



AGENDA

Board of Supervisors Special Meeting

February 22, 2022

5:30 PM

Joint Budget Work Session with the Warren County School Board

7:30 PM

Moment of Silence

- A. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance of the United States of America
- B. Public Hearing – Conditional Use Permit 2021-10-02, Travis Dodson for a Commercial Outdoor Recreation Operation Located at 650 Water Plant Road and Identified on Tax Map 1, as Lots 3, 3A, and 3AA – Joe Petty
- C. Adjournment



COUNTY OF WARREN, VIRGINIA

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA ITEM

DATE 02/22/2022	ITEM B	SUBJECT: Conditional Use Permit #2021-10-02 Travis Dodson <i>Commercial Outdoor Recreational Operation</i>
<u>EXPLANATION & SUMMARY:</u> See attached application and staff report. General standards/conditions. In addition to the specific standards set forth hereinafter with regard to particular conditional uses, all such uses shall satisfy the following general standards: 1) The proposed use at the specified location shall be in harmony with the adopted Comprehensive Plan. 2) The proposed use shall be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the applicable zoning district regulations. 3) The proposed use shall be such that it will be harmonious with and will not adversely affect the use or development of neighboring properties in accordance with the applicable zoning district regulations and the adopted Comprehensive Plan. The location, size and height of buildings, structures, walls and fences and the nature and extent of screening, buffering and landscaping shall be such that the use will not hinder or discourage the appropriate development and use of adjacent or nearby land and/or buildings or impair the value thereof. 4) The proposed use shall be such that pedestrian and vehicular traffic associated with such use will not be hazardous or in conflict with the existing and anticipated traffic in the area. 5) Adequate utility, drainage, parking, loading and other necessary facilities to serve the proposed use shall be provided. 6) In determining whether or not to grant a permit and in determining conditions to be imposed, the governing body shall take into consideration the objectives and intent of this chapter and may impose reasonable conditions that: a) Abate or restrict noise, smoke, dust or other elements that may affect surrounding properties. b) Establish setback, side and front yard requirements necessary for orderly expansion and to prevent traffic congestion. c) Provide for adequate parking and ingress and egress to public streets or roads. d) Provide adjoining property with a buffer or shield from view of the proposed use if such use is considered to be detrimental to adjoining property. e) Prevent such use from changing the character and established pattern of development of the community.		

PLANNING COMMISSION STATUS:

On Wednesday, November 10, 2021, Mr. Longo moved to forward this application to the Board of Supervisors, recommending approval. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Richardson and approved by the Planning Commission by a vote of 4-0.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

The Planning Commission and staff is recommending the following conditions be added to this conditional use permit.

1. The applicant shall comply with all Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Warren County Building Inspections, Warren County Health Department, Warren County Sheriff's Department and applicable environmental regulations and requirements.
2. A site plan shall be prepared and approved by the Warren County Planning Department prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Zoning, showing the buildings, parking area, outdoor lighting, trash receptacles, signage, outdoor firing range, and other applicable zoning requirements.
3. All light fixtures shall be full cut-off fixtures and comply with the Zoning Ordinance requirements.
4. Activities associated with the commercial operation shall not produce sound levels which exceed 60 decibels during hours of operation at the nearest property line.
5. Activities associated with the commercial operation shall be by appointment or reservation only. Such activities shall only take place during the following hours:
 - a. Classroom Instruction: Monday through Saturday 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM, and Sunday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
 - b. Outdoor discharge of firearms: Monday through Saturday 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM/or sunset, and Sunday 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM.
6. The maximum number of occupants per class shall not exceed twenty-five students and five instructors; and or as determined by the Warren County Health Department.
7. Special events which exceed the occupants listed in Condition #6, shall be limited to no more than ten events per calendar year with no more than seventy-five people per event. Such events shall meet Warren County Building Inspections and Warren County Health Department requirements.
8. The applicants shall have the well/drinking water tested annually for lead contamination and a copy of the results shall be submitted to the Planning Departments.

PROPOSED OR SUGGESTED MOTION:

I move that the Board of Supervisors approve the conditional use permit request of Travis Dodson for a Commercial Outdoor Recreational Operation with the conditions as recommended by the Planning Commission and staff.

OR

I move that the Board of Supervisors deny the conditional use permit request of Travis Dodson for a Commercial Outdoor Recreational Operation.

OR

I move that the Board of Supervisors table the decision regarding the conditional use permit request of Travis Dodson for a Commercial Outdoor Recreational Operation until _____, and charge Planning Department staff to provide additional research and mitigation strategies regarding noise and safety concerns from the discharge of firearms related to the Commercial Outdoor Recreational Operation.

SUBMITTED BY:

Joseph Petty,
Planning Director

DISPOSITION OF BOARD:

☐ APPROVED ☐ OTHER (Describe)

**PROCESSED
BY:**



Conditional Use Permit 2021-10-02: Commercial Outdoor Recreation Operation

Travis Dodson: Current Owner/ Applicant

Prepared: October 1, 2021 – **Revised:** February 14, 2022

Staff Contact: Joseph Petty, Planning Director

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

The applicant is requesting a conditional use permit for a Commercial Outdoor Recreation Operation, which would consist of a private outdoor gun training facility and classroom. The owner/applicant currently owns and operated a well-established gun shop in Middletown, Virginia, and understand the need for a safe place to provided firearms training and education for both citizens and law enforcement officers. The business would operate year-round and is only available to those who have made reservations for private classes and appointments. The facility is not a public gun range for citizens and customers.

On Wednesday, November 10, 2021, Mr. Longo moved to forward this application to the Board of Supervisors, recommending approval. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Richardson and approved by the Planning Commission by a vote of 4-0.

Since the Planning Commission public hearing, I have been in contact with the applicants and other individuals with comments in support or concern regarding the application. The following are points from staff that have been crafted from the aforementioned discussions.

- Regarding the safety of the areas outside of the property boundaries. The outdoor firing range should be inspected and approved by a certified third party for compliance. In order to obtain compliance, the site plan requirements may include the need for baffles, buffering, or other improvements. See Condition #2.
- Regarding the time one should expect to hear the discharge of firearms. By amending the hours of operation, it would reduce the times for outdoor discharge of firearms. See Condition #5
- Possible installation of evergreen landscaping around the berm and shooting area to provide additional buffering.
- Regarding the noise produced by the discharge of firearms. The property could be monitored from points around the property boundaries and reviewed and approved by a certified third party for compliance. The results from the sound study may require the need for baffles, buffering, or other improvements to reduce sounds levels.

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Property Location: 650 Water Plant Road
Tax Map ID: 1-----3, 3A & 3AA
Magisterial District: North River
Subdivision: N/A

City: Middletown
Zoning: Agricultural
Acres: 50.4413 total acres
Existing Land Use: Dwelling; Vacant Woodland & Pasture

SURROUNDING ZONING DISTRICTS & USES

North: Agricultural (A) and Right-of-Way
South: Agricultural (A)
East: Agricultural (A)
West: Agricultural (A) and Right-of-Way

Use: Interstate 81 & 66
Use: Vacant Woodland
Use: Vacant Woodland & Pasture
Use: Interstate 81 & 66; Vacant Woodland & Pasture

PROPERTY HISTORY

This property has not had any previous Conditional Use Permits issued for uses in the Agricultural zoning district. The house was constructed in 1968, and the owner/applicant purchased the property in 2020. The property was subject to a zoning violation for operating without a conditional use permit, which has prompted the current request.

ATTACHMENTS

☐ Agency Comments
☐ Location Map

☐ Application
☐ Public Comments

☐ Health Permit
☐ Submitted Plans

☐ Letter from Applicant
☐ Other: _____

COMPATIBILITY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan identifies this area to be used for agricultural land uses. A commercial outdoor recreation operation is a use allowed by conditional use permit in the Agricultural zoning district and is compatible with the current Warren County Zoning Ordinance.

SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS

§ 180-43. Commercial recreational structures and uses.

No commercial recreational activity shall be permitted which is evident from adjacent residential districts and which has the potential of adversely affecting the use and enjoyment of properties within said residential districts.

- A. The minimum acreage for commercial recreational structures and uses shall be two acres.
The property consists of three parcels totaling 50.4413 acres.
- B. Proposed sites for such activities shall have direct access to a major street or highway.
The property has direct access to Water Plant Road (State Route 840).
- C. Proposed sites for such activities shall be of a size and shape appropriate for the proposed use and be dimensioned or located in such a way as to provide spatial or other buffering to protect adjacent development from potentially adverse effects.
The property consists of natural wooded areas to provide buffering from adjoining properties. It is also bordered by Interstate 81 & 66 to the North and West.
- D. A plan shall be provided for safe and convenient parking, circulation and ingress/egress to adjacent streets and highways. This plan shall show the proposed number of parking spaces, aisle widths, the locations of aisles and the location of entrances/exits.
Please see the applicant's proposed site plan. A final site plan shall be provided if the application and conditions are approved as currently written.
- E. All commercial recreational structures and uses shall not produce sound levels which exceed 60 decibels during hours of operation at the nearest property line.
A field visit and test may need to be conducted to confirm noise level.
- F. Minimum yard dimensions shall be as follows:
 - (1) Three hundred feet wide.
 - (2) Front setback: 50 feet from the road right-of-way.
 - (3) Side setback: 50 feet from adjoining property lines.
 - (4) Rear setback: 50 feet from adjoining property lines.
- G. The hours of operation and frequency of operation shall be proposed by the Planning Commission and set by the Board of Supervisors.
Please see the applicant's proposed hours of operation and conditions as currently written.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

The Planning Commission and staff is recommending the following conditions be added to this conditional use permit. *Please note that additional conditions may be added after all agency comments have been received, prior to the Planning Commission public hearing.*

1. The applicant shall comply with all Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Warren County Building Inspections, Warren County Health Department, Warren County Sheriff's Department and applicable environmental regulations and requirements.
2. A site plan shall be prepared and approved by the Warren County Planning Department prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Zoning, showing the buildings, parking area, outdoor lighting, trash receptacles, signage, outdoor firing range, and other applicable zoning requirements.
3. All light fixtures shall be full cut-off fixtures and comply with the Zoning Ordinance requirements.
4. Activities associated with the commercial operation shall not produce sound levels which exceed 60 decibels during hours of operation at the nearest property line.
5. Activities associated with the commercial operation shall be by appointment or reservation only. Such activities shall only take place during the following hours:
 - a. Classroom Instruction: Monday through Saturday 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM, and Sunday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
 - b. Outdoor discharge of firearms: Monday through Saturday 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM/or sunset, and Sunday 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM.
6. The maximum number of occupants per class shall not exceed twenty-five students and five instructors; and or as determined by the Warren County Health Department.
7. Special events which exceed the occupants listed in Condition #6, shall be limited to no more than ten events per calendar year with no more than seventy-five people per event. Such events shall meet Warren County Building Inspections and Warren County Health Department requirements.
8. The applicants shall have the well/drinking water tested annually for lead contamination and a copy of the results shall be submitted to the Planning Departments.

Cc: Travis Dodson – Owner/ Applicant

WCCUP · 000133 · 2021

WARREN COUNTY
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION

Application Number: 2021-10-02
Date Received: 9/15/2021
Fee Amount: \$ 500.00
Date Paid: 9/15/2021 CK# 1545

Applicant Information:

Travis W Dodson

Applicant Name

105 Maryland Dr Stephens City VA 22655
Address City State Zip

650 Water Plant Rd, Middletown, VA 22645

Property Location for conditional use permit if Different than Applicant's Address

540-686-5346 middletonfirearms@gmail.com
Primary Contact Number Email

Property Owner (if same as applicant, leave blank)

Address City State Zip

Primary Contact Number

Respectfully request that a determination be made by the Warren County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors on the following request for a Conditional Use Permit for the property described below.

A. Property Information:

- (1) Address/Location: 650 Water Plant Rd, Middletown, VA
- (2) Election District: North River
- (3) Tax Map Number: 1---3AA / 1---3A / 1---3
- (4) Subdivision Name:
- (5) Total Area of Property (acres): 53
- (6) Total Area to be Used (acres): 4
- (7) Total Road Frontage (feet): Approximately 850ft on Water Plant Rd
- (8) Depth of Property (feet): Approximate 2400ft from Water Plant to I-66
- (9) Present Zoning:

B. Proposed Use of Property

- (1) State the proposed use(s) for the Conditional Use Permit: outdoor recreation + firearm training range
- (2) Current land use and condition of site: Agricultural
- (3) Zoning of surrounding land/property: _____
- (4) Will development be staged? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- (5) Construction Time: _____
- (6) Season, days, and hours of operation: Scattered weekdays (8-4 if law enforcement), 12-6 if private lessons, weekends 8-4pm
- (7) Will there be a sign? ☐ Yes ☒ No
(If yes, please submit a sketch of the sign(s) showing size and shape and the sign permit check list with this application.)
- (8) Has there been any prior application for a conditional use permit/variance for this property? (If yes, enter the permit number and/or name, date of action, action taken by the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and/or Board of Supervisors and a description of the request.) NO
- (9) Number of full time employees: Total 6 Middletown Firearms 10. 3 instructors max if needed at range
- (10) What type of sewage disposal system will be used? ☒ Private ☐ Central ☐ Public
- (11) Number of persons to be served by the sewage disposal system: _____
- (12) Number of parking spaces to be provided: Regular 16 Handicap 2
- (13) What is the proposed landscaping and buffering for this property? See attached

C. Plans Prepared By

Name: Travis Dutton

Address: 105 Maryland Dr Stephens City, VA

Telephone Number: 540-686-5346

D. Environmental Information

- (1) Will this proposed use adversely impact the community of the environment? (If yes, what are the adverse impact(s) and what is proposed to solve these adverse impacts?) no - see attached
- Risk of lead exposure is minimal with fixed beam well + septic are private. waste facilities currently with portable toilets. Hand washing stations

- (2) Will there be any debris generated from the activity? (If yes, where and in what manner will the debris be stored and how and where will it be disposed of?)
Debris from casings will be picked up following each class.
- (3) Will any potentially hazardous substances be used and/or stored on the property? (If yes, list the substances, their use and disposal of containers and substance residues.)
No firearms or ammunition will be kept on property, with exception of the residence
- (4) List any potentially hazardous emissions including, but not limited to: fumes, gases, smoke noise, liquid effluent, waste water, dust, and state what measures will be used to control these emissions. See attached
Greatest lead exposure risk is following use of firearm.
Hand washing stations with D-lead soaps are provided.
- (5) Will there be any electrical or electronic activity which will interfere with local communications or telephone, television or radio reception? (If yes, describe the type of activity and potential interference.) No
- (6) What will be the impact on traffic? We've had a maximum of 28 students with 3 instructors so far. Many of those students have ridden together + instructors park in a separate location.
- (7) Will exterior lighting be used? (If yes, state the number of lights and the wattage of each. A lighting plan or lighting contour map may be required to show the nearest candle power as measured at ground level. not yet at this time

**The following documents and/or information are required
to be submitted with the application:**

☐ **An application fee of \$500.00.** ✓

Make payable to the Treasurer of Warren County. A non-refundable fee of \$500.00 will be required at the time of submittal.

☒ **A Statement of Justification** ✓

This printed or typed statement is to be addressed to the Warren County Planning Commission. It is to summarize your proposed use and highlight any aspects of the request which are not addressed in the application form. Please note, the statement is required to be on 8 1/2 x 11 size paper.

☒ **A Site Plan/Survey.** ✓

Your site plan should show the property boundaries, existing or proposed structure(s), adjacent roads, and any other pertinent information which would help outline your proposed use. A recent survey with the proposed uses/structures located on it will serve as a site plan for the purposes of this permit. The Planning Director, Planning Commission and/or the Board of Supervisors reserve the right to ask for an engineered site plan, if they deem it necessary for evaluation of the proposed conditional use permit.

☒ **Sewage Disposal and Well Site.** ✓

Location of the existing or proposed septic system & drainfield and the well site are to be indicated on the survey or central/public connection location.

☐ **A copy of the deed to the property verifying the current ownership.** ✓

A copy may be obtained at the Warren County Courthouse, Circuit Clerk's Office.

☐ **A statement verifying that real estate taxes have been paid.** ✓

This may be obtained from the Treasurer's Office in Suite 800 of the Warren County Government Center.

☒ **Environmental and Community Impact Statements** ✓

The Planning Director, the Planning Commission, and/or the Board of Supervisors reserve the right to ask for an environmental and/or community impact statements, prepared by a certified engineer or other person qualified to perform such work, if they deem it necessary for evaluation of the proposed request.

☒ **List of chemicals stored on the site** ✓

A complete list of chemicals to be stored on the site in the form of an oath/statement for Industrial zoned properties only.

☐ **Location Map** ✗

A map clearly legible, showing the location of the proposed project in relation to surrounding publicly maintained roads and showing the use of surrounding properties. County staff can assist in obtaining this information.

☒ **Directions to your property from the Warren County Government Center.** ✓

Take Lee West. Turn Left onto S/S. Take exit 298 to
US 11. Turn Left onto US 11. Turn Right onto Water Plant
Rd. Home Property is 1st driveway on left

I/we the undersigned, do hereby respectfully agree to comply with any conditions required by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Warren, Virginia, and authorize the County personnel to go upon the property for the purpose of making site inspections. Expenses incurred in securing professional assistance in connection with the review of this application for a Conditional Use Permit, shall be charged to the applicant.

