**Attention** all Neighbors of **Branchway Forest**, **Branchway Springs, Branchway Farms, and Branchway Estates**:

A developer, Spring Branch LLC, on property at the intersection of Branch Forest Way and Anderson Highway has applied for a rezoning of 36.84 acres of land from existing Agricultural (A-10) to Commerce Center (CC) zoning designation to set the stage for future commercial development.

If you are concerned about the potential impacts on our neighborhood of this proposed commerce center, **we believe that your opinion and participation matter in the rezoning approval process**. We invite you to participate in the upcoming public hearings with the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors (details are below) and then consider signing a neighborhood petition to indicate if you are opposed or un-opposed to this rezoning case.

**We hope that ALL Branchway neighbors and other interested persons will review and consider signing the neighborhood petition.**

HERE ARE SOME OF THE CONCERNS WE HAVE HEARD:

* Commercial and Non-Local cut-through TRAFFIC IMPACTS in and out of the Branchway Forest neighborhood and increased traffic along Anderson Highway without a traffic impact analysis (TIA) to protect the safety of the traveling public for an estimated 4,678 vehicle trips per day.
* ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS due to tree clearing and earth moving operations for more than 300,000 square feet of new buildings with paved parking lots that increase runoff and erosion in the creek running through our backyards then depositing sediment in Goodwyn Lake.
* UNKNOWN DEVELOPMENT PLANS due to the long list of permitted uses for commerce center such as hotels, fast-food restaurants, car washes, and movie theatres. Traffic numbers are based on an assisted living facility, health-fitness center, medical offices, and restaurants however the applicant will not remove other objectionable permitted uses to clarify what they plan to develop. There are no parking lots shown on the development plans either, probably due to the unknown uses.
* DECREASING PROPERTY VALUES due to building footprints that are estimated to be almost twice the size of the existing Food Lion shopping center at build-out conditions. Even if your house is not adjacent, if your neighbor’s house value decreases, this affects your home’s value. Adjacent houses have tree clearing concerns, lighting concerns, and noise concerns.

\*\* Public hearings for citizen comments will be held at both the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors meetings in October, as follows.

**Planning Commission Meeting, Tuesday October 3rd, 6-8pm**

**at the Landmark Center, 4290 Anderson Highway**

**Board of Supervisors Meeting, Monday, October 23rd, 6:30-8:30pm**

**at the Village Building, 3910 Old Buckingham Road**

\*Mike Ciriello, MLA, AICP, is the county’s Planning Director and he is handling the county staff report. His phone number is 804-598-5621 x2006, or you can email him your concerns directly to mciriello@powhatanva.gov, Also, the latest plans we have been given to review are posted on [www.branchforest.com](http://www.branchforest.com). **Your opinion matters!**

PC Meeting

As the President of the Branchway Forest Homeowners Association, I have been working hard to understand this zoning application to turn agricultural lands into a commercial in front of our neighborhood. First, I attended the developers meeting on August 3rd and then I worked with the applicant to try and clarify their plans through face to face meetings and correspondence but unfortunately at our September 26th annual meeting for the home-owners association we had 18 of our 90 homes in attendance and 18 people (out of around 30 attending) signed a petition opposing the current development plan. Zero people signed our petition to support the development plan which we offered. As a result, I’m bringing the remaining concerns to the planning commission to ask for your help by denying this zoning application as it stands, so the applicant can work harder to mitigate the impacts to our neighborhood. Here are the top concerns.

1. The plan calls for businesses generating 4,678 trips per day. We want the proffer statement to state clearly in writing that no direct connection of any roads, sidewalks or other infrastructure will be onto Branch Forest Way which is where we get exercise, walk dogs and our children ride bikes. The road has no sidewalks or bike lanes and it very unsafe to have this much commercial traffic nearby. We know this size development will generate unsafe cut-through traffic to Academy Road, since we already have a serious problem with this and speeding. More commercial development of any kind between Branch Forest Way and Academy Road will make existing problems worse.
2. Since the staff report indicates 26,000 vehicles per day on Anderson Highway and since this plan adds 4,678 cars which is almost a 20% increase, and since we already cannot make a left turn out of our neighborhood during peak hour traffic, the developer can proffer traffic signal construction at the median crossover. This will improve access for their businesses and reduce accidents such as the nearby Old Buckingham Road intersection and the problems of needing VDOT and taxpayer money like Stavemill Road.
3. To clarify their plans, we would ask the developer to depict required off street parking on their plans. They will see that they haven’t left enough room to accommodate 310,000 square feet in new buildings of any type, which would be somewhere between 600 and 1,200 parking spaces by my estimate, requiring 9-acres of asphalt pavement.
4. To depict parking lots, they need to choose permitted uses. Their traffic engineer calls for assisted living, health-fitness center, and medical offices which nobody seems to oppose, except if the required parking doesn’t fit. However, it also calls for a restaurant which causes concerns depending on type, and they are keeping other permitted uses that are objectionable such as hotels, fast-food restaurants, car washes, and movie theatres. To recommend approval, PC should ask them to specify what specifically they plan to build, if it fits on the parcel with parking lots per the zoning code, and how much traffic it will generate.
5. All the uncertainty and the huge size of development, around twice the size of the Food Lion shopping center at buildout, leads to our last issue with Environmental Concerns. 7 acres of buildings and 9 acres of asphalt parking lots with other infrastructure is going to increase runoff to the creek in our backyards which is a deer run and a natural buffer to commercial development. It’s shown in our comprehensive plan in green as protected rural lands and the applicant needs to increase buffers and reduce their building footprint to avoid old growth trees on steep slopes to adequately protect the creek. They need to reduce and cluster their development around shared parking lots to mitigate impacts to the environment. The creek will otherwise erode and carry this development’s pollution to Goodwyn Lake which is surrounded by Branchway Homes and is filling up with sediment already from increased development. Just ask those living on the lake!

Newer homes built along Branch Forest Way are immediately behind this commercial development and will lose property value if the creek isn’t protected with adequate buffers. This applicant will make millions, while impacts are felt by the 90 homes counted as Branchway Forest and current residents in Branchway Springs and Branchway Farms. The county does not need unknown types of future buildings that cause traffic problems on Anderson Highway and environmental impacts to protected lands on the comprehensive plan that are irreversible.

If your vote requires this developer to mitigate environmental concerns, reduce development with a clear and shorter list of compatible adjacent uses, avoid connections to Branch Forest Way to protect our residents, and build a traffic signal on Anderson Highway to provide safe left turns out of their development and thereby avoid most cut-through traffic through our neighborhood to Academy Road, I believe this could work. Right now, we are about halfway there and need the PCs support to urge the developer to reengage the neighborhood and address the remaining concerns or to deny the zoning application until such time as an applicant is willing to offer something less damaging to our neighborhood, the environment, and every county resident traveling on Anderson Highway.

[7 minutes]