

Subject:	Rick's Place Butcher Shop Hearing
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Recipient	Action Date & Time Comment
To: Carrol Everett (EverettC@charlescounty.org)	

Ms. Everett,

Please accept the attachment as my written testimony for the hearing held on February 12, 2013 on the subject of Rick's Place Butcher shop. Please provide this to the Board of Appeals as they have allowed written testimony to remain open until Tuesday. Let me know if there are any issues or if anything else is needed. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Clinton Jenkins
8815 Margaret Court
LaPlata, MD 20646
PH: 301-934-1237

To the Board of Appeals:

My name is Clinton Jenkins. I live at 8815 Margaret Court, LaPlata, MD 20646. I grew up on Gallant Green Road which is only a few miles down the road from Rick's Place. I have been a hunter for over 20 years. I have used many deer processors since I was a kid including Chuck's butcher shop in Bryan's Road and I can tell you that Rick's Place is one of the nicer and cleaner meat processors. My family and I have exclusively used Rick's Place for the last 10 years because of the quality of his operation and because of his involvement in the community. We like to give to those who give back to the community. Rick's Place is known for helping to sponsor the 4-H club as well as baseball teams in Hughesville Little League. They are also one of the larger donators to Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry (FHFH) which provides thousands of pounds of meat to kitchens dedicated to feeding people in need. I am sure there are many other organizations within the community, of which I am unaware, that Rick Turner and his wife are either involved in or at a minimum provide sponsorship money. Small businesses like Rick's Place are needed within our community.

The other night, the 12th of February, I watched testimony from both sides of this issue and it is very evident that emotion ruled the majority of the testimony. The audience and the Board of Appeals learned very critical information from that testimony that I have listed below.

- Rick's Place is a very clean establishment, as evidenced by the many inspections that Rick's Place has passed without a violation, and that Rick and Carol Turner are very involved and well liked in the community at large, which I have briefly outlined above.
- Rick Turner notified the county back in 2002 of his intentions to run a meat processing plant and was told by one of the former zoning officials that they were in compliance with applicable ordinances.
- In 1982, an ordinance was created that stated that no more than five (5) houses should be placed on Petzold Drive, there are now sixteen (16) houses on Petzold Drive and nineteen (19) that utilize Petzold Drive to get to their houses.
- The county granted multiple variances to people in order to allow more than five (5) houses to be built on Petzold Drive.
- There are five (5) businesses already on Petzold Drive.
- The condition of the road at the front of Petzold Drive is not satisfactory.
- The traffic on the road travels at high rates of speed possibly endangering children that live on the road.
- The original owner of the property surrounding Petzold Drive designated Petzold Drive for "public use", a fact revealed by Rick Turner's lawyer.

I believe that some of these facts speak for themselves, however I think that a few of them need to be addressed. The condition of the road is one of these items. Whereas traffic heading to Rick's Place most likely has a negative impact on the condition of Petzold Drive, not once did anyone provide any proof of this. Not once did I hear any of the people talk of how often the road had to be graded prior to Rick's business and how often the road had to be graded after Rick's business was opened. Also, this issue has already been addressed since Rick Turner has agreed to take care of the road if that is one of the restrictions imposed on him by the Board of Appeals. I would like to suggest that the Board of Appeals add language to this restriction to protect Rick Turner from frivolous complaints about the condition of the road since the road currently is the lowest point of the majority of the properties and has no drainage or culverts in place. Also, it is important to note that there are 16 families that include high school aged kids that are not known for being gentle on dirt roads. Additionally, I grew up on a dirt road and want to make it known that dirt roads require almost constant maintenance in order to keep the road in a satisfactory state. Potholes need to be constantly filled in and the road needs to be graded quite a few times per year. If these actions do not happen, then the road will fail, no matter the amount of traffic.

The other main complaint against Rick's Place is the claim that patrons of Rick's Place travel Petzold Drive at high rates of speed. Whereas vehicles speeding down a dirt road definitely create a dangerous situation for children, I would challenge anyone to prove that the people speeding are solely patrons of Rick's business. With many high school aged children it would be safe to assume there are many high school aged friends. I cannot believe that these newly licensed, teenage drivers operate their cars with caution when traveling Petzold Drive. Possibly the speeders are friends of the various families themselves. Regardless of who the people speeding are, there should be a solution to this problem. Speed bumps were attempted and then removed by a neighbor. Why were these speed bumps

removed? Can speed bumps be reinstalled? This seems to work in residential neighbors with paved roads, why would it not work on a dirt road? Can jersey walls or similar items be installed to make cars perform an S-swerve at various intervals? I have seen this technique used at concerts or sporting events to make sure vehicles are not speeding through parking lots or alleys.

On February 12th, I heard many complaints but not very many solutions offered other than for Rick to move his business. Moving would not be an option for Rick at this point. A person who suggests this should analyze the amount of money it would take for Rick to move. If were to stay rural, he would need 20 acres of land in accordance with the zoning requirements. 20 acres of land in Charles County would cost Rick as much as a half a million dollars simply to purchase the property. He then would have to pay for the applicable permits to build his place and then pay to retrofit any current buildings or pay to build his processing plant. This cost would be unbearable considering in the mean time Rick would effectively have no income. The other option for moving would be to find a commercial property available for retrofit of meat processing equipment. Imagine the public outcry that would be heard if someone traveling to Safeway would have to endure seeing a deer corpse being drug into a butcher shop. The best option obviously is for Rick to stay in a rural area however asking Rick to move is equivalent to asking him to shut down.

I ask that the Board of Appeals find the compromise that will satisfy all persons involved. I know that this board prides itself on helping out small businesses while keeping the citizens' rights in mind. Our community needs Rick's Place. Not only does the business provide a long overdue service by processing animals, the Turner family is more charitable in their involvement in the Charles County community than businesses that have been here for many more years.

I thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Clinton Jenkins

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