 9/15/21
Applicant Signature Date

 9/15/21
Property Owner Signature Date

Accepted by: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE NOTE: If the required documents are not provided and/or the application is incomplete, your application will not be placed on the Planning Commission Agenda.

NOTES

I currently own Middletown Firearms, a well-established gun shop that has been operating the last 7 years. Over the years, we have provided multiple firearm safety courses, including concealed carry courses, at various locations. We also have established a great working relationship with many local law enforcement departments. Our business is all about the safe use of firearms.

When we bought 650 Water Plant Rd, Middletown we had a vision of creating a safe place for us to educate and interact with local citizens on firearm use.

650 Water Plant Rd is a total of 53 acres of land.

- 42 Acres is unoccupied wooded lot
- 6 acres in the north western corner is being leased for cattle use
- There is an approximately 1 acre stocked pond on the north end of the property

The primary use for this application is for a private outdoor and gun training facility with an established classroom in the area rear of the residence.



1325sqft residence has been renovated to later accommodate our family.

On the property at time of purchase were 3 buildings and a covered area that is now a pavilion.



- The established driveway has served as an ingress. (seen in green)

We have a graveled parking lot near the pavilion. We also are working to gravel an additional parking area. (Seen in red). Students then walk down a set of stairs to the drive to access the classroom and range areas. If handicap parking is needed, there is a gravel area directly in front of the classroom for students.

We cleared trees & graveled an egress to allow a safe flow of cars (seen in blue).

- The pavilion has been paved to allow picnic tables. This allows students areas to enjoy meals and for host of small get togethers.

- In a larger portion of Building 1, we have established a classroom. This temperature-controlled room would accommodate a maximum of 28 students. The smaller portion of Building 1 is storage. At the north end of Building 1 is a covering in which we rent a potable toilet.
- Building 2 is storage for equipment.
- Adjacent to Building 2 and 3 is Range 1. This is an uncovered, 25 yard outdoor range with 14 lanes. This range is surrounded by railroad ties to help abate sound and provide safety in case of misfire. The natural berm was enhanced with tires and additional dirt was placed to reach a height of 30 feet. This area is currently graveled, with the hopes of paving in the future.
- Building 3 has recently been converted to allow a covered range in times of inclement weather. The rear wall may be lifted to allow cover and access to the berm. Again, this area is surrounded by railroad ties to allow sound abatement and safety. Additionally, this area is storage for all range equipment, including: tables, 2x2, targets, etc. NO FIREARM OR AMMUNITION is stored on site, except for the private residence.
- North of Building 3, is Range 2. Range 2 is an uncovered, 25 yard outdoor range with 11 lanes. The south side of this range is covered with railroad ties. It is also graveled, with hopes of paving in the future. However, the north side there is a small berm and access to a small dirt drive for access to the above fields.

Neighboring areas:

- Route 81 is approximately 540 feet to the east but at a lower elevation than the adjacent field.
- There is approximately 1750 feet from Range 1 to the nearest residence on Long Meadow Road. This is separated by heavy natural forest and foliage.

RANGE USE

This range is *not* open to the public. All attendees are vetted by our personnel. Attendees are either: enrolled students or law enforcement. At least one experienced range safety officer is always on hand to supervise all range behavior.

Firearm Safety Classes:

Firearm safety classes are held almost exclusively on the weekend. The most common of which is our concealed carry courses.

Courses currently include:

- Concealed Carry Course with Live Fire
- Concealed Carry Course (classroom only)
- Pistol Movement
- Intermediate Pistol Course
- Kalash Concepts
- Defensive Shotgun
- Defensive Pistol
- Defensive Rifle
- U.S. Law Shield seminars
- NRA Instructor Training
- Youth Firearm Safety Course

Private Courses:

Throughout the week we offer private lessons with an experienced RSO. These lessons would be in 1 to 2 hour blocks from 12p-6p. There is a maximum of 4 students per RSO during these times.

Law Enforcement:

We have a positive working relationship with many local law enforcement agencies. During the week, some agencies have used Range 1 at no cost currently to continue certification. Many local law enforcement have difficulty scheduling time at the Frederick County range. We offer an area that they can continue their training. Some agencies that have been hosted include: Stephens City Police Department, Winchester Special Response Team, and Strasburg Police Department. We have no plans on charging any local law enforcement agency.

We have also looked into, but do not currently hold events such as:

- Virginia Department of Criminal Justice training. (DCJS)
- Shooting events such as USPSA or IDPA
- Corporate events and classroom rentals
- First Aid training

Range Rules:

Treat every firearm as if it was loaded

Never point your firearm at anything you do not intend to shoot

Keep your finger straight and off the trigger until you intend to shoot

Keep your firearm on safe until you intend to shoot

Know your target and what lines beyond: Ensure down range is unoccupied

Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to use

Range staff has the right to inspect all firearms, ammunition, and equipment

Load and unload firearms on the firing line ONLY

Only 1 loaded firearm at a time

All firearms must be cleared and properly cased when removed from the firing line

Shooters must put on eye & ear protection prior to entering the range and until the exit

If any malfunction occurs, leave the firearm on the shooting bench & ask a Range Officer for help

Cross firing is strictly prohibited

If a cease fire is called, unload your firearm with the cylinder open or pull the slide back, and step behind the range line

Tracers, explosive, steel case, steel core, or armor piercing ammunition is prohibited

No black powder firearms allowed

Use and fire at only approved targets

Avoid shooting at target board supports and framework

Never use drugs or alcohol before or while shooting

Shooters under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian

Be courteous and aware of other shooter around you

Notify Range Officer of any unsafe practices on the range immediately

Dispose of your own targets and shells

Other considerations:

No firearms or ammunition will be stored on the property apart from the residence.

Lead exposure is minimal with an open range. We provide handwashing stations with D-Lead soaps or lead removing wipes. All rounds shot into the main berm will remain in place and all dirt is fixed. Lead risk would be greatest if dirt was to be moved or mined. Lead is a naturally oxidizing substance. Ground exposure to lead would depend on the number of rounds fired. Industry standard for a rubber berm is about 80,000 rounds per shooting position. If needed, we will seek out further expert consultation in regards to firing range services and lead mining.

Pavilion with adjacent steps:



Parking:



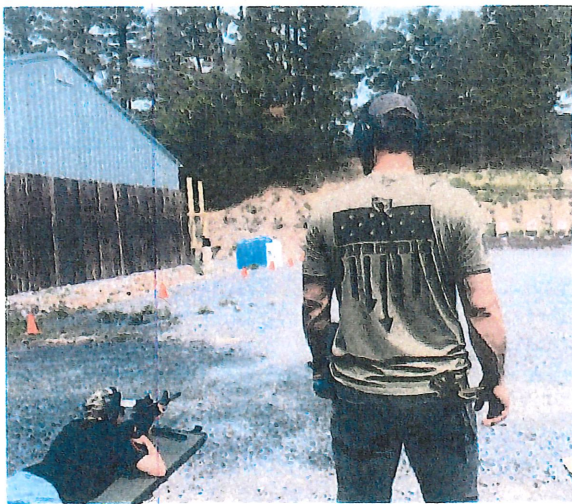
Classroom:



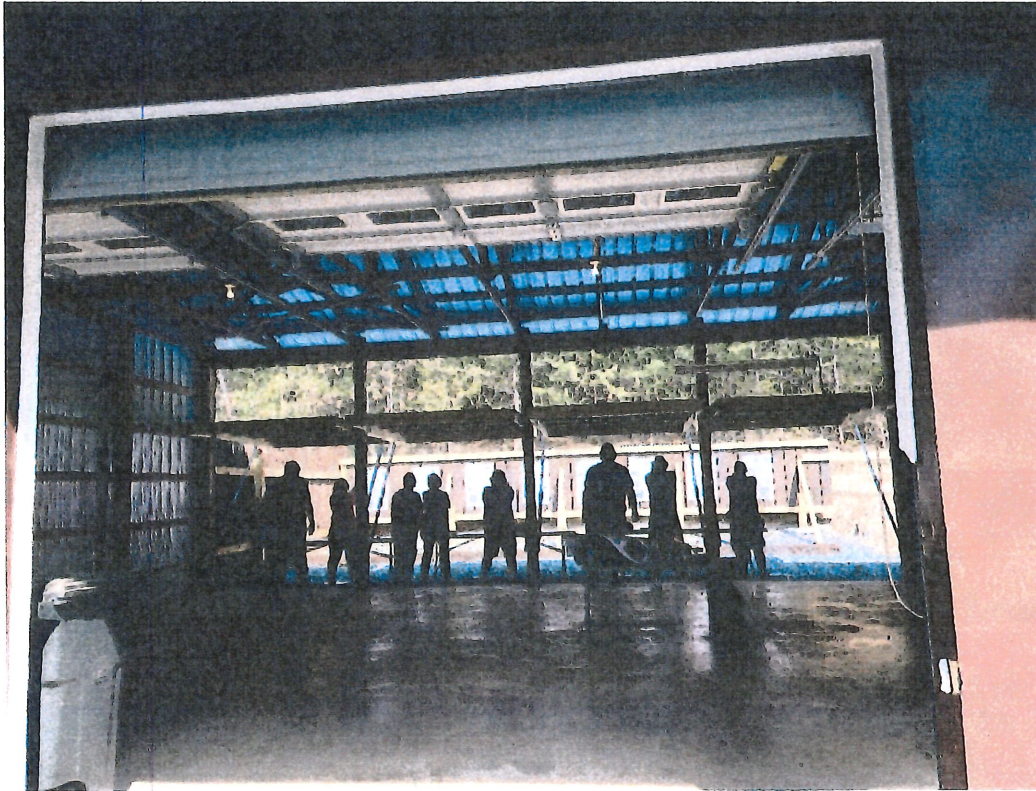
Facilities:



Range 1:



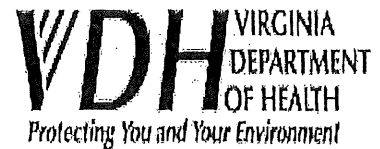
Building 3:



Lord Fairfax Health District



Warren County Health Department
465 West 15th Street, Suite 200
Front Royal, Virginia 22630
Tel. (540) 635-3159 ~ Fax (540) 635-9698
www.vdh.virginia.gov



September 22, 2021

Joe Petty, Planning Director
County of Warren
Planning and Zoning Department
220 N Commerce Ave., Suite 400
Front Royal, Virginia 22630

RECEIVED

SEP 27 2021

WARREN COUNTY
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

RE: Request for Comments for a Conditional Use Permit (2021-10-02)
650 Water Plant Rd. Middletown, VA 22645 (Warren County Tax Map# 1-3AA, 3A & 3).

Dear Mr. Petty,

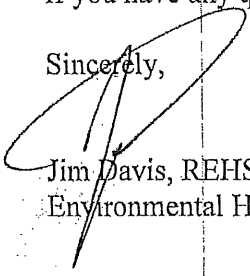
I have reviewed your request and this office would have no objections to the proposed shooting range and classroom facility provided an onsite sewage system could be approved and installed. Our office has no records of the existing onsite sewage system currently serving the dwelling designated as 650 Water Plant Rd. Therefore, that system cannot be considered to serve the classroom facility and portable privies are not a viable option for buildings designed for human occupancy or places where people congregate.

Regarding potential groundwater contamination from spent ammunition, the owner/operator should develop an operational manual for lead collection, disposal or recycling. This could include having proper backstops for collection of spent ammunition. Although lead from spent ammunition is not considered hazardous waste when used for the intended purpose, lead abatement must be considered at the time the facility is closed or abandoned. For more information, please see EPA publication, Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges (www.epa.gov/region2/waste/leadshot) or contact

Leadshot Coordinator
RCRA Compliance Branch
U.S Environmental Protection Agency
Region 2
290 Broadway - 22nd Floor
New York, NY 10007-1866
E-Mail: Leadshot.Region2@epa.gov

If you have any questions, contact me at (540) 635-3159.

Sincerely,


Jim Davis, REHS
Environmental Health Supervisor

Joe Petty

From: Arthur Boyce <bobby.boyce@vdot.virginia.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 7, 2021 3:45 PM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: Funkhouser, Rhonda (VDOT); Travis Duncan; Rigglesman, Bradley
Subject: Warren-Rte 612-CUP 2021-10-02 Dodson Shooting Range TM#3-1, 3-1A, 3-1AA

<<...>>

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Staunton/Edinburg Land Development

14031 Old Valley Pike

Edinburg, VA 22824

Dear Mr. Petty:

We have reviewed the above subject Conditional Use Permit Application dated September 15, 2021 for impacts to the local roadways. Middletown Firearms would like to utilize this property for firearms training and no retail sales will take place at this location. Our comments are as follows:

- The State's minimum sight distance requirements can be obtained by trimming trees, removing vegetation, and some minor grading. The existing entrance serving this site will need to be upgraded to meet VDOT's minimum low-volume commercial standards. The entrance(s) will need to be reconstructed and paved 25' back from the existing pavement on Route 612. This upgrade should be installed prior to any use, other than the existing dwelling.
- A Land Use Permit shall be obtained before any work is performed on the State's right-of-way. The permit is issued by this office and will require an application fee and surety coverage. Once satisfactory application has been made, a permit will normally take 10-20 days to process and issue.

We appreciate the County's efforts to include VDOT in the early planning stages for development and the opportunity to provide comments on this Conditional Use Permit. We ask that you include a copy of this transmittal for official public record. If you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Sincerely,

Bobby Boyce

VDOT- Land Development Engineer
Shenandoah, Frederick, Clarke, & Warren Counties
14031 Old Valley Pike
Edinburg, VA 22824
(540) 534-3211

Joe Petty

From: David Beahm
Sent: Monday, October 18, 2021 11:41 AM
To: Chloe Phillips
Cc: Joe Petty; Paula Fristoe
Subject: Request for Comments 2021-10-02 – Travis W. Dodson – Conditional Use Permit for Outdoor Recreation Facility (Firearms Training) – WCCUP-000133-2021

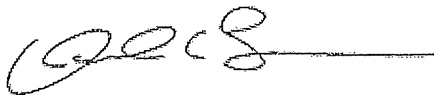
Comments 2021-10-02 – Travis W. Dodson – Conditional Use Permit for Outdoor Recreation Facility (Firearms Training) – WCCUP-000133-2021:

NOTE: From the information provided (photos and description) it would appear that work has been completed without permits having been obtained. The only permit on file is for an electrical upgrade that was completed earlier this year. Any work that may have been completed that required permitting would be in violation and would need to be addressed prior to Building Inspections being able to provide approval for this request.

- Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) Items:
 - From the information provided it would not appear that any land disturbance is to take place, but it does appear that some has already been completed without having been permitted. Any combined area of disturbance over 10,000 square feet would require a permit. As such, for this type of work scope, an application and permit are required for ESC permit, which would be a normal submission including a full plan review application
 - While it does not appear to have exceeded one (1) acre, if it has it would require submission to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for Stormwater. Approval by DEQ (Construction General Permit) would be required prior to any ESC Permit and any type of Building Permit being issued by Warren County.
- Building Inspections Items:
 - As indicated above, any work that has taken place without permitting will need to be addressed first. Then if or when any additional building construction related activity (structure, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, etc.) were to start, it would be subject to the normal requirements of application, review and approval prior to work beginning.
 - All building requirements are based on the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
 - This activity would require a Change of Use and Occupancy for the property given that all structures on the property originally where in the One- and Two-Family Dwelling (R-5) Classification.
 - The use of portable facilities would not be allowed for this type of Use and Occupancy. Permanent facilities would be required per the USBC.

If anything should change in the scope additional requirements may be required.

Respectfully,



Joe Petty

From: Pascarella, Jonathan <jed.pascarella@deq.virginia.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 19, 2021 4:18 PM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: Simmerman Graham iej11935
Subject: Re: 2021-10-02 – Travis W. Dodson – Conditional Use Permit for Outdoor Recreation Facility (Firearms Training)

Hello Joe,

I appreciate you forwarding to me the Conditional Use Permit application for the Commercial Outdoor Recreation Operation at 650 Water Plant Rd, Middletown. As we discussed, DEQ does not regulate shooting range operations. DEQ would, however, regulate discharges from these operations. Thus, EPA's Best Management Practices are designed to prevent releases from these operations.

Considering this, I have some observations regarding this permit submittal in consideration of EPA's BMPs and DEQ's experience.

-- There is no mention of soil pH or depth to groundwater. Low soil pH, in conjunction with acid rain, can mobilize deposited lead to be washed off-site, or to be carried down into the soil. Ideal soil pH is between 6.5 and 8.5. Considering soil pH, there are mitigating measures, such as liming, that can be used to reduce the possibility of this becoming an issue.

-- In addition to lead in the berm backstop, lead can be deposited in the soil at the firing line from discharge of the primer. Thus, the need to look at soil pH, and possible soil pH adjustment in this area also, as a consideration to preventing contaminated run-off or deep soil contamination.

-- The plan does not appear to have a concrete frequency of bullet collection and recycling. EPA's BMP states that "periodic lead removal activities should be planned for and conducted" in order that the range stays away from the "discarded" definition for deposited bullets. The Plan's 80k round limit per lane appears reasonable, but if the soil pH is not favorable, the Facility might want to consider a more frequent collection schedule.

-- I noticed at least one high velocity firearm in the photos that were attached. As we discussed, if high velocity rounds are used on a regular basis, the potential for more, and freshly exposed lead goes up along with the potential for lead leaching (see pH discussion above).

