield approximately \$1.5 million in construction costs. He further stated local contractors would be used when possible. Hutcheson reviewed Dollar General's history of donating approximately \$127 million to non-profit organizations. He said the project would include 6 to 8 full time jobs. Dollar General also offered to use a brick front on the building to bring it in line with the existing Ebony Volunteer Fire Department building. Hutcheson also said Dollar General supports a literacy foundation.

He said Dollar General would consider planting Cypress trees to block the view from Prospect United Methodist Church located next door or installing a fence.

Jerry Jones spoke in favor of the project saying it would be a good fit for Ebony. He was pleased Dollar General would use local contractors.

Tony Conner, who owns property in Ebony, spoke in opposition to the project. He questioned being able to have the 500 feet sight distance. Conner said the Comprehensive Plan does not list Ebony as a potential site for economic development. He said there are only telephone and electric lines as infrastructure, Ebony is not an incorporated town and residents want to retain the quaint character of the community. Conner said that in his opinion this should be considered spot zoning and also called attention to the closeness of the proposed facility to the church and cemetery.

Richard Beville spoke in favor of the project saying it will bring jobs and revenue to Brunswick County. He favors the project because it will increase economic development.

Bobby Conner who lives in Ebony spoke in opposition to the project. He said for the past 20 years he has worked with the county and other organizations to increase tourism in the county by improving existing assets such as Fort Christanna and creating new ones such as the Brunswick Byways Visitor Center, the James Solomon Russell/Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives and having the Meherrin River designated as a State Scenic River. Conner said another project was having Highway 46 and Highway 626, and Highway 903, which both run through Ebony, designed as Virginia Byways. Virginia Byways are roads that represent an exceptional example of a common regional landscape and have reasonable protection for aesthetic and cultural values.

Conner said in the 2037 Brunswick County Comprehensive Plan tourism plays a prominent role in the county's future. The plan states that tourism is an asset particularly in scenic, rural regions of the county that offers outdoor recreation and cultural assets.

The plan, said Conner, goes on to say that from a tourism perspective, visitors want to experience the "authentic" local culture of a destination, such as art, history, music, local crafts, traditions, local food, architecture, religion and distinctive leisure activities. The cultural, heritage and natural assets of Brunswick County make it very attractive for tourism.

Conner said the Ebony area is unique in that it has not changed much over the last 100 plus years and that is what attracts tourists and new residents to the Ebony/Lake Gaston area. He called attention to its open spaces, natural resources and history and it currently offers what the Comprehensive Plan states is what visitors want.

Conner expressed concern about lighting for this project. He said in the proposal Par 5 Development says they will provide night sky friendly lighting that will not provide spill over or glare onto other adjacent properties. There are many types and classes of night sky friendly lighting. Some work and others not as well and the application does not directly address the specific kind of night sky lighting except to say that it will be night sky friendly.

Conner said his last concern was traffic. The proposed property to be rezoned sits almost directly across from the intersection of Hendricks Mill Road, Ebony Road, and Robinson Ferry Road. He said almost 75% of the cars that get to the stop sign, treat the sign as a yield sign rather than a stop.

"This coupled with the entrance to Ebony General which is directly across the road from the proposed property to be rezoned. There is not a standard entrance or exit from Ebony General. The store has been at this location for 50 years and the entire parking lot is open as an entrance and exit across from the proposed rezoning. There are over 1500 cars a day according to VDOT's 2018 traffic count that travel this road and the combination of the intersection, the driveway at Ebony General and the new entrance to Dollar General all right in close proximity will create problems," Conner stated.

Earl Jarrell, a member of the Planning Commission, said motorists not stopping at the stop sign are breaking the law, which is a safety factor regardless of whether Dollar General builds a facility.

Conner agreed but restated that adding an entrance to an already congested area is a safety concern.

Supervisor Fredrick Harrison, also a member of the planning commission, said that the fact that cars don't stop at the stop sign should never have been brought up at the public hearing and wasn't something that should be considered.

Valerie Zubrod said she has lived in Ebony for approximately 35 years and opposes building a Dollar General. She called attention to the Dollar General located in Gasburg and another in Bracey. She expressed concern that Dollar General would hurt Ebony General Store and 903 Slip In, the two stores in Ebony.

