



VINT HILL DATA CENTERS: THE TICKING TIME BOMB

How decades of redevelopment decisions left one of Fauquier County's most distinctive communities facing a new industrial future

By Dr. Steve Pleickhardt 9.9.2026

For years, Vint Hill has been presented as one of Fauquier County's great redevelopment success stories.

The former military intelligence installation was transformed into a mixed community of businesses, recreation, residences and historic buildings. Today, families use its parks and athletic fields. Small businesses operate there. Children attend activities there. People live nearby.

But beneath that transformation lies a complicated web of zoning, land bays, development rights and infrastructure decisions that is now colliding with one of the largest land-use issues facing Northern Virginia:

data centers.

My investigation began with a simple question:

Just how much of Vint Hill can become data centers?

The answer turned out to be much more complicated—and much more important—than I expected.

FROM SECRET MILITARY BASE TO DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Vint Hill Farms Station was once a **696-acre U.S. Army installation**. Following the federal Base Realignment and Closure process, redevelopment responsibility ultimately passed to the **Vint Hill Economic Development Authority (VHEDA)**. Federal records identify VHEDA as the local redevelopment authority for the former installation.

That redevelopment required roads, utilities, sewer capacity, zoning and a long-term plan for converting former military property into civilian uses.

By 2007, Fauquier planning documents showed the scale of the infrastructure involved. The Vint Hill Economic Development Authority had **250,000 gallons per day of wastewater-treatment capacity reserved exclusively for it** within the first module of the Vint Hill wastewater facility.

Vint Hill was being positioned for substantial development.

And one of the people who would play a major role in that transformation was **Edwin W. “Ike” Broadus**.

IKE BROADDUS AND VINT HILL

This connection isn't speculation.

It is documented by Fauquier County itself.

According to Broaddus's official county biography, he was appointed to the **Vint Hill Economic Development Authority in 2007**, where he served as both **Chair and Executive Director until 2012**.

The county's Economic Development Authority materials independently repeat the same history.

Then something important happened.

In **2013**, after his VHEDA service had ended, Broaddus and his wife purchased several buildings at Vint Hill.

According to the county, they subsequently launched **Old Bust Head Brewing Company** and renovated Vint Hill commercial properties. The county credits those efforts with helping attract dozens of businesses to the area.

There is nothing inherently improper about any of this.

But the history matters today because Broaddus is no longer simply a former redevelopment official and Vint Hill property owner.

He is now the elected **Scott District representative on the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors**.

And Vint Hill is in the middle of another transformation.

ENTER THE DATA CENTERS

Our recent inquiry to Fauquier County Community Development produced an unusually useful response from **Adam Shellenberger**.

I asked the county to determine the potential data-center development at Vint Hill.

Shellenberger explained that there is no simple answer.

Determining the true development potential would require going essentially **parcel by parcel**, examining zoning, approved rezonings, deeds, development allocations, existing development, pending development plans and the individual land bays.

That's a critical distinction.

The large area shown as **PCID — Planned Commercial Industrial Development** — **cannot simply be counted as future data-center acreage.**

Individual properties can carry different restrictions and development rights.

But Shellenberger also provided something extraordinarily helpful: his professional assessment of where significant Vint Hill data-center development is actually most likely to occur.

He identified three projects:

OVH

Cyrus One

Vint Hill Corners

And that gives Fauquier residents a much clearer picture of what may be coming.

OVH: THE DATA CENTER ALREADY AT VINT HILL

OVH already operates at Vint Hill.

According to the information Community Development provided to me, OVH is expected to continue operations on **PIN 7915-86-3249-000** and potentially expand onto **PIN 7915-76-7273-000**.

Shellenberger placed the maximum additional development at:

110,000 square feet

This is important because OVH demonstrates that data centers at Vint Hill aren't theoretical.

One already exists.

The question is how much larger the Vint Hill data-center presence becomes.

CYRUS ONE: THE GIANT

The largest identified project is CyrusOne.

And this is where the numbers become difficult to ignore.

Publicly available project information indicates a campus of approximately:

874,500 square feet

The proposal consists of **four two-story data-center buildings**.

Even more significant, this project has moved beyond somebody simply drawing a possible data center on a map.

