



July 18, 2022

Dear President Kline and members of the Town Council,

I am writing to express the Corsica River Conservancy (CRC) opposition to the Text Amendment before the Town Council (Ordinance 07-2022), which proposes a change to the maximum square footage for convenience/gas stations from 2,000 to 5,500 square feet to allow for the construction of a Royal Farms in Centreville. To allow the larger square footage would cause environmental damage and would be in opposition to the Council-approved Economic Development Plan which rightfully includes concern for our natural resources. We strongly encourage you to reject the text amendment to expand what is currently allowed.

The area in question is very close to the Mill Stream tributary of the Corsica River. Any additional building/parking lot footage will result in additional impervious surface. Additional impervious surface increases the damage from storms, the frequency and severity of which are increasing. Stormwater is damaging in and of itself and also carries dangerous pollutants, particularly from a gasoline station. In addition, Royal Farms has been cited by the Maryland Department of the Environment for leaking underground storage tanks. (See, for example, MDE case numbers 2010-0339BA and 2011-0729-CE).

Centreville developed a strategic plan for economic development in 2015 which was to "establish a clear framework for attracting and retaining businesses and promoting key assets." The focus is on existing businesses, historic preservation, environmental assets, tourism, transportation, and the availability of utilities. Net benefit to the Town of another larger convenience store seems dubious given that it would come with environmental damage and would compromise long standing development restrictions which are key to the character of the Town - not to mention the negative impact on existing business..

For over 15 years the Town has been a key partner in the effort to restore and conserve the wonderful resources of our Corsica River and its surrounding watershed. We trust that the Council will act in a manner consistent with its commitment to stewardship in regard to this proposed text amendment.

Sincerely,

Frank DiGialleonardo
President, CRC