Again, these items are not required by DEQ regulations, but stem from EPA's Best Management Practices combined with observed conditions in working with other ranges.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding these items. I would be glad to discuss them, or any other issues, with you or the range owners.

Take Care,

JED

Jonathan (Jed) Pascarella
Environmental Program Planner
Department of Environmental Quality - Valley Regional Office
4411 Early Road (Physical)
P.O. Box 3000 (Mail)
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
540-574-7838 (Office phone - rolls to my cell phone)
jed.pascarella@deq.virginia.gov - email
804-698-4178 - DEQ fax number

On Tue, Oct 19, 2021 at 11:28 AM Joe Petty <jpetty@warrencountyva.net> wrote:

Good morning Jed:

Thank you for reaching out regarding the property at 650 Water Plant Road. As discussed, the property is currently in the process of requesting a conditional use permit for a commercial outdoor recreation facility that is used from firearms training. The CUP application was a result of a notice of violation sent from our office. I have attached the application and comments we have received from various agencies. Please let me know if you have any comments.

Joseph "Joe" Petty

Planning Director/Zoning Administrator

Warren County Planning Department

220 North Commerce Ave., Suite 400

Front Royal, VA 22630

Phone: (540) 636-3354

Fax: (540) 636-4698

warrencountyva.net

[Warren County Code](#)

[Zoning Setbacks](#)

[Warren GIS](#)



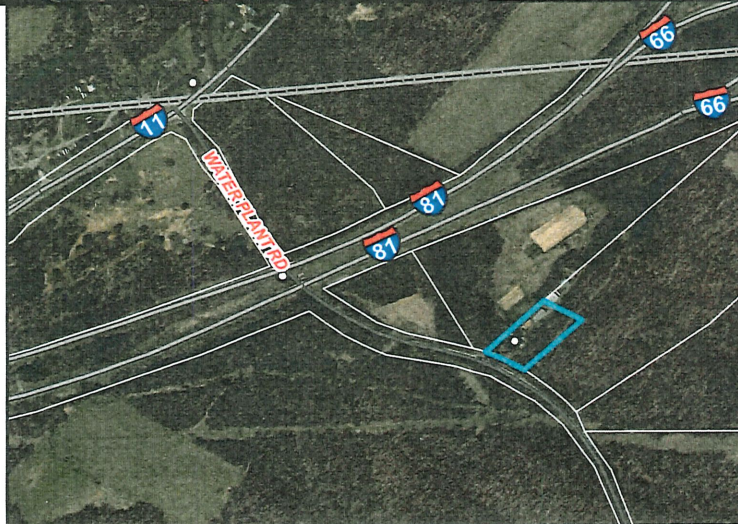
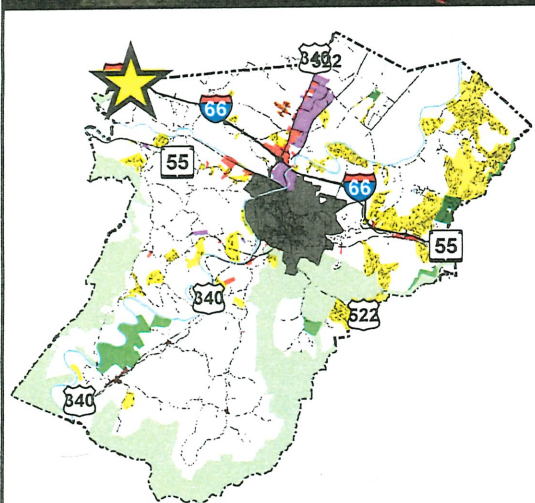
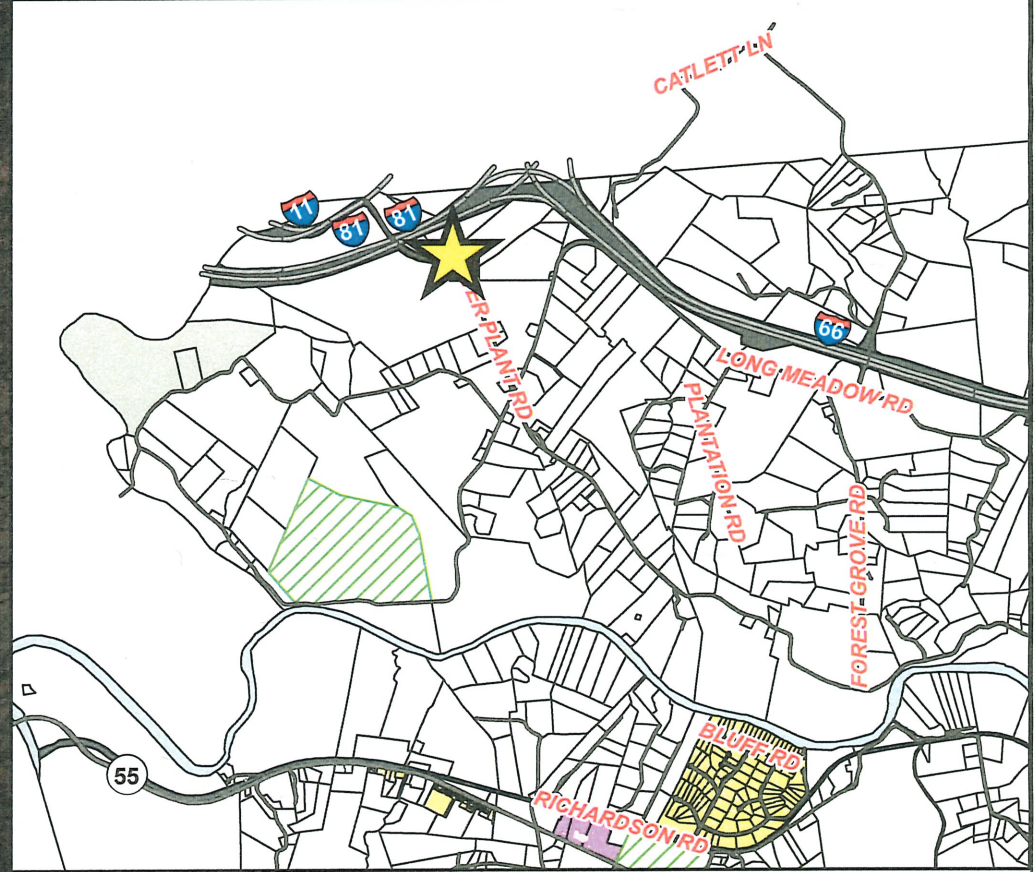
Warren County VA

CUP Location Map



Outdoor Recreation Facility: Firearms Training
Applicants: Travis Dodson

Tract-----3AA
650 Water Plant Rd



Zoning

Agricultural	Rural Residential
Commercial	Right of Way
Industrial	Front Royal
Residential One	Federal Land
Residential Two	State Land
Suburban Residential	Water
Village Residential	VOF Conservation Easements
	WC Conservation Easements

Map produced by
Warren County GIS 2021
Department of Planning

WARREN COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

DEC 21 2021

RECEIVED
WARREN COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

December 20, 2021

Dear

I urge you to reject the application for a special use permit from Mr. Dodson for a shooting range on property adjoining the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park.

We are so very fortunate to have parts of two National Parks in Warren County - Shenandoah National Park and the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. And tourism is the most important driver of our economy largely because those Parks are located here. Park visitors eat here, sleep here, and shop here. The proposed shooting range will cause severe and continuous damage to the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park because the noise will discourage tourists from coming here.

Not only will the shooting range cause continuous damage to the National Park, it is in conflict with the Warren County comprehensive plan. That plan calls for maintaining the rural character of the county and of preserving historic sites. The shooting range goes against both those goals.

The battle of Cedar Creek was the deciding battle of the Civil War campaign in the Shenandoah Valley, and as such it is nationally important. The annual re-enactment of that battle draws thousands from far and wide, but that is only a three day event. Those re-enactors will come regardless of the range. It is the day to day visitors who will no longer want to come.

The Belle Grove Plantation house is one of only 27 historic houses-museums in the entire country owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The historic house was built in 1797 by Isaac Hite with design help from Thomas Jefferson. Isaac was the son of Jost Hite, one of the earliest settlers to the area. Isaac married James Madison's sister and James visited Belle Grove often including on his and Dolly's honeymoon.

I don't know if you have ever heard the sound of gunfire from AK-47s and other high powered rifles, but it is deafening even at a distance - well over a mile. That noise is incompatible with the National Park. Belle Grove is a prime wedding venue. My son got married at Belle Grove, but I can't imagine anyone wanting to walk down the aisle to the sound of continuous gunfire. Will area schools still want to bring grade school children to Belle Grove where they currently learn about what life was like there over 200 years ago? I doubt it. In pre-pandemic days Belle Grove educated over 1,000 young students per year.

Trails lead through the important locations of the 1864 battlefield, several quite close to the proposed shooting range. The trails go through a pastoral landscape still much as it was over 150 years ago. When you're there, one can re-imagine the battle, see the terrain, and reflect on the strategies of the commanding officers. If the special use permit is approved, you won't want to be there while the shooting is going on and that will be most daylight hours seven days a week, year around.

Mr. Dodson asked for a similar permit from the Frederick County Planning Commission. His application was unanimously rejected.

Sincerely,
Fred Anderson



January 10, 2022

Mr. Joseph Petty
Planning Director/Zoning Administrator
Warren County
220 N Commerce Ave # 400
Front Royal, VA 22630

Dear Mr. Petty,

Thank you for your work on the Conditional Use Permit for 650 Water Plant Road, Middletown, VA which would rezone this property from agricultural use to recreational use for an outdoor firearms training facility and classroom. Belle Grove Inc. is an adjacent property owner in Warren County with a 13-acre parcel at the corner of Water Plant Road and Route 11.

As I stated at the Planning Commission public hearing on November 10, the proposed use will have a detrimental impact on Belle Grove Plantation. Belle Grove Inc., which operates the site and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which owns it, opposes this Conditional Use Permit.

The core Belle Grove property came into the ownership of the National Trust in 1964 and it has been operated as a historic house museum since 1967. Belle Grove Inc. was founded in 1977 and both organizations have been active in land preservation of the Hite family properties and Cedar Creek Battlefield. This land preservation effort, which later included Cedar Creek Battlefields Foundation and Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, ultimately resulted in the creation of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park in 2002. Our efforts to preserve this hallowed ground has included preserving the landscape, and viewscape, now must include preserving the soundscape.

In December, representatives from Belle Grove Inc., the National Trust and other Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park partners met with the applicants, Travis and Ashley Dodson, and one of their instructors. The applicants reiterated that they intend to grow their business and have classes or practices on many days, as is stated in the Conditional Use Permit application (“5b. Outdoor discharge of firearms: Monday through Saturday 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM/or sunset, and Sunday 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM.”) While they were willing to occasionally avoid dates or times when Belle Grove or its Park partners have a special event, they were unwilling to make any written agreement about this—it would be on a case-by-case basis. Between May and October, we have events on many weekends, and they only seemed willing to work with us on avoiding one day a month. They also noted the variety of firearms that may be used at the facility. We are concerned about the continuous, percussive sound of multi-hour classes and practices and the especially high volume of noise that certain firearms would generate.

The applicant told us they conducted a sound test and measured the volume of the noise they produce at 60 decibels at the edge of the property. The Park Partners have learned more about how the volume of gunfire might be measured and it is not clear whether the applicants used the correct

equipment to get these measurements. In addition, since the applicant used the property for firing before seeking these permits, we know what sound impacts would be and it is heard on the Belle Grove property. It is much worse on the National Park property where they have the Morning Attack walking trail and access to the 1885 Vermont Monument.

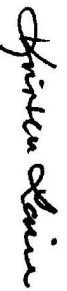
The applicants have mentioned the berms they have already erected will minimize the sound, but in fact they are only on three sides forcing sound out and toward the National Park and Belle Grove. They also argued that I-81 traffic noise is just as loud as gunfire. While traffic noise is a nuisance, it is at a different frequency, is considered ambient noise for many people, and is not percussive and as alarming as gunfire will be to our visitors. At the Planning Commission meeting, the applicants expressed that they would be willing to consider sound mitigations such as baffles, but in our in-person meeting with the applicants, they stated they were too expensive to consider.

Belle Grove Plantation typically has more than 14,000 visitors from around the country and the world each year. Even with the pandemic, our 2021 visitation was close to returning to 2019 levels. We are seeing increased attendance at our outdoor events and festivals as people are looking for safe and fun things to do. Our visitors have a positive economic impact on Warren County hotels, restaurants, and campgrounds. Having National Historic Landmark historic sites and a National Park in the west end of the County also improves the quality of life for residents. Approving this permit would harm all these benefits.

More information and study are needed on this application. I urge the Planning and Zoning Department to request the methodology for the sound tests the applicants did and determine if it is valid. I also request additional sound buffers be mandated to protect the historic resources that surround the property. In addition, there will need to be a practical way for sound to be measured going forward so that the conditions of the permit will be met. It should be considered whether monitoring this private business is a wise use of County staff time and resources.

Thank you again for considering these points and for sharing this letter with the Board of Supervisors in the materials they will receive about this issue. Please let me know if you have further questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristen Laise". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kristen Laise
Executive Director

Dear Board of Supervisors,

My name is David Blount, 2082 Bowmans Mill Rd, Middletown, VA, Warren County and for 42 years I've been a resident of the county. My wife and I know quite a bit about the County as she taught in County schools and at Lord Fairfax CC while I served in numerous organizations supporting the County most recently as the Chair of the Warren Memorial Hospital before it was dissolved by the Valley Health System. Among other things, I was a founding manager of the American Woodmark Corp. which employed hundreds of County residents, founded the "Friends of Samuels Library" in the mid-1990s, and worked with Dave Ziegler/Tom Peachy/Don McNeil to relocate the NW Community Services offices to Criser Rd from Winchester.

I say this to let you know that I believe in Warren County and the honest and fair dealings owed its' citizens. Because of that belief, I do not think this CUP as proposed by Mr. Dodson should be approved. I live in the neighborhood of the proposed site, one-half mile away, and will be impacted by its' approval. We have been impacted in the past when Mr. Dawson operated without a permit due to the overwhelming noise pollution, particularly, in the afternoons. I have to assume that this proposed facility will be a detriment to the value of my property and hinder any resale opportunity in the future. In addition to the noise and the property valuation concerns, there are three other major reasons why this request should be denied.

1. Mr. Dodson is not a resident of Warren County. He may own property in our County but his application says that he resides and operates his business in Frederick County. Frederick County has previously denied him a permit for the same or similar CUP proposal. His business is in Middletown, he pays taxes in Frederick County and his service area is the Route 11 corridor with little impact on Warren County. This CUP may have costs, tangible and intangible, associated with it that will accrue to Warren County while the benefits go to Frederick/Shenandoah Counties. I think Warren County should understand how these potentials costs/liabilities will be funded on an on-going basis, not just a one-time basis.
2. The Comprehensive Plan of Warren County lists Long Meadow farm and the Cedar Creek Battlefield as historical preservation sites that need special protection. Specifically, the County document states that it will continue to mitigate the impact on historical structures and properties imposed by development. I have not seen any agreement between the three historic entities, namely, Cedar Creek Battlefield National Park, Belle Grove Historic Trust and Long Meadow Farm, all within ear shot of the proposed firing range that would mitigate the CUP's impact on those sites. My farm borders on Long Meadow Farm and I can assure you that Long Meadow Farm when fully operational, as planned, will be impacted by the noise from the rifle range. Moreover, visitors to the Vermont Monument in Cedar Creek Park or attending activities at the Belle Grove Estate will be negatively impacted with the sound of an AR-15 shooting lesson literally next door. Clearly, this is not the intent of the County's Comprehensive Plan.
3. As this CUP was developed out of an incident in response to a violation of law, it would appear that the management practice of "asking for forgiveness as opposed to asking for permission" was

in play. This is a serious flaw particularly when dealing with weaponry. This error is so grievous that I hope the Board does not reward its behavior by granting this "mea culpa" request. If unfortunately, you do grant this CUP, then stringent probationary rules should be created to ensure that the firing range operation does not further develop into additional activities and that significant penalties are applied for not adhering to any outlined rule set.

In sum, as a local home owner, I think this CUP should be disallowed. But if you go forward, please take time to ensure that we, the County, gets full economic measure, that there is a balanced operating agreement between the affected parties, and that there are safe guards in places to protect against unauthorized business expansion.

Thank-you,

David Blount

Emily Ciarrocchi

From: Joe Petty
Sent: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 12:52 PM
To: Daniel M. Downey
Cc: Emily Ciarrocchi
Subject: RE: Warren County Government Website contact inquiry [Daniel M. Downey]

Good afternoon Mr. Downey:

Thank you for your email. Your comments will be attached to the file and copies will be provided to the Board of Supervisors for the upcoming public hearing on February 22, 2022.

Joseph "Joe" Petty
Director of Economic Development/Interim Planning Director
Phone: (540) 636-3354

-----Original Message-----

From: Warren County <No_Reply@warrencountyva.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 12:39 PM
To: Joe Petty <jpetty@warrencountyva.net>
Subject: Warren County Government Website contact inquiry [Daniel M. Downey]

A contact inquiry has been submitted via the employee contact form found at <https://www.warrencountyva.net/> (Warren County Government Website) on 2022-02-15. Please view details below.