Melissa Brewer who operates 903 Slip In said she opposed Dollar General coming to Ebony. She said if the store comes it might result in two vacant buildings. She said her store and Ebony General offer their customers great service

Sarah Moseley said she and her husband own property in the Ebony area and is using some of the property adjacent to this project as sustainable organic farming. She said Ebony is descriptive of Brunswick County and Southside Virginia calling attention to the social interaction not found in generic Dollar General stores. She opposed the rezoning request and said she didn't want

Ebony to become a cookie cutter strip mall.

Patricia Conner voiced opposition to the rezoning request. She said her late husband Robert Conner served on the Brunswick County Board of Supervisors and Brunswick County Planning Commission for 20 years. She said Ebony is a unique community and feels that uniqueness should be preserved. Conner also expressed concern about the close proximity of the proposed business to Prospect United Methodist Church and cemetery and the increase in traffic.

Anne Hartley, who is an adjacent property owner, presented a booklet to members of the Planning Commission with parts of the Comprehensive Plan highlighted for their review. She also provided information about the negative impact Dollar General stores can have on a community. Hartley called attention to the proliferation of Dollar General stores and asked the members to consider the big picture. She is also chair of the Prospect Cemetery Association and feels this project is not in the best interest of the cemetery.

Michele Malone opposed the proposed project. She said residents of Ebony want to preserve the tranquility of the area. She said she moved from up north to get away from congestion. She said no matter how you dress it up it's like putting lipstick on a pig, it might look good but it is still a pig. She asked the members to help the residents keep the rural and agricultural atmosphere. Malone said Dollar General doesn't fit. She ended by saying Ebony is a community.

Lisa Conner also expressed opposition to the project. Her concern also is light pollution. She said light can be intrusive to surrounding property owners. Conner went on to say that Ebony has a sense of place, referring to a caring community. She objects to Dollar General's aggressive growth pattern calling it invasive. Conner closed by saying the community has two general stores and questioned if the community of approximately 400 people could sustain a new store. Conner said Bracey is only 10 miles away and that Ebony has not been identified for potential economic growth.

Wendy Nash credited Dollar General for supporting literacy. She also applauded them for saying they would use local contractors, but said she would like to see them put that in writing because that is not always the case. Nash called attention to the community's dignity likening it to "Mayberry" or Mt. Airy, N.C., referring to the popular TV show "Andy Griffith." The residents of the Ebony community are proud of the area and want it to continue being important to those that visit. She said she wants to preserve the pastureland and agriculture.

Jessica Zubrod Wyatt opposes the Dollar General project saying the community already has two established businesses. She said if it's not broke, don't fix it referring to keeping things the way they were.

John Zubrod who represents the Meherrin District on the Brunswick County Board of Supervisors spoke as a resident of Ebony and expressed opposition to the proposed rezoning.

"I am not standing here this evening trying to influence your decision as a supervisor, rather I am here as a long term resident and business owner in Ebony, having called it my home for 35 years. My daughters and now my grandbabies grew up eating Ebony General hot dogs. I myself am partial to Melissa's BLT sandwiches and French fries. My doctor isn't, but I am.

"My first issue with this rezoning proposal is safety. The intersection of Hendricks Mill Road, Robinson Ferry Road and Ebony Road is way overdue for rebuilding, however VDOT keeps putting it off due to the relocation expense with the existing businesses. The existing traffic hazards are bad enough, without adding another parking lot entrance within 75 yards of it to increase the dangers.

"My second issue is the location itself. Ebony is a very quaint and historical community, one of the nicest in Brunswick County. The landowners have done a remarkable job bringing all the buildings back to restoration status. It has taken many years of hard work and extensive funding to get where we are today. There is no junk, no debris. I cannot say the same for the other local Dollar Generals that I drive by almost every day.

"Ebony consists of a post office, a fire department, 2 logging companies, an antique store, a construction company and 2 convenience stores. It also has a beautifully restored church and cemetery located alongside the property that is in question for rezoning tonight. That cemetery has many of my friends buried there. Do we really need a store like that located close by, with it's brightly shining all night security lights, interrupting the peaceful serenity and tranquility of those grounds?

"As a businessman and elected official, I have been preaching that Brunswick is open for business. I want the increased tax base. But it still must be a planned growth, always considering the benefits and impacts to the citizens. We have a Food Lion and Family Dollar 5 miles away, a Dollar General 8 miles away, along with another 9 miles away. Is another one really warranted here in Ebony?

