

Chancellorsville opposition shut out at meeting

Tish Osborne
The Civil War Courier

CHANCELLORSVILLE, Va. — Opposition to a proposed development on the historic Chancellorsville Battlefield was shut out Oct. 17 by a long-winded county supervisor supporting the project.

The crowd was limited, too, to about 150 people, half that projected to show at Courtland High School for the public hearing. Jim Campi, director of policy and communications for the Civil War Preservation Trust, said the recent sniper shootings in the area kept many at home.

Those who did come were forced to listen to a one and a half-hour speech by Spotsylvania County Supervisor Jerry Marcus, whose district includes the proposed development.

"I did not get the impression we changed the minds of any of the supervisors," Campi reported. He attended as CWPT's representative of the Coalition to Save the Chancellorsville Battlefield, an informal group of 11 national and local preservation, conservation and civic groups representing more than 600,000 members nationwide. "They are not going to vote against this (project) because it's battlefield land," Campi concluded. "If we can show it is not economically beneficial in the long-run, we have a better chance of stopping it." Dogwood Development Group intends to develop Mullins Farm, a 790-acre property located just northeast of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. It is the site of the first day's fighting in the Battle of Chancellorsville.

Please see CHANCELLORSVILLE page 24

CIVIL WAR COURIER
NOVEMBER, 2002

Criticism issued for Mullins Farm plan

(Continued from page 1)

Initially, Dogwood President Ray Smith proposed 2,350 homes on the property and 1.5 million square feet of commercial space. On Oct. 17, the developer proposed cutting the number of homes to 1,995, the commercial space to 500,000 square feet and paying to widen State Route 3, among other changes, according to the Fredericksburg **Free Lance Star**.

According to Dogwood Devel-

opment, the county would net \$9.9 million annually after the project, called Town Chancellorsville, is built.

However, surveys of the county's residents show that eight of 10 residents are against it, primarily because of the expected impact it could have on the county's roads and schools. Sixty-six percent don't want to see the battlefield destroyed.

A public statement released the day before the meeting by the coalition opposed to the development, said a county school board official expressed concern about several large rezoning applications in the county, stating that the school system was "feeling the stress of growth."

The statement also questioned the almost \$10 million projected in

revenue to the county. That figure is only one million dollars less than the revenue projected before Dogwood proposed cutting the size of the development. "The new proffers also fail to address the impact of the new development on the tourist industry, the county's already strained water supply and the area's overburdened health care system," the statement added.

"We still feel pretty positive," Campi commented after the meeting. The coalition has hired an independent economist to analyze the project before it goes before the Spotsylvania Planning Commission at its meeting Nov. 6 at 7:30 p.m.

"We are still fighting to win the vote and that's going to be our focus for the next several months," Campi said.