Sender Name: Daniel M. Downey
Sender Email: downeydm@aol.com
Day Phone: 540-433-5827
Evening Phone: same
Contact Preference: Email

Comments:
Delores Oates, Vice Chair
Warren County Board of Supervisors
Warren County, Virginia

Dear Mrs. Oates:

I am writing in regard to the request of Travis Dodson for a Commercial Outdoor Recreation Operation to be located at 650 Water Plant Road and operated under a conditional use permit, #2021-10-02 that will be considered at the special meeting February 22. I am respectfully requesting that this permit be denied. My reasons for this request are as follows.

1. I am a landowner in Shenandoah County with my brother Roy Martin Downey of the historic Daniel Stickley property, located one mile west of the proposed location. This farm figured prominently in Civil War and colonial history. Although it is privately owned, we have protected and shared it for visitation and education for a variety of groups from Shenandoah University, Belle Grove, National Park Service, etc. at no

cost for decades. The sound and frequency of gunshots from the proposed can be clearly heard at this farm and detracts from the serenity and quality of life at that location.

2. The proposed site is adjacent to the Cedar Creek National Battlefield Park and the sound and frequency of gunshots also detracts from the experience of visitation by educators, students and tourists.
3. Mr. Dodson has not adequately addressed safety. The proposed site is adjacent to I-81, I-66, the ramps that connect the two highways and secondary roads. Since the site is an open air range with low acreage, there will be stray bullets that exit making it an extremely unsafe location for passers-by.
4. Mr. Dodson has not demonstrated a need for this type of facility in this location; there are alternatives in place that are already available for gun owners in that area. Rather he has chosen this location for proximity of his business of sales of guns and ammunition in Middletown.
5. There are no benefits to Warren County as expenditures will return tax revenue to Fredrick County due to the location of Mr. Dodson's business.
6. Mr. Dodson claims this is not a public firing range, yet the membership required for shooting at the proposed range is so loosely defined that it is indeed open to the public.
7. The requested hours of operation are all the daylight hours every week. This means neighbors will potentially experience nonstop gunfire. It is not only the loudness of the shots, but also the unrelenting duration that detracts from the quality of life for neighbors.

In summary this is a very bad location for the proposed shooting range. The only way this proposal would be somewhat acceptable is if the range were to be completely enclosed in a building constructed for that purpose. We appreciate your consideration of denial of this request. Please feel free to contact me if more information is needed (540-433-4827).

Sincerely,

Daniel M. Downey, Ph.D.
35081 Old Valley Pike
Strasburg, VA 22657

Emily Ciarrocchi

From: Tony Carter
Sent: Thursday, December 2, 2021 11:27 AM
To: Buz Grover
Cc: Emily Ciarrocchi
Subject: RE: Warren County Government Website contact inquiry [Buz Grover]

Mr. Grover,

Thank you for your email. My understanding is that the Board of Supervisors public hearing will be in January. My term ends on 12.31.2021, so I will not have a vote on this. My successor will take office on January 1, his name is Jerome Butler. I do not have an email address for him. You can forward your email to the deputy clerk and she could see that he gets it. Her name is Emily and I have copied her on this.
Tony

-----Original Message-----

From: Warren County <No_Reply@warrencountyva.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 30, 2021 2:45 PM
To: Tony Carter <Tcarter@warrencountyva.net>
Subject: Warren County Government Website contact inquiry [Buz Grover]

A contact inquiry has been submitted via the employee contact form found at <https://www.warrencountyva.net/> (Warren County Government Website) on 2021-11-30. Please view details below.

Sender Name: Buz Grover
Sender Email: buz@buzwardo.com
Day Phone: 7039935784
Evening Phone: --N/A--
Contact Preference: Either

Comments:

Dear Supervisor Carter:

I'm writing about the proposed Middletown Firearms ranges you are considering. Those ranges have already built, are being used for classes and by favored customers, and indeed has been fully operational for about two years. Not only has there been substantial site disturbance with three dirt backstops created and in use, but also a former garage bay has been converted into a classroom with most that work completed store staff or relatives of the owners, who are also working to renovate the residence on the property. It does not appear that any of the work has been done by anyone with formal licensure, nor were any permits obtained for any of this already completed work.

The ranges that are already being used for classes or individuals weekly or more are something you should be particularly concerned with. The 100 yard rifle range is backed by a berm behind which you can see traffic passing on Water Plant road. Should someone shoot over the berm, particularly on its left side when traffic is passing it could create a tragic result. This issue has been noted to the owner of Middletown Firearms, though these sorts of concerns are not well received and indeed is one of the reasons I'm no longer teaching there. It should also be noted that this berm and range has been constructed on a flood plain with no provision to keep lead contamination from leeching into the groundwater.

Though the situation is not as bad on the pistol ranges, Interstate 81 is directly behind them and a shot lofted over the berm could result in a vehicle being struck. Go to any indoor range and you will note damage to the ceiling and walls

where poorly aimed shots struck them. Were high shots to occur at any of these ranges damage to passing vehicles and their occupants could occur. Moreover much of the current use is either unsupervised or conducted by instructors that do not have range safety officer credentials.

During my time instructing there I noted numerous management issues and poor business practices. Though those issues may not be germane to your current deliberations, they were part of a larger pattern where ad hoc, often times poorly informed decisions were made with an eye on the short term profitability instead of best practices, basic risk and other management standards. I'm happy to discuss these concerns in detail and provide video documentation if you'd like.

With all that said the citizens of Warren county would be well served by a facility like this. Moreover, with the proper inducements the owners of Middletown Firearms can likely be motivated to provide this service and run their classroom and ranges in a safe manner. Remediating current issues and making it clear that best practices, rules, and regulations need to be closely followed moving forward would go a long way toward meeting that goal.

As a constituent living for 20 years on High Knob I thank you for taking the time to consider these points. Again, at the end of the day I hope this effort moves forward, albeit in a safe and professional manner. Please feel free to reach out to my should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Buz Grover

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**National Trust *for*
Historic Preservation**
Save the past. Enrich the future.

SENT VIA EMAIL TO JBUTLER@WARRENCOUNTYVA.NET,
VCOOK@WARRENCOUNTYVA.NET, CCULLERS@WARRENCOUNTYVA.NET,
WMABE@WARRENCOUNTYVA.NET, DOATES@WARRENCOUNTYVA.NET, &
JPETTY@WARRENCOUNTYVA.NET

February 14, 2022

County of Warren
Board of Supervisors
220 North Commerce Avenue
Front Royal, Virginia 22630

Re: Objection to Conditional Use Permit (2021-10-02), 650 Water Plant Road,
Middletown, VA 22645 (Warren County Tax Map #s 1-3-AA, 3A, & 3)

Dear Board of Supervisors:

The National Trust for Historic Preservation (“National Trust”) opposes approval of conditional use permit application number 2021-10-02 for 650 Water Plant Road (the “Property”). The permit application seeks to operate the Property as a Commercial Outdoor Recreation Operation in the form of an outdoor gun training facility with multiple gun ranges. The purpose of this letter is to supplement the National Trust’s November 10, 2021 letter submitted to the Planning Commission (enclosed). Since the Planning Commission meeting, the National Trust along with other Park Partners of the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park met with the applicant to ask questions about their permit application and use of the Property. In addition, all members of the Board of Supervisors have visited the National Historic Landmark District Contributing Property known as Belle Grove, which the National Trust owns and Belle Grove, Inc. operates as a historic site open to the public.

The National Trust does not believe that the permit application contains sufficient information to allow the Board of Supervisors to conduct a thorough review of the permit application which would allow the Board of Supervisors to make an informed decision regarding the suitability of the site for this particular use. In general, the permit application does not address with enough specificity the noise impacts or safety and environmental issues created from the operation of the Property as a commercial outdoor gun training facility.

Typically, such issues would have been addressed in an earlier stage of the permit application review process in consultation with Planning Department staff or as part of the Planning Commission’s review and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. The National Trust acquired a copy of the November 10, 2021 minutes (which as of the date of this letter were still not available on the County’s website for public review) from Planning Department staff. The minutes do not reflect any discussion by the Planning Commission regarding the noise and safety issues associated with this permit application. The minutes also do not reflect that the Planning Commission considered the County’s 2013 Comprehensive Plan and the 2018 Strategic Vision or that the Planning Commission evaluated how the operation of an outdoor gun training facility would or would not be in harmony with the County’s existing and future land use goals and plans.

While Planning Department staff made several recommendations for conditions on this permit application to the Planning Commission, none of the conditions sufficiently addressed the important variety of noise impacts and safety issues related to operating multiple outdoor gun ranges on the Property.

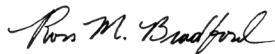
The permit application also suggests that this Property will function both as a private residence and as a commercial enterprise. For purposes of enforcing any conditions placed on the use of the Property, it is unclear how the County will be able to differentiate between private firearm use related to the residential use of the Property as compared to firearm use related to the use of the Property as a commercial outdoor gun range.

The permit application also fails to include any studies addressing noise impacts, safety issues, and mitigation of environmental hazards, and the minutes from the Planning Commission meeting contain no request for any such studies. While there is a reference in the Planning Commission meeting minutes to the applicant conducting a sound test, no information was provided in the permit application regarding this test. During the applicant's meeting with the Park Partners, there was some discussion of sound testing using cell phones; however, the use of cellphones for such tests are inadequate and should not be relied upon to accurately measure sound impacts from the use of the Property as an outdoor gun training facility.

To ensure that the Property operates in a safe manner and to mitigate invasive sound impacts on the National Park and Belle Grove from the operation of multiple gun ranges on the Property, we strongly urge the Board of Supervisors to delay any decision on this permit application until the applicant has performed adequate studies regarding noise impacts and potential safety issues and until the applicant agrees to design a baffled gun range, which can be constructed of readily available construction materials. As an example of a possible baffled range design, we would encourage the Board of Supervisors to consult the United States Department of Energy's "[Range Design Criteria](#)." Excerpts from these Criteria are enclosed.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the permit application.

Sincerely,



Ross M. Bradford
Deputy General Counsel

Enclosures

RANGE DESIGN CRITERIA



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY Office of Health, Safety and Security

AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:
<http://www.hss.energy.gov>

INITIATED BY:
Office of Health, Safety and Security

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f. Ceiling or Roofs	29
g. Floors	29
h. Bullet Traps.....	30
i. Elevated Observation Control Platform.....	30
ATTACHMENT 1 -- RANGE DESIGN FIGURES	Attachment 1-1