"Another item is that I am also concerned about are the impacts to the 2 existing convenience stores. One of them has been known as the Food Lion of Ebony as long as I have lived here, they even sell T-shirts that say so. These stores support the community in many ways. If they are unable to maintain their margins due to increased competition and thereby forced to close, where will we go to fuel our cars, get the diesel for our tractors and kerosene for our heaters? When we need a hot biscuit first thing in the morning, or lunch after a day working in the field or while taking a break from hunting, where will we eat? When we need to check game in during hunting season, where will we go? Not to the Dollar General.

"I don't feel the need for a Dollar General or any other store like it to be located in downtown Ebony. Go a mile away in any direction and build as a stand alone, but do not destroy the picturesque charm, beauty and strength of this very tightly knit community by allowing this to proceed. I therefore ask for your vote this evening in denying this request for rezoning," Zubrod stated.

For more information about the proposed project call the planning office at (434) 848-0882.

Giving

Continued from page 1

New York. Dispatch also found him suspended in Virginia. Jarrell asked dispatch to provide a photo of Bruce and the photo was not the person at the traffic stop.

When confronted with the information, the driver stated his name was Dionte Ivy Bassett-Scott of New York. The license came back suspended and wanted in Florida for drug charges. Bassett-Scott said he gave false information because he was scared. He stated the information he gave was his brother's. When contact was first made Jarrell could smell the odor commonly associated with marijuana coming from within the vehicle. Bassett-Scott said there was not any marijuana in the vehicle and that he had smoked the night before with some friends in D.C.

A weapons pat down was performed and a small bulge was discovered in his left front pocket. Bassett-Scott stated it was money, specifically \$3,000. He said he used a portion of that money to buy the marijuana.

Bassett-Scott was placed under arrest. The denominations of the currency were noted. The separation of money is consistent with that of drug sales and the purchasing of drugs for distribution. Bassett-Scott couldn't provide proof that the currency was legally obtained. The car came back as being from Hertz Rental Company. Jolly's Auto was contacted to tow the vehicle. Bassett-Scott was transported to the Meherrin River Regional Jail and held on a \$2,500 secure bond.

Later in the evening Jarrell was contacted to return to the jail. A strip search revealed 2 debit cards, and an ID card. The debit cards were in the names of Sharond Poag and Miguel Cintron. The ID card belonged to his brother.

Brunswick County tax deadline is Dec. 5

Brunswick County 2019 Personal Property and Real Estate Taxes are due on or before Dec. 5.

The Treasurer's Office is open daily Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. The extended hours for payment of taxes are Thursday, Dec. 5, from 8 a.m. -7 p.m.

Tax bills have been mailed insofar as possible. Please contact the Treasurer's Office at (434) 848-2512 immediately if there are questions or problems regarding your bills.

Payment options include on-line services through the County's website; 24-hour drop box payments; payments made at local Benchmark Community Bank or First Citizens Bank; and payments accepted at Treasurer's Office in person or by mail.

Penalty and interest will be added to all unpaid taxes on Dec. 6.

A late fee of \$10 will be added to all unpaid license fees on Dec. 6.

Due to our Thanksgiving production schedule ad request deadline for Wed., Nov. 27th Edition will be 4PM Wed., Nov 20th.

Thank you.



Answers from the Nov. 13, 2019 puzzle

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

4	5	6	3	2	9	1	8	7
7	9	1	6	8	4	2	5	3
3	8	2	1	7	5	6	4	9
2	6	4	5	9	8	7	3	1
1	3	5	4	6	7	9	2	8
8	7	9	2	3	1	4	6	5
9	4	8	7	5	2	3	1	6
5	2	3	9	1	6	8	7	4
6	1	7	8	4	3	5	9	2

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 27 mins.

N	A	T	A	L	O	R	B	F	A	B	
A	R	I	S	E	B	E	E	I	D	O	
G	E	N	I	E	J	I	N	G	L	E	S
G	A	R	D	E	N	R	E	P	S		
P	A	L	S	E	C	B	A	T	T	Y	
I	D	E	M	S	T	A	I	D			
G	O	S	E	E	K	D	O	E	S	N	T
K	A	S	H	A	D	I	R	E			
H	U	M	O	R	O	I	L	N	A	N	
E	R	I	N	D	U	R	I	N	G		
M	I	N	G	L	E	S	B	A	L	S	A
P	A	T	I	C	E	E	P	E	E	S	
S	H	Y	D	O	S	L	A	S	T	S	

Be Kind to Mother Earth.

REMEMBER: Reduce • Reuse • Recycle