A Fauquier County procurement document describing engineering experience states that ECS performed **subsurface exploration, laboratory testing and geotechnical engineering** for **CyrusOne Vint Hill Phase 1**.

Phase I alone involves a:

159,450-square-foot, two-story structure

plus a:

42,500-square-foot service yard.

The engineering work included consideration of building foundations, pavement, retaining walls, stormwater facilities and underground utilities.

That is substantial project-development work.

CyrusOne therefore deserves particular attention.

VINT HILL CORNERS

The third major project identified by Community Development is **Vint Hill Corners**.

County records show that development activity involving Vint Hill Landbay V/X goes back at least several years; for example, Fauquier's Planning Commission scheduled a 2021 site visit associated with **PLOD-20-013774 — Plan of Development, Vint Hill Landbay V/X**.

Current pre-application concepts we examined indicate approximately **360,000 square feet** of proposed data-center development involving **two buildings**.

That makes Vint Hill Corners considerably smaller than CyrusOne—but hardly inconsequential.

ADD IT UP

Using the presently identified projects, the potential Vint Hill data-center footprint becomes substantial.

Project	Approximate data-center development
OVH existing facility	~80,000 sq. ft.
OVH potential expansion	110,000 sq. ft.
CyrusOne	~874,500 sq. ft.
Vint Hill Corners	~360,000 sq. ft.
Potential total	~1.42 million sq. ft.

The approximately **1.34 million square feet of additional development** beyond the existing OVH facility is the number Fauquier residents should understand.

It does **not** mean every project is guaranteed to be constructed exactly as presently depicted.

It does mean there is a very substantial amount of identifiable data-center development already associated with Vint Hill.

THEN THERE IS THE PCID ZONING

This may be the most consequential part of the story.

Community Development explained to me that within the PCID district, a data center using **recycled water for cooling** and having **all power lines underground** can qualify as a permitted use.

If recycled water isn't used, Special Exception approval is required.

Again, however, individual land bays can be further constrained by previous rezonings, deeds and development allocations.

That explains why simply looking at a zoning map isn't enough.

But it also raises a fundamental public-policy question:

How much discretion does the Board of Supervisors actually retain over future data-center development at Vint Hill?

That question becomes especially important when we examine what happened in **2024**.

THE 2024 PCID VOTE

On **March 14, 2024**, the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors considered **TEXT-24-021435**, an amendment to the Planned Commercial Industrial Development Overlay District.

The official agenda is revealing.

Among the supporting materials were:

“Analysis of Current Buildings at Vint Hill”

and

“Declaration of Personal Interest.”

The motion to adopt the ordinance was made by Supervisor Regan Washer and **seconded by Supervisor Ike Broaddus**.

The vote:

Broaddus — YES

Gerhardt — YES

Washer — YES

Carter — NO

Culbertson — NO

The ordinance passed:

3–2.

That voting record comes directly from Fauquier County's official Board minutes.

But the story did not end there.

THE DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

The following month, the Board considered reconsideration of the PCID amendment for purposes of potentially **grandfathering particular properties**.

This time the public record provides unusually specific information.

According to the official Board record, Broaddus read a declaration explaining that he had a personal interest because of his:

“ownership of approximately 26.7 acres of property or about 6.3% of the property located within the PCID overlay district.”

The record states that, pursuant to an opinion from the Fauquier County Commonwealth's Attorney and Virginia law, Broaddus could nevertheless participate after making the required disclosure.

Broaddus stated that he was part of a group of property owners affected by the transaction and that he could participate fairly, objectively and in the public interest.

He then **made the motion to reconsider the PCID ordinance amendment**.

The motion passed unanimously, **5–0**.

This distinction is important.

The official record does not establish that Broaddus acted illegally.

Indeed, the county record specifically states that the Commonwealth's Attorney provided an opinion permitting his participation following disclosure.

But legality is not the only question elected officials should expect citizens to ask.

There are also questions of **transparency, public confidence and public policy**.

THE QUESTIONS FAUQUIER DESERVES TO HAVE ANSWERED

The documentary record leaves us with several legitimate questions.

How much data-center development at Vint Hill is already entitled?

How much still requires discretionary approval from the Board of Supervisors?

Which properties would be protected by grandfathering or vested development rights?