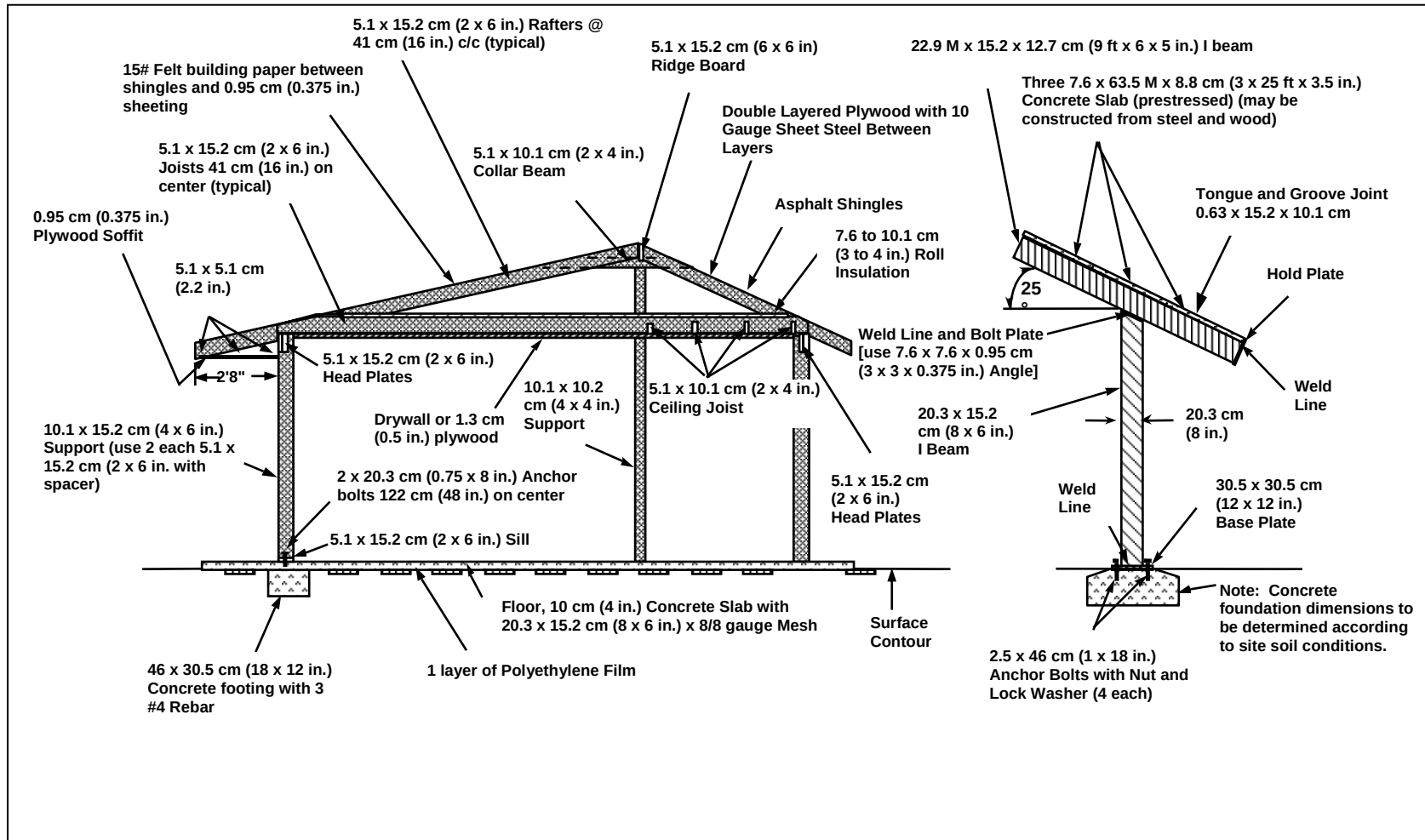


Figure 9
Ballistic Overhead Canopy

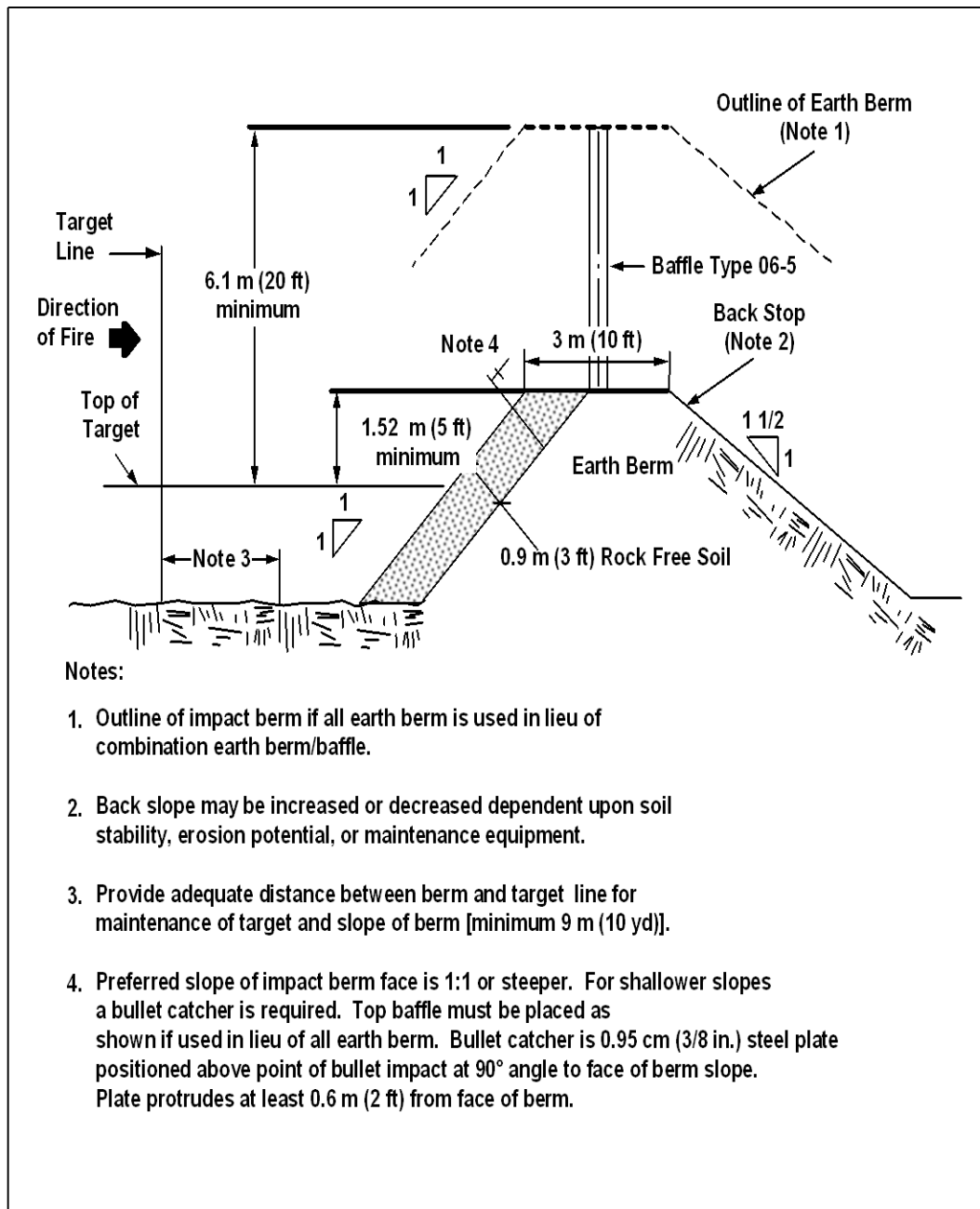


Figure 14
Impact Berm for Open and
Partially Baffled Ranges

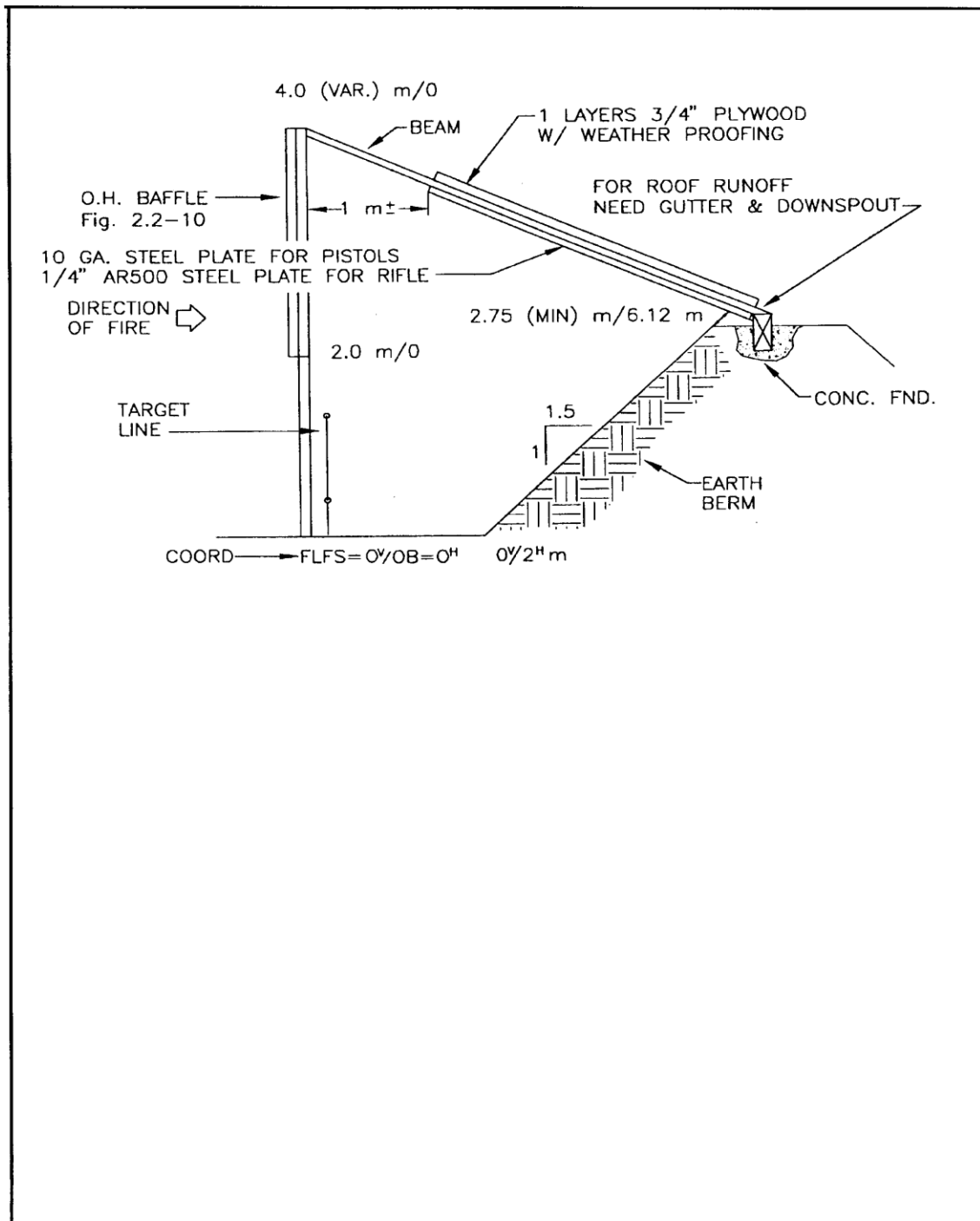
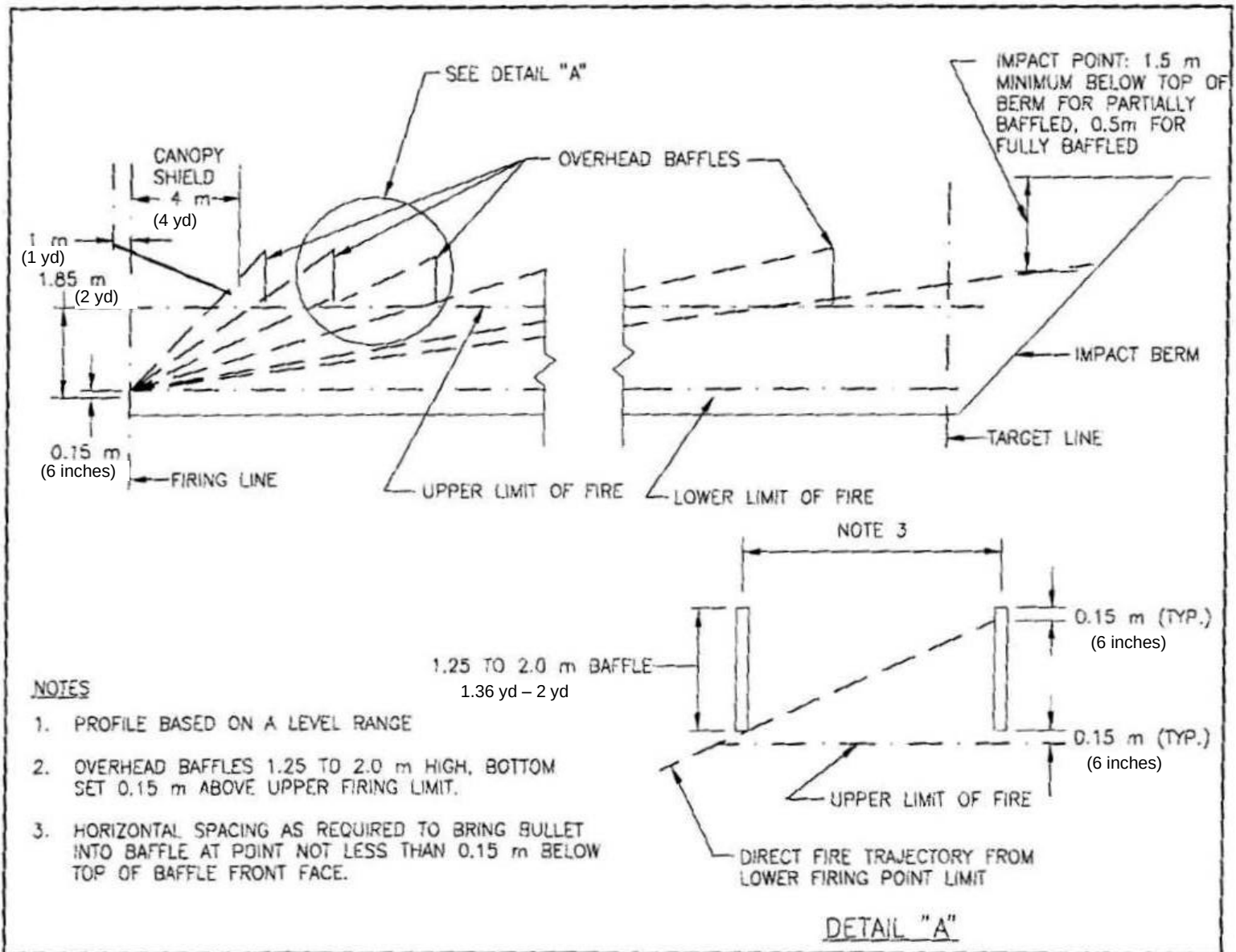


Figure 15
Outdoor Baffled Bullet Stop

Figure 16
Baffled Range Profile



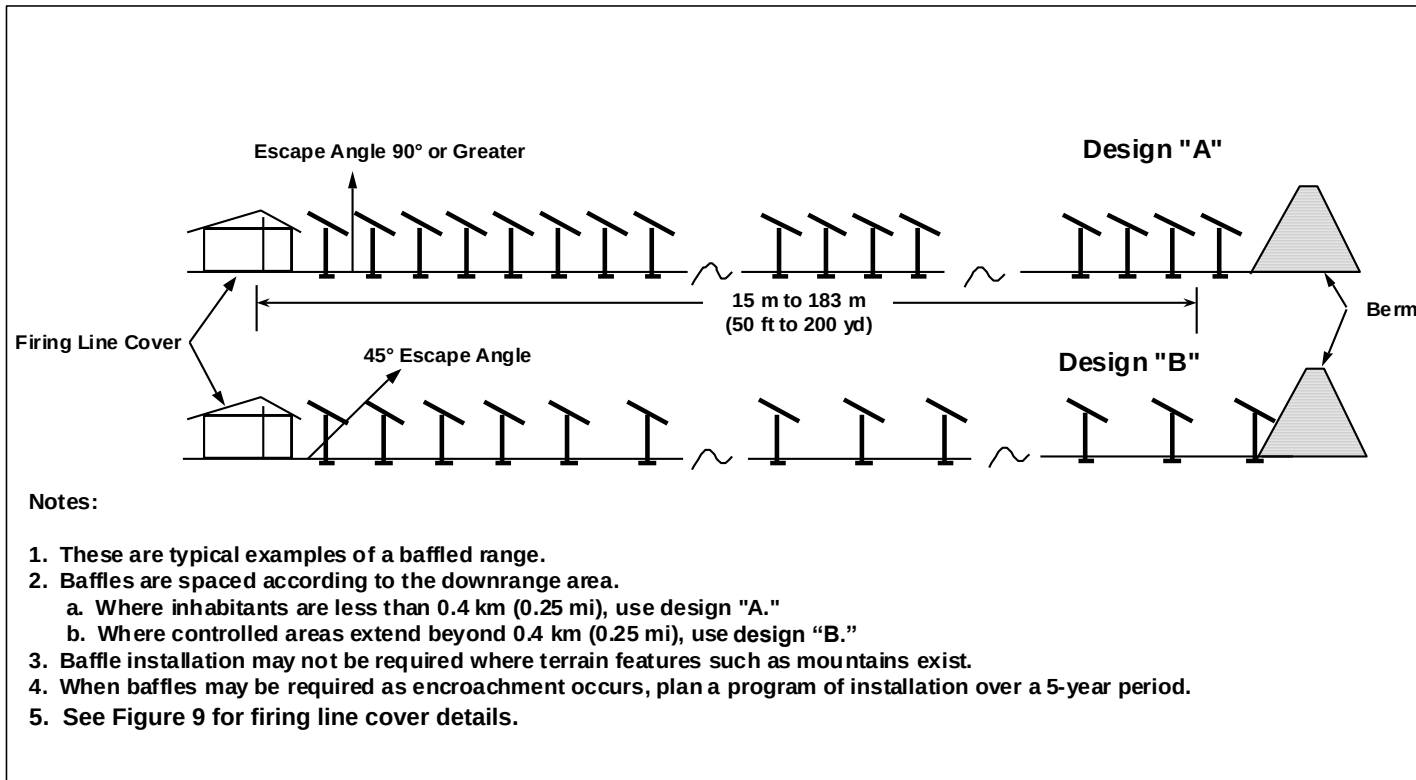


Figure 17
Baffle System Geometry

Emily Ciarrocchi

From: Gee Gee Pasquet <longmedo@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 9, 2022 3:00 PM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: Emily Ciarrocchi; wtm@2mi.co
Subject: Proposed Firing Range on Water Plant Road

Dear Director of Planning,

We are writing to express our opposition to the proposed shooting range on Water Plant Rd.

First and foremost, we are concerned about safety of the shooting range which appears to be oriented to shoot towards the road. The current lay-out has clear lines of fire that could reach Water Plant road and surrounding properties. We understand they will have safety precautions but accidents happen. Have you personally been to the site and seen the landscape and range geometries?

We are cattle farmers, and we hunt on our property. As such, we are also concerned about the noise generated by constant gunfire. It can be quite unsettling not only to us, but our livestock as well. Furthermore, the constant gunfire will drive game from the general area.

In addition, we are concerned with increased vehicular traffic and the number of people that will travel through our quiet neighborhood. We already have problems with illegal dumping, littering and roadside poaching of game. Increased traffic will only exacerbate these problems.

Finally, as Warren County taxpayers and voters, we do not think it fair that the burden of this facility be placed on Warren County and it's residents while financial proceeds go outside the county.

Sincerely,
Virginia Pasquet
Anne Mahoney
Bill Mahoney

Emily Ciarrocchi

From: Walter Mabe
Sent: Friday, January 7, 2022 10:21 AM
To: powersryan@mindspring.com; Emily Ciarrocchi
Subject: Re: Mr Dodson's Outside Shooting Range Special Use Permit

Ms Powers,

Thank you for your impassioned letter concerning the CUP for the shooting range near Bell Grove.

I have copied Emily Ciarrocchi so that she may put the letter into record opposing the application.

Your concern does not go un-noticed and I want you to understand it will be in our packets when it comes to the BOS for consideration.

Thanks again for sending the letter.

Walt

Walter J. Mabe
Board of Supervisors
Shenandoah District
wmabe@warrencountyva.net
540-692-5801

From: powersryan@mindspring.com <powersryan@mindspring.com>
Sent: Friday, January 7, 2022 9:45:55 AM
To: Walter Mabe <Wmabe@warrencountyva.net>
Subject: Mr Dodson's Outside Shooting Range Special Use Permit

Dear Walt,

This letter concerns the special use permit for an outside shooting range as requested by Mr. Dodson. I have two reasons the shooting range should not be approved.

The first reason is the proposed shooting range would be located adjoining the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park and would be within hearing distance of the Park's patrons. The Park is a major asset to our area for many reasons: preservation of an historical site, education, and tourism, plus providing a beautiful peaceful place. Many of the visitors drawn to Belle Grove and the Park also visit Front Royal and Warren County on the same stay.

Much of Belle Grove Plantation's financial support comes from tours and events such as weddings and festivals. This nationally recognized property would see its financial resources greatly diminished, if not curtailed, if events patrons had to listen to continuous gunshots instead of the peaceful quietness of the countryside. No one would want to have a wedding where the members of the wedding party have to yell, "I do", in order to be heard over the cracking of a semi-automatic rifle shooting at targets.

The second reason the outside shooting range should be denied is due to lead pollution from spent bullets. The lead in these bullets interacts with rain and winds up in our creeks, rivers and ground water. Wildlife picks up and eats spent lead-shot pellets, mistaking them for food or grit.

An indoor firing range with proper soundproofing construction would not have noise pollution that would affect the Belle Grove site nor the lead pollution that would affect our water and wildlife.

I urge you to vote no on this special use permit to maintain the quiet, peaceful atmosphere around Belle Grove and to help preserve cleaner water.

Sincerely,

Mary Ryan
Resident of the Shenandoah District of Warren County

Robin Young
520 Chimney Circle
Middletown VA 22645
January 9, 2022

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors of Warren County,

Regarding: Shooting Range Permit App Middletown Firearms, 1/11/22 Agenda

Happy New Year and thank you so much for coming in person to visit Belle Grove Plantation, where I volunteer as a docent and historian.

Belle Grove's location on the knoll, makes it the perfect spot to orient visitors to the general history of our area, both military and political. I normally gather my tour groups at the bottom of the front stairs and then on the top, to point out what a great high point for military reconnaissance it made for any general occupying its ground. I point out how close the Alleghenies are, and how the threat of French settlers from Canada penetrating our area along them was the impetus for the Government of Virginia to open the Valley to settlers from the British "side" of our state. My goal is to open their eyes to the potent history here, and make them want to come back to our area to visit and spend money, on gas, food, and lodgings.

I cannot hold their attention under the sound of gunfire. Neither can the Park Ranger doing talks on the lawn with the benches, or fireside talks on local history that Belle Grove does. Gunfire is very distracting. It can be alarming to many. For military veterans, whom Belle Grove offers special attendance days, it can trigger PTSD episodes. And forget about holding the summer tea on-the-lawn fundraiser unless the ladies want to wear earplugs and bullet-proof vests to feel safe.

I speak from personal knowledge of this. My home on Chimney Circle is adjacent to farm lands, pastures, apple orchards and open country with stands of woods and forest. When hunting season opens, I can't have my windows open. The fusillade of bullets echoing from nearby forest land is distracting, and when it goes on for a long time, annoying and off-putting. Hunters are firing everywhere. On New Years Eve, a cloudy day, I wondered who was sending up fireworks so early before midnight – until duh – I realized it was the rhythmic pop of rifle fire. From Thanksgiving to Christmas Day, the gun fire is always noticeable. The Civil War could be today.

If you inflict this situation on Belle Grove, you are going to hurt our area's most important site, and depress tourism dollars.

