

My name is Nicole Hamilton. I live in Waterford and I'm President of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. I represent hundreds of citizens from across our County who care about and are concerned for our wildlife and habitat.

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy supports immediate approval of the Clem-Burton proposal minus grandfathering.

We need the Clem/Burton zoning in place now because developments like Shadowbook Farms are rapidly moving through our system and their approval destroys countless sensitive wildlife habitats that can never be replaced.

Shadowbrook Farms is a relatively small development but what it signifies is significant. It's a 114 acre parcel that the developer purchased under the previous zoning to create 11 lots. When the Supreme Court overturned our zoning on a technicality, this developer took advantage of our lack of direction to double the density, squeezing in as many houses as possible regardless of the environmental consequences.

Habitat that falls within this development happens to be one of Loudoun's few known breeding areas for the State Threatened Wood Turtle. While this developer recently started to consider revisions to his plan to address some of the environmental concerns, there are no guarantees in his proposal that this habitat will be protected by future landowners.

Because the wildlife in and around the Shadowbrook development is of State-wide concern, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy petitions the Board to require the developer to conduct a complete ecological analysis of the Piney Run watershed prior to approval of any proposed development in and/or impacting the watershed. We request that land delineated by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) as wood turtle habitat be protected and deemed un-developable so that this species can be protected. We further request that official public hearings be held on the development before any decision is made by the County to approve this development and/or any other preliminary approvals, waivers, variances and/or special exceptions in this matter.

This past weekend, I hiked through trails that border the Shadowbrook development. We know this area well because of our monthly bird walks. Along this walk, I saw cerulean warblers gleaning insects from a tree, an Acadian fly catcher doing a flutter call, and pickerel frogs leaping into Piney Run stream. We as citizens and you as our representatives have a moral imperative to protect our natural resources. It is an obligation we have to future generations of this County to leave them with wood turtles roaming our pastures and streams and cerulean warblers singing from the tree tops of our forests. This is the Loudoun of today. Please enable us retain it for the future.