

Neighborhoods

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Two Rivers added to Odenton plan

By PAMELA WOOD
Staff Writer

The County Council has voted to add a massive senior housing complex to the Odenton Small Area Plan.

With just two minutes to spare on Monday night, the council voted 6-0 for an amendment that makes a series of zoning changes to accommodate Two Rivers, a proposed 1,500-acre community in the rural Forks of the Patuxent community.

The council is not allowed to conduct business after midnight.

County Councilman Barbara D. Samorajczyk, D-Annapolis Roads, was not at the meeting.

Odenton and Crofton residents turned out in force during a public hearing earlier in the night to support the project. The council chamber was packed to standing-room-only, full of people wearing yellow "We Support Two Rivers" stickers.

They said Two Rivers would be the best way to reuse property that is currently being mined for sand and gravel. Many said they fear the only other viable option for the property would be a landfill.

Councilman Bill D. Burlison, D-Odenton, who sponsored the amend-



Capital graphic

ment, said Two Rivers would be "a substantial improvement."

But Councilman Ed Reilly, R-Crofton, said Two Rivers might not be the best solution. With a 12- to

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15-year construction timeline and 1,900 total homes, the area will be subject to traffic problems, he predicted.

"Ladies and gentleman, be careful what you ask for," he said. "There will be considerable traffic."

The council was forced to adjourn before considering four other technical amendments to the Odenton Small Area Plan. Those likely will be considered at the Aug. 4 council meeting. A vote on the entire plan would come after that.

Two Rivers originally was included as part of the Odenton Small Area Plan, which will guide development in west county. It is one of 16 such community plans.

But county planners removed Two Rivers, saying it would stress roads and sewer systems and change the rural nature of the community.

"The issue is the adequacy of facilities," said Joe Rutter, county planning and zoning officer.

But council members seemed more comfortable with the idea after Mr. Rutter confirmed that Two Rivers would have to meet county standards

for traffic, water and sewers before securing building permits, just like any other development.

Developers John Stamato of Two Rivers Investors LLC and Gary Koch of Koch Homes said they've received overwhelming support from people who live near the proposed development.

"I've not been in one meeting where we've had someone stand up and say, 'I'm opposed to this,'" Mr. Koch said. "I can't imagine what would be a better alternative use."

The developers are offering to pay \$7 million to \$8 million to the school system, even though that's not required for a senior project. They also plan to pay for road, water and sewer upgrades.

Roger Massey, a member of the committee that created the Odenton plan, opposed Two Rivers on the grounds it would stress public services.

"This will not only be a mistake, but a complete and utter disaster," he said.

Council members considered 12 other amendments to the Odenton plan.

They approved one that adds a

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section to one that details community opposition to a proposed magnetic levitation train that would run through Odenton.

And they rejected an amendment that would have included a goal of creating a West Arundel Center.

pwood@capitalgazette.com