In 1860, a new bride came from Maryland to Belle Grove, escorted by her family. Her brother wrote enthusiastically about hearing the rippling water of Cedar Creek from his bedroom, while visiting. Well, ambient noise and intervening development has stopped that from happening. But gunshots are a step too far.

One final point. From the years I worked with a major metropolitan police department which operated its own training range, I fully understand the poisonous effect of lead bullets, especially in the environment. The local Blue Ridge Wildlife Center, which tries to rehabilitate eagles

poisoned by environmental lead, speaks out on this issue. Before his death, I was acquainted with Colonel Pasquet, and his wife, Gee Gee, who owned a historic home off Long Meadows Road. In years of high water, the river lapped at their back stairs. River water interacts with all of that land mass along there. That land mass drains into the river, already badly polluted. Lead in the river affects fish, and affects those who take fish from it, human and eagle alike. The Riverkeeper would not approve.

Lead recovery from bullets fired at this range in a fragile ecosystem area is going to be imperfect at best. Likely unpoliced. Do you have the staff to go check up on lead recovery procedures?

There are many sites where this entrepreneur looking to increase his ammo sales could site a range. I've seen them [Frederick County side]. He thinks the Middletown area is a pushover for approval. The people are not.

Thank you for engaging and taking the time to read a letter I know is too long. Your attention is really appreciated. My email is robinyoung@earthlink.net should you have questions. I am unable to attend the public meeting.

Sincerely,

Robin Young

Joe Petty

From: Jan Boru <janboru@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 8:08 PM
To: Joe Petty
Subject: Middletown Firearms

Good Evening,

It is my understanding that the above mentioned company is trying to secure a permit to continue with firearm training at their range location. I have taken firearms classes with them and feel that I greatly benefited from this training. Along with myself in the class there were about 15-20 other females, speaking with them throughout the day I know we all benefited from this class. It would do this are an injustice to remove this company from giving firearm safety classes or any of their classes.

I know that I am only one person, but I hope it gives you a perspective from an actual student.

Thank you for your time

Jan Boru

Joe Petty

From: Shawn <wscarrico@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 8:45 PM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: Nancy Jo Carrico; Trav
Subject: Middletown Firearms Training Special Use Permit

Good evening Mr. Petty,

I am writing on behalf of my wife and I to respectfully request the Warren County Planning Commission approve the special use permit for Middletown Firearms Training to operate a shooting range on their property located on Water Plant Road.

My wife and I have attended one of their group classes and taken private lessons.

We have trained with many groups over the years and the team at Middletown are the safest and most professional we have encountered.

Respectfully,

Nancy Jo & Shawn Carrico

--

Regards,
Shawn

Joe Petty

From: Dusty Drummond <freebird807d@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 8:24 PM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: middletownfirearms@gmail.com
Subject: Middletown Firearms Training

Good evening, hopefully you read this and please approve the permit for Travis and Middletown Firearms to provide a place for firearms training. Some train due to lack of knowledge which they provide. Some train to improve or acquire new skills. If there is no place here locally to provide that it increases the probability of having unsafe conditions or people handling firearms negligently. With proper training that they provide it will help reduce those instances and also teach people respect for something that holds so much power. Travis and Middletown Firearms have worked very hard to achieve this dreams and constant helping the local communities. They are great people and dear friends, they want nothing but the best for their community and with the ability and to provide these services they will continue to do so.

Thank you,

Dusty Drummond

Sent from my iPhone

Joe Petty

From: Gary Finniff <finniff@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 11:10 PM
To: ✓ Joe Petty; Trav
Subject: Special Use Permit for Middletown Firearms

To: All

This is to relay my concerns and opinions on the installation and maintenance of an outdoor weapon range being operated by Middletown Firearms. This organization strives for excellence and has proven time and time again they are dedicated to our community and its safety. The employees are polite and cordial. They are consummate professionals and have a vast amount of knowledge to pass on to those willing to learn. I implore you all to consider this application seriously and pass it unanimously. I have been privileged to have been taught weapons safety and handling from my military experience and the instructors with Middletown Firearms are professionals on every level. I am excited to have a local business to patronage within a local county so my hard-earned income stays local and helps those who help the community. If the opportunity presents itself for the public comment I would appreciate the chance to speak to those who have concerns about my experiences with this business.

Respectfully,
Gary Finniff

Joe Petty

From: Sherry McBrayer <sherryjo1941@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 12:05 PM
To: Joe Petty
Subject: Middletown Firearms Gun Range

This email is to let you know that I am definitely in support of this gun range. I believe this to be beneficial not only to Warren Country, but also to surrounding counties.

I attended a class for women beginners there a year ago. Later I took private lessons from one of their instructors. I would like to continue with practice with my handgun and this range would be perfect for me, as well as others.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sherry Jo McBrayer
Huntly, Virginia

Joe Petty

From: Cathy Schucker <cls0905@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 11:09 PM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: middletownfirearms@gmail.com
Subject: Special Use Permit for Middletown Firearms

Mr. Petty,

It's come to my attention that Middletown Firearms is seeking a special use permit to continue training at their range on Water Plant Road. I've received training at their facility on several occasions and would like for you to approve their application so I can continue to have the opportunity to train in a safe, controlled environment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cathy Schucker
519 McCoys Ford Rd.

Joe Petty

From: Kyla Sine <ericandkyla524@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 7:44 PM
To: Trav; Joe Petty
Subject: Middletown Firearms Training

To whom it may concern,

Over the last year, I have completed various trainings courses and lessons through Middletown Firearms. This has been pivotal in allowing me to safely learn about firearms and to be a responsible firearm owner.

Additionally, my wife has completed training and learned a great deal. Having never been exposed to firearms, this had a significant impact for both of us.

Having a safe environment with qualified instructors of diverse backgrounds has been invaluable, not just to my family, but to our community as well.

Middletown Firearms and their staff genuinely care about making our community safe by imparting knowledge and fostering a culture of learning and development for all skill levels, from the inexperienced to the well seasoned individual!

Please consider allowing this group to continue to do the superior work of making our community a safer, wiser, well-trained place!

Thank you,
Eric Sine

Joe Petty

From: Katya Smith <katya.smith9@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 3:30 PM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: middletownfirearms@gmail.com
Subject: Special Use Permit for Middletown Firearms

Good afternoon Mr. Petty,

My name is Katya Smith and I am a resident of Maurertown, VA. I am a 41- yr old female who has always enjoyed firearms, but had never had the opportunity to properly train until last year. Discovering that Middletown Firearms offered group courses year-round, as well as private lessons near me, was just what I needed. I immediately enrolled in the All Female Live Fire Concealed Carry Course in order to get my permit, and my experience with the instructors was so great that soon after, I signed up for a yearly private lesson pass with Tommy Schurtz at Adroitness. Tommy's methodology & professionalism really helped me learn and understand the responsibility that comes with owning firearms. Not once did I come home disappointed or felt like I had wasted my money. In fact, I ended up signing up my entire family for the yearly pass, to include my husband & 12-year old daughter.

I am a firm believer that if we want a society of responsible gun owners, we all need to strive to make gun education accessible to as many people as possible. Having the Middletown Firearms range be so close to where we live, and having top-notch instructors speaks volumes as to the professionalism with which they do business. I implore you to please, consider granting them a special permit so people like me, can safely & securely enjoy time at the shooting range while at the same time promoting safe firearms practices.

Thank you for your time,

Katya Smith
831-295-3743

Joe Petty

From: brian.smith60@us.army.mil <hastaelgol@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 3:29 PM
To: Joe Petty; Trav
Subject: Special Use Permit

Dear Sir or Ma'am,

I am writing in regards to the special use permit for which Middletown Firearms has applied in order to continue to bring safe, professional, and much needed firearms training to the Shenandoah Valley.

As a career US Army Officer with four combat deployments to Afghanistan I can speak with profound confidence to the quality of training that Mr. Dodson and his staff provide. I have seen first hand the up-close and personal attention they pay to their students, the well thought out execution of their classes, and perhaps most importantly, the premium they put on safety.

It speaks volumes that I would trust them not only to train my wife but also my daughter. Their dynamic is welcoming, family focused, and is a boon to the community writ large.

Since moving to the Valley, it has always puzzled me that there are so many Firearms dealers yet so few places to safely shoot and receive training. I can think of few better reasons to grant special permit status to Middletown Firearms than the fact that they are answering a substantial community need and bringing an incredibly high quality service to market. Please consider this letter as one Valley family's ringing endorsement towards the granting of their request.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss this matter at any greater length.

Regards,

Brian L Smith
Chief Warrant Officer 3
United States Army
831-297-2050

Joe Petty

From: Corey Szwydek <corey.michael0923@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 8:03 PM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: Trav
Subject: Middletown Firearms range

To whom it may concern, I have been training with this group for quite some time. They have put safety first day one. I believe it is an amazing thing to me to be able to train and practice our skills in a controlled environment and I feel that Middletown firearms has provided that for us. The instructors are top notch and I feel that there is nobody better around. I hope that we get to continue to train at the range for years to come. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Corey M. Szwydek

Joe Petty

From: Suzi Wilt <wilt9458@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 12:47 PM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: middletownfirearms@gmail.com
Subject: Middletown Firearms Training Range

Dear Mr. Petty and esteemed members of the planning commission,

I am writing in hopes to encourage you to grant permission for Middletown Firearms and Travis Dodson to continue operating the training facility located within Warren County, VA. We need to have locations like this nearby to ensure top quality and safe training is available to the residents of the area and anyone wanting and needing to get proper training.

While we maintain it is our right to own and carry firearms per the 2nd Amendment, we are not ignorant to the fact that training is beneficial and necessary. Middletown Firearms has created a safe and secure environment that is private, has controlled access, and provides excellent training and safety personnel. Losing this option would increase backyard training in unsafe locations by uncertified and unqualified people being the only option we have access to.

In closing, please allow us to have this option.

Thank you,

Suzi Wilt
(540)931-3616
wilt9458@gmail.com

Joe Petty

From: Mike Wilt <vonspasm@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 12:00 PM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: middletownfirearms@gmail.com
Subject: Firearms training and shooting range

Sir,

I am contacting you in support of Middletown Firearms' shooting range and training facility, located in wonderful Warren County. It is more than a place to shoot. It is a bona-fide training facility that is affordable to the regular public. In a time when so many are attempting to curtail access to firearms and facilities such as this, I hope Warren County leaders show the foresight to support Middletown Firearms and their state-of-the-art range. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
M. Wilt

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

Joe Petty

From: Trav <middletownfirearms@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 10:53 AM
To: Joe Petty
Cc: Ashley Dodson
Subject: 650 Water Plant Rd Support
Attachments: Millholland Letter to Warren County.pdf; Daniel Morgan Letter of support.docx; Special Use Permit Letter Middletown.doc; Dan Beasley letter of support.docx; Stephens City letter of support.pdf; Kenneth Logan Letter of Support.pdf

Hey Joe,

Just wanted you to have letters of support I have gathered. 2 are neighbors while 3 are local municipals.

Please let me know if you need anything else this week.

Feel free to give me a call any time,

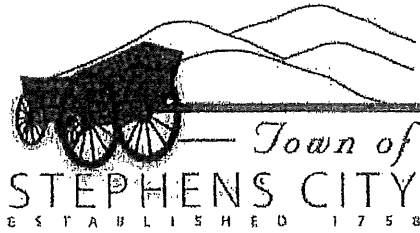
Travis Dodson - Owner

Middletown Firearms, LLC

www.middletownfirearms.com

Tel: 540-868-8517

Cell: 540-664-7076



POLICE DEPARTMENT

William A. Copp, Chief

October 30, 2021

County of Warren
Board of Supervisors
220 North Commerce Avenue
Front Royal, Virginia 22630

Dear Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors,

I write this letter of support on behalf of Middletown Firearms in their effort to obtain a Special Use Permit for a private outdoor firearms range and training facility at 650 Water Plant Road, Middletown, Virginia.

The facility is a private facility and is not open to the public. All users are supervised and vetted by experienced, trained Middletown Firearms personnel. Users of the range include area law enforcement agencies and officers, including the Stephens City Police Department. The range is certified by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), and it is one of only two such DCJS-certified ranges available to our department. We desperately need the use of the facility and range because of proximity to the Town and difficulty we experience when attempting to schedule use of the only other DCJS-certified range, the range operated by Frederick County Sheriff's Office.

Our department uses the range for firearms qualification and training on a regular basis. Middletown Firearms graciously allows us to use the facility at no cost to the Town and whenever we require use of the facility.

We fully and wholeheartedly support Middletown Firearms in their endeavor to obtain a Special Use Permit for the operation of their facility, and we urge the Board to expeditiously grant such special use authorization.

If I can be of further assistance in your consideration of this matter or if you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

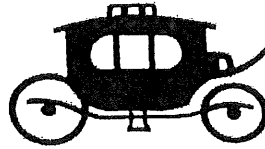
Respectfully yours,

William "Bill" A. Copp
Chief of Police

1033 Locust Street
Post Office Box 250
Stephens City, VA 22655

Office: 540.868.1012
Non-Emergency: 540.662.6162
FAX: 540.868.7653

stephenscity.org



Town of Middletown

7875 Church Street

Middletown, Virginia 22645

(540) 869-2226 ♦ Fax (540) 869-4306

Gateway to Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park

RECEIVED

NOV 03 2021

WARREN COUNTY
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Charles H. Harbaugh IV, Mayor

October 28, 2021

Attn: Warren County Planning Commission
Warren County
220 N. Commerce Avenue
Front Royal, VA 22630

Dear Chairman Robert Myers, Vice Chairman Hugh Henry & Warren County Planning Commission Members:

This letter is in support and reference to Travis Dodson and his special use permit request at 650 Water Plant Road Middletown, VA 22645. I have known Travis Dodson for twenty plus years and hold him in the highest regard. He proudly served in the United States Marine Corps and saw combat in tours overseas for our country. When he returned home after being honorably discharged, he started a very successful business, Middletown Firearms. What Travis and his team at Middletown Firearms have done for the community during his 7 years in operation, should be commended. Contributions include large donations, sponsorships of nonprofits, raffles, giveaways, training and discounts and free classes and use of range for free for law enforcement.

As a staunch supporter of local law enforcement, I can attest those areas for our LEO's to train and shoot are in short supply, that limits their capabilities to provide this crucial training to our officers in the area. This property will be able to provide that key service to our community, and it is already DCJS certified. The Strasburg Police Department, Stephens City Police Department and Winchester Response Team currently are using the facility at no cost to our communities.

It is key for the board to understand that this is not a public range. All attendees are enrolled as students in classes or law enforcement personnel. Firearms Safety classes offered include the following: concealed carry, pistol movement, defensive pistol and shotgun courses, NRA instructor training and the Youth Firearm Safety course. At least one experienced range safety officer is on-hand to supervise attendees. The applicant wishes to work with the neighbors and National Park Service to operate classes at convenient times and mitigate any noise concerns or potential complaints.

I would like to offer my highest personal and professional recommendation for Mr. Travis Dodson. I have worked with him on a personal and professional basis and he is just a gem and this special use permit would be a wonderful addition for Warren County and area law enforcement. Please do not hesitate to call me at 540-877-4594 or email me at charbaug@su.edu to provide more details.

Best,


Mayor Charles Harbaugh IV

FREDERICK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



Sheriff Lenny Millholland

Major Steve A. Hawkins

1080 COVERSTONE DRIVE
WINCHESTER, VIRGINIA 22602

540-662-6168
FAX 540-504-6400

Warren County Planning Commission
220 N. Commerce Avenue
Front Royal, VA 22630

November 1, 2021

TO: Chairman Robert Myers,
Vice Chairman Hugh Henry
Warren County Planning Commission Members

I send this letter in support of a special use permit request sent by Mr. Travis Dodson for property located at 650 Water Plant Road Middletown, VA 22645. (Warren County)

I have both a professional and personal relationship with Mr. Dodson.

Mr. Dodson, through his business, Middletown Firearms has been an important part of Frederick County and Middletown for many years. Mr. Dodson has made his range available to Law Enforcement for training and firearms education.

As the Sheriff of Frederick County, the use of a range is an important training aspect for our personnel and other agencies. Many ranges are limited to their capabilities and what they can provide, in a safe atmosphere. I have been on this property and know that it will be able to provide a service to our community. The range is also Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) certified. Numerous local police agencies are using the facility at no cost to their communities.

Attendees are enrolled as students in classes, as are law enforcement personnel. Courses such as Firearms Safety classes, weapon familiarization, pistol, shotgun, concealed carry classes are just some courses offered. There is also NRA instructor training and the Youth Firearm Safety courses offered by Middletown Guns.

I fully support and recommend Mr. Travis Dodson for this special use permit and feel it would benefit so many to include Warren County.

Thank you for your consideration in this request.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "Lenny Millholland", with a stylized, looping initial "L" and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Sheriff Lenny Millholland

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the shooting range on Water Plant Road in Warren County, Virginia. I am a resident of Warren County, and I pay taxes to Warren County. I also vote in Warren County Elections. I am a veteran that has served multiple combat deployments in Iraq.

I live less than one mile from Travis Dodson's property on Water Plant Road, and in no way do I think this range would put anyone in danger or damage my community. I believe this range would actually make my community safer. Having this range open would give shooters, hunters, and outdoorsman a safe place to train and shoot. I have been to the range, and I have seen the back stops. They meet and exceed DCJS standards. The projectiles go in a safe direction, a natural hill with shredded rubber tires to slow the bullets down. I have personally used this range, and felt safe with the engineering measures that where in place.

