

## ***Nimmo Meet & Greet with Councilwoman Barbara Henley***

On Monday evening, Nimmo hosted a Meet & Greet with City Councilwoman Barbara Henley in the social hall at Nimmo. R.J. Nutter, the attorney representing Royal Farms, and Greg Schmidt, civil engineer with Kimley-Horn and project manager, also attended.

Mrs. Henley opened the meeting with remarks about the Royal Farms project, describing in detail the many ways she, the city and Royal Farms worked to respect our church's history, our unique grounds, and the feelings and concerns of the church members. Mr. Nutter then spoke in detail about the many conversations and meetings he and Royal Farms had discussing details and asking questions with members of the congregation and church leaders, conceding to nearly all of our requests. Mrs. Henley acknowledged, "You folks were some tough negotiators!" Mr. Schmidt spoke to the attendees about the actual building itself and the many changes that were made at the request of the church members and the Historic Review Board. He also explained how all of the changes made were to ensure that stormwater, fuel tanks and other concerns were designed in a way that placed everything safely and as far away from the church property as possible.

They then opened the floor for a Q&A session for everyone. Mrs. Henley concluded with updates on the two nearby Princess Anne Road projects currently underway in our area nearing completion, along with two other projects that will begin shortly.

The following are brief highlights from the meeting:

- Mrs. Henley discussed the extensive efforts she took to research the Royal Farms project from every perspective - sound intrusion, any intrusions on the Nimmo property, our historical location, and other concerns. She asked the engineers to develop site plans for a funeral home and a business, both of which showed how the parking demands required by the city would have meant we would have lost significantly more trees along the barrier

and would have had larger flood protection implications on the site. Royal Farms works to our advantage in many capacities.

- We did not want to share an access way with Royal Farms which they had a legal right to. They not only conceded but are gifting their land on the other side of the old road to Nimmo. **Matthews Green** also gifted Nimmo land in the wooded area between the new and old roadways.
- We have filed to have the old road proffered to us by the city, and Mrs. Henley believes that will come before city council within the next two months without issue, not only expanding Nimmo's property, but connecting our two disjointed properties.
- Royal Farms is giving up rights to a portion of their property by asking the city to straighten the property line in favor of Nimmo.
- They have submitted their site plan with multiple revisions to move the fuel tanks to the corner farthest from our property (the northwest corner) and to install underground drainage systems to minimize the number of trees that will be removed and to be sure no water is directed toward our property, especially the cemetery.
- They left the largest buffer of trees surrounding the car wash for the preservation of the sanctity of the cemetery and church services.
- They are installing an initial tree barrier to protect the trees that will remain untouched.
- Toward the end of the project, they will install an eight-foot privacy fence across the back of their property made of a dark brown textured composite to blend with the woods and block as much of the building as possible.
- They altered the plans so that the building and columns will be faced with brick, and modern trusses were altered and reduced in number to preserve the farm look. Lighting was also selected to maintain the style.
- They have left an acre of trees to be protected and undisturbed.
- They completed a thorough cemetery study of gravesites to be sure no human remains were found on their property, and they did not encroach upon the cemetery. They are graciously supplying a copy of that study for our records.
- They anticipate breaking ground this summer, with construction expected to last approximately six months. The typical construction work week will not include Sundays.

• ***Princess Anne Road Phase 7*** will be 95% complete by late April at a cost of \$33.6 million, making it a year overdue. Originally scheduled for 15 years ago, Nimmo has benefitted from the delay.

• The widening of Sandbridge Road should break ground in June.

• The expansion of making West Neck a proper two-lane road with a bike path and shoulder will also begin shortly.

• A public meeting will be held in late April concerning the extension of Nimmo Parkway to Sandbridge as the environmental studies are being finalized with an estimated cost of \$43.7 million.

I believe the meeting was extremely informative and helped many of those in attendance to move past our feelings of negativity about Royal Farms. We cannot change the decisions which have been made, but we can choose to move forward in a Christian manner of goodwill, fostering a peaceful, cooperative, and friendly relationship with our new neighbors. We are extremely grateful for their time and efforts to accommodate our requests and candidly answer our questions. We appreciate all of those who came with thoughtful questions and open minds to allow our church to move forward! Romans 12:18 encourages us, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

Peace and blessings,

Roma Firestone  
Chair of Trustees