



You Are Why We Are Here

**FRANKLIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
August 6, 2018
5:30 p.m.**

BOC: Commission Chairman Thomas Bridges
District 1 Commissioner Robert Franklin
District 2 Commissioner Dr. Jason Macomson
District 3 Commissioner Jeff Jacques
District 4 Commissioner Eddie Wester

Media: Shane Scoggins, Franklin County Citizen
Mark Berryman, WLHR

Staff: County Manager Beth Thomas
County Clerk Elaine Evans
County Attorney Bubba Samuels

Chairman Bridges welcomed everyone and called the public hearing to order. There are two issues to be discussed and the public hearing will stay open for 30 minutes giving an opportunity to speak for or against each item. Chairman Bridges said to come forward and state your name for the record.

Rezone request for Charity Mackenzie -There was no one to speak for or against the request for Charity Mackenzie.

Rezone request and conditional use permit for Best Propane Gas, LLC – Eric Gibson of United Propane Gas which will be the operator of Best Propane Gas came forward to speak. He said he is the general counsel for the company. The request is for 17 & 19 Argo Road to be rezoned and a conditional use permit to be able to have a retail propane location. The existing house on the property will be renovated for office use and installation will be done for a 30-gallon vault tank with loading for trucks. Mr. Gibson said he learned at the Planning Commission there are approximately six to eight providers in this area. The number of providers speaks to the importance of propane to this area. Mr. Gibson said there are currently three Best Propane Gas locations in Georgia; Lafayette, Ellijay and Baldwin.

Dennis Barron spoke in favor of the request from Best Propane Gas. He said he is a real estate broker and has the property listed for sale. The zoning on this property is commercial. Mr. Barron said the proposal will clean the property up and will make it more presentable. He said he has had feedback from farmers and no one he has talked with has been opposed. Competition brings prices down. Mr. Barron



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stated his job as a real estate broker is to sell land at the highest and best use. At this time the highest and best use for this property is to allow the request from Best Propane Gas.

Steve Fortmann spoke in opposition of the request from Best Propane Gas. He said he lives on Argo Road with his wife and children. One of the enjoyments of living on Argo Road is there is not a lot of traffic. Mr. Fortmann said Argo Road is a tiny dirt road that is in constant need of repair. He said the added traffic from the retail store would place a burden on the residents and the road. Another concern expressed by Mr. Fortmann is property values would go down. He also expressed concern for safety of the possibility of the propane tanks exploding. The fire protection for this area is provided by Sandy Cross Volunteer Fire Department and they are all volunteers. Mr. Fortmann said this is not the safest or smartest thing and he says absolutely not.

Casper Faust spoke in opposition to the request from Best Propane Gas. He said there is an intangible element in this of families living in the area and enjoying it. Mr. Faust said over 60% of his family now live on Argo Road. He said his father-in-law is one of the major land owners on Argo Road and he has the same opinion as Mr. Fortmann that property values will decrease. Mr. Faust said one of his concerns is there will be an odor from the propane. He said the propane tank will not project the right image for the small rural community, it will be a negative.

Sherry Munt spoke in opposition to the request from Best Propane Gas. She said between Argo Road and Red Dog Run there are about 30 children who play and ride their bikes. Ms. Munt suggested placing the company near I-85 and not around the precious children.

Eddie Dunn spoke in support of the Best Propane Gas request. He said it would be a good thing for the farmers and he welcomes competition.

Prize Fortmann spoke in opposition to the Best Propane Gas request. She said she moved to Argo Road about five years ago from Atlanta and to her it is a piece of heaven. Mrs. Fortmann said she did not want her children to be close to something potentially dangerous.

Eric Gibson said there is an existing entrance off of Hwy 51 which can be used and there is not a problem exploring this with the State Highway department. He said he has been employed by United Propane Gas for 18 years and there have not been any incidents during this time. The company has been in existence for over 60 years and Mr. Gibson has no knowledge of any incidents at any of their locations. A gas station could be located on this property because of the zoning. Mr. Gibson said a gas station with the underground tanks is more of a hazard than the propane tanks.

Charity Mackenzie came forward to speak about her request for rezoning. She said her desire is to open a 1950's diner. This is a work in progress as she has



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owned the building for two and a half years. Ms. Mackenzie said this would be beneficial to the community and it would fill their bellies.

There was no further discussion. The meeting at 5:57 p.m.

Signed on the _____ day of _____, 2018

Chairman J. Thomas Bridges

Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner

Dr. Jason Macomson, District 2 Commissioner

Jeff Jacques, District 3 Commissioner

Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner

Elaine H. Evans, County Clerk