If approved, this range will bring value to our community. I will be patronizing this range multiple times a year and know many others that will also be doing so.

Very Respectfully,

Daniel Morgan
716 Gafia Lodge Rd.
Middletown, VA 22645

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this on behalf of Travis Dodson and Middletown Firearms. I am a retired police officer with a total of thirty-two years of law enforcement experience. Twenty two years, retiring as a Detective with the Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, D.C.. and ten years as a Criminal History Analyst with the United States Attorney's Office, Washington, D.C..

I live in Lake Frederick, Virginia and I am a member of the Winchester Izaak Walton League where I serve on the range committee. I am a NRA certified Range Safety Officer and in that capacity, I assist in range qualifying our Izaak Walton membership for the privilege of shooting on our ranges. In the past two or three years, we have noticed a huge increase in the number of new or first-time firearm owners, including many women. We offer some firearm training, but since we are a non-profit organization run by volunteers, we cannot offer training on a regular, continuing basis. During our orientation and range qualifying sessions, we see many new gun owners who are in need of basic firearm training and safety classes. That's an important function being filled by Middletown Firearms and their outstanding range facility and instructors. I've seen them in operation and they do a top notch, professional job of training folks how to safely handle firearms. They have an excellent, well thought out facility and a large classroom. There is a tremendous need for this range and the training they can provide to the public. They are also now DCJS certified and can provide annual LEOSA training to retired law enforcement officers such as myself.

I am requesting that the Warren County Planning Commission strongly consider granting Travis Dodson and Middletown Firearms the necessary permits required to operate the range. Thank you.

Daniel Beasley
540-869-5286

Kenneth Logan
1974 Long Meadow Rd
Middletown, VA 22645

Subject: Special Use Permit Request at 650 Water Plant Rd, Middletown VA 22645.

To Whom this may concern,

This letter is in support of Travis Dodson and the special permit request for Middletown Firearms (MTF) special permit at 650 Waterplant Rd in Middletown, VA. I have known Travis Dodson and the staff of MTF since their opening in 2014 and have admired their commitment and value added to the Middletown community. I strongly believe that MTF should be commended for their support of the local community and their participation in community events, including but not limited to holiday parades, sponsorships of non-profit organizations, raffles, donations, giveaways, and their participation in the famous Route 11 Yard-Crawl. They are actively engaged in firearm education and training, and I am particularly encouraged by their engagement and training of new firearm owners. MTF's storefront along Rt 11 in Middletown, VA has drawn excellent business into Middletown: I have noted in my countless in-store visits that the MTF employees are always respectful and kind. While a friendly in-store representative can give basic firearm safety information, I believe there is a need for deeper understanding of firearms safety, and I am thrilled that MTF's private classes have helped hundreds, if not thousands of new firearms owners learn to safely operate their firearms. They also open their range for law enforcement training for FREE.

I strongly support our local law enforcement, and in my opinion (and in contrast to the current movement to "defund the police"), law enforcement officers should train frequently to increase their effectiveness in their important and valuable role to the community. Multiple police departments and response teams currently use MTF shooting facility at no cost to the taxpayer, adding immeasurable value, and increasing their capacity to serve citizens of our county and surrounding areas.

I have personally visited their shooting range, which is approximately 1 mile from my home in Middletown, VA. As a firearms enthusiast, and recreational shooter, I was very impressed with the level of detail MTF had exhausted to ensure their facility was safe. The range is already certified by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), and in my observation the designated firing lanes were surrounded by adequate backstops and were oriented in safe directions to ensure no ricochet or over-penetration could harm neighboring land, or other personnel on the range. In addition to projectile containment, the range is setup to utilize natural landscaping to protect against excessive noise pollution: **as one of the closer neighbors to the MTF shooting range, I have never been disturbed by activities on their property.**

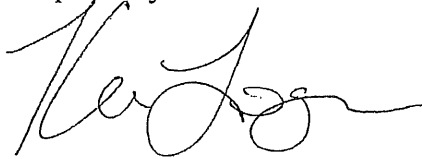
It is important to note that this range is not open for public use: the range will be used for firearms safety classes (and law enforcement training as previously noted). This is important, as

the class will be led by at least one experienced range safety officer to supervise the attendees and ensure safe practices are followed. In addition, MTF schedules classes at convenient times to prevent any potential complaints of other neighbors.

I strongly believe that MTF has added value to the Middletown community, and I support their use of the firearms shooting range for training classes along Waterplant Road. I can be contacted at (540) 323-3202 or logankenneth1@gmail.com for more details, or to answer any questions you may have.

Please let me reiterate that as one of the closer neighbors to the MTF shooting range, I am in support of their special permit application.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Logan', with a stylized, cursive script.

Kenneth Logan

Emily Ciarrocchi

From: Tony Carter
Sent: Thursday, December 2, 2021 11:27 AM
To: Buz Grover
Cc: Emily Ciarrocchi
Subject: RE: Warren County Government Website contact inquiry [Buz Grover]

Mr. Grover,

Thank you for your email. My understanding is that the Board of Supervisors public hearing will be in January. My term ends on 12.31.2021, so I will not have a vote on this. My successor will take office on January 1, his name is Jerome Butler. I do not have an email address for him. You can forward your email to the deputy clerk and she could see that he gets it. Her name is Emily and I have copied her on this.

Tony

-----Original Message-----

From: Warren County <No_Reply@warrencountyva.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 30, 2021 2:45 PM
To: Tony Carter <Tcarter@warrencountyva.net>
Subject: Warren County Government Website contact inquiry [Buz Grover]

A contact inquiry has been submitted via the employee contact form found at <https://www.warrencountyva.net/> (Warren County Government Website) on 2021-11-30. Please view details below.

Sender Name: Buz Grover
Sender Email: buz@buzwardo.com
Day Phone: 7039935784
Evening Phone: --N/A--
Contact Preference: Either

Comments:

Dear Supervisor Carter:

I'm writing about the proposed Middletown Firearms ranges you are considering. Those ranges have already built, are being used for classes and by favored customers, and indeed has been fully operational for about two years. Not only has there been substantial site disturbance with three dirt backstops created and in use, but also a former garage bay has been converted into a classroom with most that work completed store staff or relatives of the owners, who are also working to renovate the residence on the property. It does not appear that any of the work has been done by anyone with formal licensure, nor were any permits obtained for any of this already completed work.

The ranges that are already being used for classes or individuals weekly or more are something you should be particularly concerned with. The 100 yard rifle range is backed by a berm behind which you can see traffic passing on Water Plant road. Should someone shoot over the berm, particularly on its left side when traffic is passing it could create a tragic result. This issue has been noted to the owner of Middletown Firearms, though these sorts of concerns are not well received and indeed is one of the reasons I'm no longer teaching there. It should also be noted that this berm and range has been constructed on a flood plain with no provision to keep lead contamination from leeching into the groundwater.

Though the situation is not as bad on the pistol ranges, Interstate 81 is directly behind them and a shot lofted over the berm could result in a vehicle being struck. Go to any indoor range and you will note damage to the ceiling and walls

where poorly aimed shots struck them. Were high shots to occur at any of these ranges damage to passing vehicles and their occupants could occur. Moreover much of the current use is either unsupervised or conducted by instructors that do not have range safety officer credentials.

During my time instructing there I noted numerous management issues and poor business practices. Though those issues may not be germane to your current deliberations, they were part of a larger pattern where ad hoc, often times poorly informed decisions were made with an eye on the short term profitability instead of best practices, basic risk and other management standards. I'm happy to discuss these concerns in detail and provide video documentation if you'd like.

With all that said the citizens of Warren county would be well served by a facility like this. Moreover, with the proper inducements the owners of Middletown Firearms can likely be motivated to provide this service and run their classroom and ranges in a safe manner. Remediating current issues and making it clear that best practices, rules, and regulations need to be closely followed moving forward would go a long way toward meeting that goal.

As a constituent living for 20 years on High Knob I thank you for taking the time to consider these points. Again, at the end of the day I hope this effort moves forward, albeit in a safe and professional manner. Please feel free to reach out to my should you have any questions. [REDACTED]

Sincerely, [REDACTED]

Buz Grover

129.174.163.161 - Generated by Work Force (c) on Tuesday, 30 November 2021 14:45

Joe Petty

From: Bradley Long <bdad04@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 7, 2021 6:55 AM
To: Joe Petty; middletownfirearms@gmail.com
Subject: Special Use Permit

To whom it may concern:

I have had the pleasure of being a customer at Middletown Firearms for several years. In that span I have attended a couple of classes at their range. I cannot speak highly enough of their attention to detail, safety and knowledge of firearms and proper use of them.

Many accidents with firearms occur because of inexperience and lack of training. This area lacks proper training ranges and classrooms. For the amount of firearms owned per capita here that is a dangerous correlation. We NEED the knowledgeable and capable instructors of Middletown Firearms.

I truly believe that giving them the permit they need will help to save lives and prevent reckless misuse of firearms. Knowledge is power and Travis and his team have that knowledge.

Thanks,
Bradley Long
(540)331-0588
bdad04@hotmail.com

Sent from my T-Mobile 5G Device
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

November 8, 2021

Byron Brill & Kathleen Kanter

964 Bowmans Mill Rd

Middletown, VA 22645

Dear Mr. Petty

We would like to express concerns over the proposed special use permit for a shooting range to be located on Water Plant Rd. We are a landowners, our home is approximately one mile southwest of the proposed site.

1. While it is listed as 'private'. This could be a private club with 1000 members. Is this not a possibility?
2. Concern that the hours listed are long and every day. This could present a noise issue, every day all day.
3. I would assume the location of this property, on a busy road, and with the proximity to Interstate 81 and 66, would pose a safety issue for VDOT.
4. How long is a special use permit granted for? If a special use permit is issued, what is the recourse if this project becomes a public nuisance?

We feel like we must oppose this project pending resolution of these questions.

We are unable to attend due to a recent surgery. We would respectfully ask this letter be read and put into the minutes of the planning commission meeting.

Thank you

Byron Brill and Kathleen Kanter

Joe Petty

From: Ashley Sonntag <ashleysonntag@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 8, 2021 7:48 PM
To: Joe Petty
Subject: Nov. 10th, 2021, Public Hearing Information
Attachments: General Documentation.zip

Hello,

My name is Ashley Sonntag, and I am the Operations Manager and Curator for the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, a preservation Partner at the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park in Middletown, Virginia. I am writing to you today to share some information about recent activity regarding a property which has applied for a Conditional Use Permit (applicant Travis Dodson of Middletown Firearms) and will be a subject of discussion at the Planning Commission Hearing on November 10th. Late last week it came to my attention that a class had been scheduled for Saturday November 6th (with non-refundable payments collected) for a course located at the property in question. While driving on Water Plant Road (and in the adjoining neighborhoods) in the late afternoon and early evening on November 6th, activity from the applicant's property was very evident. Attached you will find two videos documenting this activity (a few seconds each though the activity itself lasted intermittently for hours), the times of the documentation, a photo of the public hearing announcement at the property entrance showing that this activity was taking place while aware of the pending hearing, as well as screen grabs from the business's social media promoting this course (and others throughout 2020 and 2021). In this file is also a number of screen grabs of the registration forms and course schedule for the remainder of 2021, for which registrations have most likely been collected in advance. The information in these screen grabs is all accessible by the public through the applicant's own internet activity. Thank you for your patience and diligence with this matter, and I hope this documentation assists in creating a more complete record in advance of the November 10th Planning Commission Meeting. I hope you have a pleasant evening,



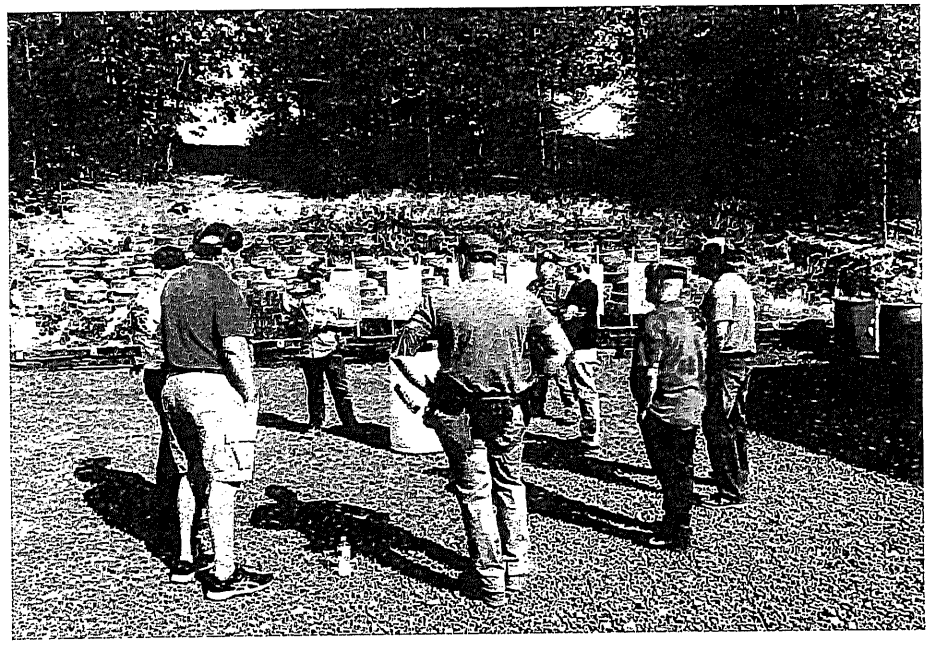
Saturday Activity.zip

SONNTAG ATTACHMENTS (6 PAGES)

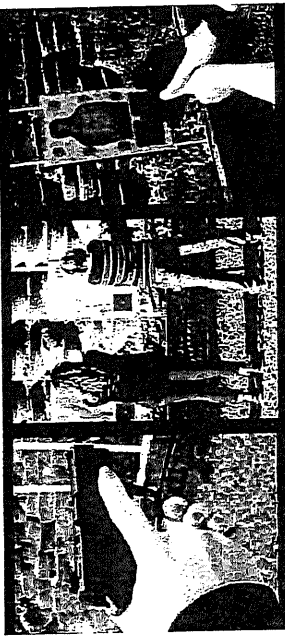
PISTOL MOVEMENT

MAY 9, 2021
1PM - 5PM
FEE: \$100

www.middletownfirearms.com



ALL FEMALE CONCEALED CARRY COURSE



SATURDAY, JUNE 26, 2021
\$100 PER STUDENT
9AM - 4PM

FACILITY ACCOMODATES RAIN OR SHINE

Upcoming courses

MIDDLETOWN FIREARMS

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[How We Started](#)
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Upcoming courses 2021...

	August 21, 2021	Concealed Carry Live Fire	Middletown, VA	Sign Up
	August 28, 2021	ALL FEMALE Concealed Carry - Live Fire	Middletown, VA	Sign Up
	September 4, 2021	Defensive Shotgun	Middletown, VA	Sign Up
	September 12, 2021	Red Dot Pistol	Middletown, VA	Sign Up
	September 18, 2021	Concealed Carry Live Fire	Middletown, VA	Sign Up
	September 25, 2021	Defensive Rifle 1	Middletown, VA	Sign Up

MIDDLETOWN FIREARMS

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November 6, 2021

Concealed Carry
Live Fire

Middletown, VA

Sign Up



December 4, 2021

Concealed Carry
Non-Live Fire

Middletown, VA

Sign Up



December 12, 2021

Red Dot Pistol

Middletown, VA

Sign Up



December 18, 2021

Concealed Carry
Live Fire

Middletown, VA

Sign Up

Online



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1100-estabFirearmsVA

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Middletown Firearms LLC
August 16

Women are on the rise for new firearm ownership. With that ownership comes the responsibility of knowing how to safely and effectively operate your firearm.

Join us for our next Concealed Carry Permit Course as we work together and teach you how to become that confident protector for your loved ones and yourself.

We'll dive into a deep discussion during the morning for our classroom portion, answering your questions on the how's, the what's, and the why's. After lunch, it's range time!

Your learn, hands-on, what it takes to land effective hits on target.

We'll finish off the day back in the classroom going over the permit application process and getting your documentation in order.

Join the PACK! <https://www.middletownfirearms.com/upcoming-courses>

Or <https://www.aacritness1.xyz/>

FEE: \$125

What to Bring

- Open Mind and Positive Attitude

- Working Handgun

- Two (2) Magazines

- *Holsters are not mandatory for this course as we will be conducting live fire from ready positions.

- 100 rounds of ammunition minimum (welcome to bring more). Every shot will be accounted for.

- Eye and Ear Protection (electronic provided)

- Notepad and Pen

- Drinks/ Snacks/ Lunch

Join the PACK! <https://www.middletownfirearms.com/upcoming-courses>

Or <https://www.aacritness1.xyz/>

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5,028 likes
284 comments

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Lipsey's Guns

Shenandoah Valley Bears Assoc...

Town of Middletown VA

Northern Neck Colles & Antiques...