Exactly how do the various Vint Hill deeds, proffers and land-bay development allocations constrain future development?

What electrical infrastructure will be required to support approximately 1.3 million square feet of additional data-center space?

How many substations will be required?

How many emergency generators?

What will be the cumulative noise impact?

What will be the cumulative air-quality impact?

And what will this development mean for nearby homes and the character of Vint Hill?

Those questions should be answered **before**, not after, the transformation occurs.

WHAT WE SHOULD NOT CLAIM

There is another important responsibility when conducting an investigation like this.

The records I have reviewed establish a long and substantial connection between **Ike Broaddus and Vint Hill**.

They establish his leadership of VHEDA.

They establish his subsequent property ownership at Vint Hill.

They establish his election to the Board of Supervisors.

They establish his disclosed ownership of approximately **26.7 acres—about 6.3% of the PCID overlay district** at the time of the 2024 reconsideration.

And they establish his participation in the relevant PCID votes.

They do **not**, based on the evidence presently available to me, establish that Broaddus owns CyrusOne, Vint Hill Corners or OVH; that he is being compensated by those data-center developers; or that his votes were motivated by personal financial benefit.

I will not make those claims without evidence.

That is precisely why the public record matters.

A TICKING TIME BOMB?

The phrase is intentionally provocative.

But the “time bomb” isn't a claim that Vint Hill will suddenly disappear beneath data centers tomorrow.

The danger is something much less dramatic—and much more familiar to communities across Northern Virginia.

Development rights accumulate.

Infrastructure arrives.

Applications progress.

Engineering is completed.

Projects become vested.

And eventually elected officials tell residents:

There isn't much we can do anymore.

That is exactly why residents need to understand the Vint Hill situation **now**.

Fauquier County Community Development has already told us that the answers could change depending upon the pending data-center zoning text amendment.

That means the decisions being made today could determine what Vint Hill looks like for generations.

TRANSPARENCY BEFORE TRANSFORMATION

Vint Hill has already undergone one extraordinary transformation—from a secret military intelligence facility into a civilian community.

Now it stands at another crossroads.

There is nothing inherently wrong with economic development. There is nothing inherently wrong with technology. And there is nothing inherently wrong with a data center simply because it is a data center.

The issue is **scale, location, infrastructure and accountability**.

Before potentially allowing approximately **1.3 million additional square feet** of data-center development at Vint Hill, Fauquier residents deserve a complete accounting of what has already been approved, what remains by-right, what requires another vote, what electrical infrastructure will be required and what protections exist for the people who already live there.

This investigation isn't finished.

It is just beginning.

The question is no longer whether data centers have arrived at Vint Hill.

The question is how far Fauquier intends to let them go.

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REFERENCES & SOURCE DOCUMENTS

1. [Fauquier County — About Supervisor Edwin W. “Ike” Broaddus](#) — Official biography documenting Broaddus's VHEDA service and subsequent Vint Hill property/business activity.
2. [Fauquier County Economic Development Authority materials](#) — County documentation independently describing Broaddus's VHEDA leadership and 2013 Vint Hill property purchases.
3. [Fauquier County — March 14, 2024 Board of Supervisors record](#) — Official record for TEXT-24-021435, including the PCID amendment, Declaration of Personal Interest and recorded 3–2 vote.

4. [Fauquier County — April 11, 2024 PCID reconsideration record](#) — Official record of Broaddus's motion to reconsider the PCID amendment for potential grandfathering.
5. [Fauquier County — Full Board record containing Broaddus's disclosure](#) — Records his approximately **26.7 acres / 6.3% PCID ownership disclosure**, the Commonwealth's Attorney opinion referenced by the Board record and the subsequent vote.
6. [Fauquier County — CyrusOne Vint Hill Phase I engineering documentation](#) — Documents geotechnical work for the 159,450-square-foot first building and 42,500-square-foot service yard.
7. [Fauquier County Planning Commission — Vint Hill Landbay V/X record](#) — Documents earlier Plan of Development activity associated with Vint Hill Landbay V/X.
8. **Fauquier County GIS — Vint Hill Zoning Map**, supplied by Community Development. The county map identifies the PCID geography and expressly warns that the GIS information is not survey-accurate or suitable for legal descriptions.