

Chesterfield County has painted a picture of itself by repeated interactions with developers. These are my impressions: there's not much of an arm's length relationship when the county agrees to pay an entity tied to East-West Communities (of Brandermill & Woodlake fame) \$10.5M for a property it purchased for \$1.5M in 2021. Forget assessments! Raw land doesn't appreciate that fast.

Developers have long played Chesterfield, waiting for the county to initiate some sort of project that requires road improvement, water & sewer lines, and other infrastructure to be brought into an area. And then those developers tap into the new resources in order to build homes on surrounding land. The proposed purchase of 98 acres along Old Otterdale is just one more example. Close by this parcel, there are at least 5 other parcels totaling 708 acres, owned by Doug Sowers (Rountrey), Bill Goodwin (Riverstone Group), and English Construction, whose holdings might all benefit by a school on this site. Is this just coincidence? Possibly. But many developers donate to the Home Building Association of Richmond, and they in turn have donated to Forward Chesterfield, a Republican PAC. So it would appear all the players probably know each other. And maybe there are some congenial relationships in the mix. One can only imagine...

Of all the parcels of vacant land in and surrounding the Midlothian District, why this parcel specifically? Why the dark-of-night secrecy, and sudden rush to do something? Mido Middle has been here since 1924. It's not going anywhere tomorrow.

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