Places - Middletown, Virginia - Shopping & Retail

Sporting Goods Store

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August 26, 2021
9AM - 1PM

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October 2, 2021

Concealed Carry
Non-Live Fire

Middletown, VA

Sign Up



October 2, 2021

Pistol Movement

Middletown, VA

Sign Up



October 10, 2021

Defensive Handgun 1

Middletown, VA

Sign Up



October 16, 2021

Kalash Concepts

Middletown, VA

Sign Up



October 23, 2021

Defensive Handgun 2

Middletown, VA

Sign Up



November 6, 2021

Concealed Carry
Live Fire

Middletown, VA

Sign Up



December 4, 2021

Concealed Carry
Non-Live Fire

Middletown, VA

Sign Up



December 12, 2021

Red Dot Pistol

Middletown, VA

Sign Up

Online

Middletown Firearms Course Signup 2021

Please fill out the blanks below.

What date would you like to attend?

NOVEMBER 6TH- CONCEALED CARRY - LIVE FIRE

Your First & Last Name

Phone number.

Your number will only be used to contact you regarding your class. It will never be shared. We will call you on the Monday or Tuesday prior to the course to remind you. We will answer any questions or concerns. Please give us a call if you have any questions.



Middletown Firearms LLC

📍 Middletown, Pennsylvania

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Most Relevant

 Lance Cardaro Hi...where is the live fire training held?

30m

👁️ View 1 more reply

 Middletown Firearms LLC Lance, at our private range here in Middletown.

37m

📅 April 5

Weather is turning warmer and our next concealed carry course is right around the corner! Sign up link below.

<https://form.pdfform.com/203-336913758159>



👍 39

💬 6 Comments

➦ 26 Shares

📞 (540) 666-6517

📧 Contact Middletown Firearms LLC on Messenger

🌐 www.middtownfirearms.com

🔫 Gun Store • Sporting Goods Store

📏 Price Range \$\$

🕒 Opened Tuesday

📅 Closed 12/1

🔍 Page Transparency

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👤 People

★★★★★

5,028 likes

204 videos

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 Upsey's Guns

 Shenandoah Valley Bass Assoc...

 Town of Middletown VA

[illegible]



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MiddletownFirearmsVA

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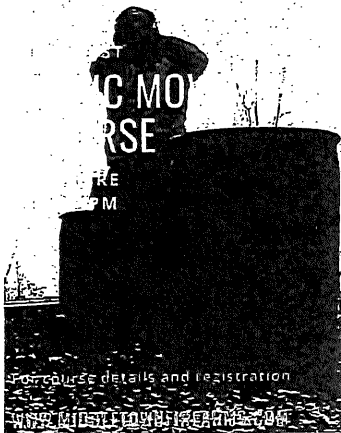
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SOLD OUT QUICK!!
207

View 9 more comments

Middletown Firearms LLC
January 25

Hope to see you there! Message us for more information!



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204 posts

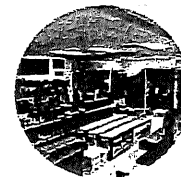
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Middletown Firearms LLC
December 5, 2020

What an amazing group of people! This was a great way to end the last co-ed class of 2020! We enjoyed having everyone and hope you all pass this knowledge on to your friends and family. See you all again hopefully next year!



69 6 Comments 2 Shares

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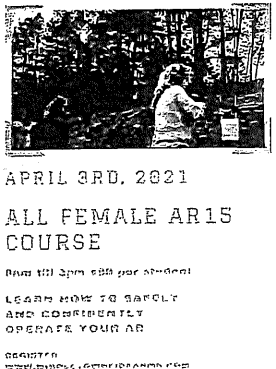
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Middletown Firearms LLC
March 15

Hello Ladies! You all asked for it and here we are delivering. We hope to see you all there!



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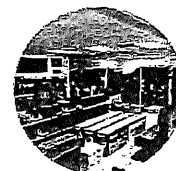
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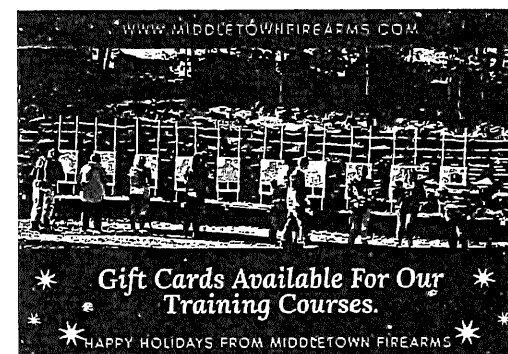
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Middletown Firearms LLC
December 23, 2020

We have many types of classes setup for next year on our courses page. This is a great gift for you, your friends and/or family!



14 1 Comment 4 Shares

Like Comment Share

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APRIL 3RD, 2021

ALL FEMALE AR15 COURSE

9am till 3pm \$99 per student

LEARN HOW TO SAFELY
AND CONFIDENTLY
OPERATE YOUR AR

REGISTER @
WWW.MIDDLETOWNFIREARM.COM



Joe Petty

From: Lee Meyer <lmeyer.sundown@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 8:25 AM
To: Joe Petty
Subject: Comments Regarding Proposed Special Use Permit

Dear Mr. Petty,

I am a resident of Warren County and represent the County on the Federal Advisory Commission for Cedar Creek-Belle Grove National Historical Park. It has come to my attention that Travis Dodson has applied to the Planning Commission for a Special Use Permit to operate a commercial shooting range, 7 days a week, at 650 Water Plant Road.

Due to the negative impact this range will have on Park operations, I am opposed to granting Mr. Dodson this permit. Warren County is a special place with portions of two National Parks in our borders. The NPS staff, partners, such as Belle Grove Plantation, and volunteers of Cedar Creek-Belle Grove have worked hard to enhance the visitor experience since the park began operations.

They have created a driving tour, which begins along Water Plant Road and covers key sites in the Warren County section of the Park. There are also walking trails, which include a stop at the 8th Vermont Monument, one of the few monuments in this Park. The possibility of constant gun fire every day of the week has the impact of keeping visitors away from these areas, due to concerns for their safety. I personally have promoted visits to these areas which are some of the best in the Park, and I am concerned about how this visitation will be affected and reduced.

I hope you will consider my comments and have provided my cell phone number below if you have any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely, Elizabeth (Lee) Meyer
Cell phone: 540-514-6471

Joe Petty

From: Kimberly Andrick <andricksgifts@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 10, 2021 12:35 PM
To: Joe Petty
Subject: Shooting range

Hello Mr. Petty

I am Larry Andrick living at 2605 Long Meadow rd. and I am against the shooting range that they are trying to open about a 1/2 mile from my residence. I was planning on coming to the meeting tonight but am out of town until tomorrow. I am not anti gun, just anti noise, make it an indoor shooting range and then it wouldn't be a problem. If they recently bought this residence with the intentions of putting a range there, you would think that they would have got the permits before buying the property. If I'm right I think they just recently bought this property at auction. Please don't make our quiet neighborhood into a loud shooting range.

Thank You

Larry Andrick



**National Trust for
Historic Preservation**

Save the past. Enrich the future.



SENT VIA EMAIL TO JPETTY@WARRENCOUNTYVA.NET &
PLANNING@WARRENCOUNTYVA.NET

November 10, 2021

Joe Petty, Planning Director
County of Warren
Planning and Zoning Department
220 North Commerce Avenue, Suite 400
Front Royal, Virginia 22630

Re: Objection to Conditional Use Permit (2021-10-02), 650 Water Plant Road,
Middletown, VA 22645 (Warren County Tax Map #s 1-3-AA, 3A, & 3)

Dear Mr. Petty:

The National Trust for Historic Preservation and Belle Grove, Inc. oppose approval of conditional use permit application number 2021-10-02 for 650 Water Plant Road (the "Property"). The permit seeks to operate the Property as a Commercial Outdoor Recreation Operation which includes an outdoor gun training facility. In our view, it is inappropriate to locate such a facility adjacent to the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park (the "National Park") due to the noise generated by an outdoor gun training facility and the danger created to the public using the park's various historic sites, trails, and driving tours. Within the National Park, the National Trust owns the National Historic Landmark District Contributing Property known as Belle Grove along with 280 acres of property all of which is operated by Belle Grove, Inc. as a historic site open to the public. The National Trust and Belle Grove, Inc. are both key legislative partners of the National Park Service and are tasked with protecting, preserving, and interpreting park resources by virtue of our ownership of significant acreage within the National Park. With the other National Park partners, we have made a commitment to a shared preservation ethic and a willingness to provide visitor services and public access.

One of the key components of the National Park's significance is that it offers panoramic views of the mountains, natural areas, waterways, and pastoral surroundings that convey an aesthetic and historic sense of life in the Shenandoah Valley. The National Park also provides visitors with an inspiring setting of great natural beauty, while also offering outstanding opportunities to appreciate that beauty in a tranquil environment in an ever-expanding suburban area. The National Trust and Belle Grove, Inc. oppose the operation of the Property as an outdoor gun training facility because the proposed use will degrade the context and setting of the National Park. The proposed facility will have a detrimental effect on visitation to our property and to the entire National Park by eroding the public's opportunity to experience its pastoral setting as a component of learning about the history of the development of the Shenandoah Valley. Reductions in the number of visitors to the National Park will have direct negative impact on Belle Grove's business operations and will have negative economic impacts through loss of business to local establishments providing services to park visitors.

It is our understanding that the applicant operated this facility this past summer and that staff and visitors at Belle Grove could easily hear firing of gunshots from this facility. Furthermore, we understand that visitors to the National Park expressed concern for their personal safety using certain trails because of the nature and intensity of the gunfire at the Property.

In addition to the impacts described above, the National Trust and Belle Grove, Inc. believe that operation of the Property as an outdoor gun training facility in close proximity to the National Park is also inconsistent with Warren County's key planning documents, particularly the 2013 Comprehensive Plan and the 2018 Strategic Vision. On its face the operation of an outdoor gun training facility directly contradicts the County's vision statement which seeks to "[p]reserve the quality of [the County's] clean water, air, natural resources and scenic landscape." See 2018 Strategic Vision at Page 4. The operation of an outdoor gun training facility is also inconsistent with three of the Comprehensive Plan's core strategies:

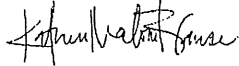
First, the County places a high priority on tourism and emphasizes the use of zoning tools to protect historic sites, viewsheds, and buffers to the Shenandoah River, Shenandoah National Park, battlefields, and the Appalachian Trail. See 2018 Strategic Vision at Page 13. The County also places a high priority on economic development projects that improve the quality of life and maximize the County's natural resources and built assets such as the National Park. See 2018 Strategic Vision at Page 12. Third, under the 2018 Strategic Vision at page 6 the County seeks to direct development in places where infrastructure supports growth and away from sensitive environments with particular attention to using design guidelines and zoning to ensure that development is compatible with the County's historic character and that scenic viewsheds are preserved particularly from the National Park. In our view, operation of an outdoor gun training facility through its noise impacts and any real or perceived threats to safety is incompatible with the historic character of the National Park and will degrade the quality of the visitor experience at historic sites and trails in the National Park, generating negative economic impacts on those sites and on to local business due to reduced park visitation.

The operation of the Property as an outdoor gun training facility also conflicts with many of the goals and needs stated in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, specifically those contained in Chapter 4, Land Use and Development. For example, on page 5 of Chapter 4 of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, the County expressly identifies the need to preserve Warren County's rural character which includes open space and agricultural and forested lands along with the need to improve cultural and recreational amenities such as parks and historic sites. Installation of an outdoor gun training facility in close proximity to the National Park is inconsistent with the preservation and improvement of one of the County's primary existing recreational assets. It is also an expressed goal of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan to "[u]tilize public lands as a resource in maintaining the County's rural character," which is articulated through the objective of "[w]ork[ing] with the National Park Service to ensure an equal partnership in the use and management of common resources and common concerns." To implement this goal and objective the County further states in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan that the National Park (along with Shenandoah National Park and George Washington National Forest) should "assist Warren County in providing resource management providing the County with open space and aid in maintaining the community's rural character." The 2013 Comprehensive Plan goes on to state that "[t]hese areas also serve as an economic development tool of the tourist industry. Each year, thousands of people visit ... [the National

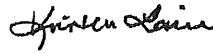
Park] and many [visitors] contribute to the local economy during their visit. Continued cooperation between the County and the federal agencies overseeing these lands is crucial in meeting many of this plan's goals." The National Park Service is opposed to the proposed use of the Property for many of the same reasons the National Trust and Belle Grove, Inc. express in this letter, and we hope that the County will take into consideration the National Park Service's view in addition to our views as long-term partners of the National Park.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the permit.

Sincerely,



Katherine Malone-France
Chief Preservation Officer
National Trust for Historic Preservation



Kristen Laise
Executive Director
Belle Grove, Inc.

cc: Karen Beck-Herzog, Site Manager, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park



**SHENANDOAH
★ ★ VALLEY ★ ★
BATTLEFIELDS
NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Shenandoah Valley
Battlefields Foundation

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Keven M. Walker
Chief Executive Officer

*The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields
Foundation is the managing entity of the
federally designated Shenandoah Valley
Battlefields National Historic District.*

SENT VIA EMAIL TO JPETTY@WARRENCOUNTYVA.NET &
PLANNING@WARRENCOUNTYVA.NET

November 10, 2021

Joe Petty, Planning Director
County of Warren
Planning and Zoning Department
220 North Commerce Avenue, Suite 400
Front Royal, Virginia 22630

Re: Conditional Use Permit (2021-10-02), 650 Water Plant Road,
Middletown, VA 22645 (Warren County Tax Map #s 1-3-AA, 3A, & 3)

Dear Mr. Petty:

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, acting as the congressionally designated managing entity of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District, has been asked to register an opinion concerning the above referenced conditional use permit.

The use of Warren County tax parcels 1-3-AA, #A, & 3 as an outdoor shooting range and firearms training facility has been of great concern to the preservation community and the legislated partners of the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. The solemnity of the Cedar Creek Battlefield; the sense of place that Cedar Creek's preserved landscape provides visitors; and the historic integrity of the historic sites within the Park boundary are of paramount importance and the battlefields foundation stands with its partners to work with localities to that end.

The Cedar Creek Battlefield is one of the most endangered battlefield landscapes in the country and continued development within the park boundary further erodes this nationally significant historic site. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation strongly encourages the Warren County Planning Commission to take into consideration the historic significance of the Cedar Creek Battlefield and to refer to existing planning documents related to Warren County's commitment to the preservation of the Cedar Creek Battlefield. The Battlefields Foundation takes no position regarding conditional use permit 2021-10-02.

Sincerely,



Keven M. Walker
Chief Executive Officer

SHENANDOAH VALLEY BATTLEFIELDS FOUNDATION
P.O. Box 897 • 9386 Congress St. • New Market, VA 22844 • 540.740.4545
ShenandoahAtWar.org • facebook.com/ShenandoahBattlefields

Outdoor Recreation Facility 650 Water Plant Road

I support the development and use of an outdoor recreational facility at 650 Water Plant Road.

First Name	Last Name	Address	Signature
GARY	WHITE	610 GAFIA Lodge Rd. MIDDLETOWN, VA.	Gary R White
Daniel	Morgan	716 Gafia Lodge Rd Middletown, VA	Daniel Morgan
Zoe	Morgan	716 Gafia Lodge Rd Middletown, VA	Zoe Morgan
Dan Funk	Funk	1573 Beaumont Mill Rd Middletown VA	Dan Funk
Joan	Funk	2795 Long Meadow Rd. Middletown VA	Joan Funk
Dorsey	Funk	2991 Long Meadow Rd Middletown VA	Dorsey Funk
Bonnie	Mitchell	2794 Long Meadow Rd Middletown	Bonnie Mitchell
Joe	Mitchell	2794 Long Meadow Rd Middletown	Joe Mitchell
Allyson	Reid	2794 Long Meadow Rd Middletown	Allyson Reid
Amy	Adams	2348 Long Meadow Rd Middletown	Amy Adams
Brian	Adams	2348 Long Meadow Rd Middletown	Brian Adams
Adam	Kell	390 GAFIA LODGE RD Middletown	Adam Kell
Ken	Logan	1974 Long Meadow Rd Middletown	Ken Logan
Robert Cullers	Cullers	1609 Commonwealth Dr Front Royal	Robert Cullers
Robert E. Graver	Graver	2052 Reliance Rd Middletown VA	Robert E. Graver
Joseph	Dickman	576 Rocky Ln Front Royal VA	Joseph Dickman
Roger	Robinson	2974 Reliance Rd. Middletown VA	Roger Robinson
Gary	Simms	232 Bluebird Dr Stephens	Gary Simms
Dana	Taylor	232 Bluebird Dr Stephens	Dana Taylor
Greg	Simms	17719 Tawney Town Rd Bunker Hill	Greg Simms
Mike	Simms	117 Pine Marl Rd Berryville	Mike Simms
Cathy	Schucker	519 McGuff Ford Rd Front Royal, VA	Cathy Schucker
James	BAKER	2408 Greenbriar Rd Middletown	James Baker
Sam	Stocker	141 Whigginwill Rd. Front Royal	Sam Stocker
Dan Ver	Drain	3634 Parhandle Rd. Front Royal	Dan Ver
Nick	Fortunato	2598 Long Meadow Rd Middletown VA 2264	Nick Fortunato
Dwayne	Codon	2696 Long Meadow Rd Middle VA 2265	Dwayne Codon
Richard	Thomson	7 Woodlawn Ave Front Royal VA	Richard Thomson
Charles	Benson	608 Skyline View Dr. Front Royal	Charles Benson

22620

Outdoor Recreation Facility 650 Water Plant Road

I support the development and use of an outdoor recreational facility at 650 Water Plant Road.

[illegible]