

## **Citizens Appeal Hanover County Board of Supervisors Vote to Allow Wegmans Distribution Center**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Ashland, VA (June 5, 2020) — Five Hanover County citizens, living near the proposed Wegmans Food Distribution Center, with the support of the Protect Hanover community group, have filed a 101 paragraph, 8 count, 29 page lawsuit against the Board of Supervisors of Hanover County, Wegmans and Airpark Associates, the owner of the 217-acre property. Wegmans proposes a 1.7 million square foot distribution center, which would be one of the largest building complexes in Virginia. On May 6th, the Hanover County Board of Supervisors voted 4 to 3 to amend the existing zoning, which had been in place since 1995 to protect the surrounding community. The Board also voted to allow Wegmans to build a facility more than 27% taller than what is typically allowed in the light industrial zoning district.

This lawsuit contends that the rezoning approved by the Board of Supervisors improperly relaxes County land regulations to the detriment of the community. The Board approved plan violates the Hanover County noise ordinance and the Virginia Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. The County, *in its zeal to pave wetlands for Wegmans committed numerous procedural errors*, including depriving citizens of a meaningful opportunity to provide input by holding a closed-door “public hearing” attended by over 30 Wegmans and County personnel despite the Governor’s emergency COVID-19 order limiting public gatherings to no more than 10 people. The lawsuit asks the Court to condemn the Board’s action as unlawful and void.

“Hanover citizens are concerned a facility of this magnitude is not appropriate for this site at the corner of Sliding Hill and Ashcake Roads, which is surrounded on all sides by residential neighborhoods, agricultural land and the historic African-American Brown Grove Baptist Church and community”, said Rod Morgan, one of the plaintiffs. “We are also concerned by efforts designed to understate wetlands destruction, pollution, and stormwater impacts, the demolition of historic sites and graves, as well as increased traffic and safety issues, the creation of noise and light nuisances, and the reduction of local property values.”

Citizens believe that Wegmans’ proposal does not include berms or buffers tall or wide enough to screen the facility from surrounding homes. Neighbors are concerned about the light and noise pollution that will emanate from this 24 hours a day, 7 days a week facility. The added traffic from over 3,000 daily vehicle trips will cause back-up and safety issues on already stressed local roads.

Protect Hanover is a group of concerned neighbors working together to prevent the devastating impact the proposed Wegmans distribution center could have on Hanover County and the precedent it could set for future development without regard to citizen input. The group has set up a web page at [www.ProtectHanover.com](http://www.ProtectHanover.com) and is accepting donations to support its appeal.

Media Contacts:           Chris French – [robert\\_c\\_french@yahoo.com](mailto:robert_c_french@yahoo.com)  
                                     Rod Morgan – [roderickmorgan@yahoo.com](mailto:roderickmorgan@yahoo.com)