

COUNTY OF YORK

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 4, 2025
TO: York County Board of Supervisors
FROM: Mark L. Bellamy, Jr., County Administrator 
SUBJECT: County Owned Property at 1606 Yorktown Road

York County currently owns a parcel located at 1606 Yorktown Road. The property has approximately 79 feet of frontage and a depth of 100 feet and contains a 728-square-foot block structure measuring roughly 20 by 36 feet.

This property is maintained by County staff, with grounds crews responsible for mowing and general upkeep. The building is included in the County's replacement schedules for both the roof and HVAC system. In addition, the County incurs ongoing utility expenses, including electricity, water, and HRSD service.

The property was donated to the county on May 22, 1957, from Gertrude and P.R. Carmines. Prior to acquisition, the site was informally referred to as the "Bethel Town Hall." However, research conducted by Yorktown Librarian Elizabeth Land did not uncover archival documentation supporting the use or designation of the building as a town hall.

Although a 2002 *Daily Press* article highlighted the County's prior efforts to sell the property, the Board ultimately decided against proceeding with the sale at that time. Anecdotal insights from former County employee Ray West suggest the building served as a meeting space for a group discussing local issues before and after Yorktown established a town council. However, no formal historical or operational role has been identified for the structure.

Given the limited use, ongoing maintenance costs, and lack of historical designation, staff recommend the Board approve the disposal of the property.

Fuller/3504

Attachment:

- Historical Data from *Newspapers.com*

This Deed, Made this 17th day of November, in the
 year one thousand nine hundred and fifty-three, by and between
 GERTRUDE C. CARMINES and P. R. CARMINES, her husband, of Bethel District,
 York County, Virginia,

parties of the first part, and
 THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF YORK COUNTY, VIRGINIA,

parties of the second part,

Witnesseth, That in consideration of the sum of One Dollar (\$1.00), cash in hand
 paid to the said parties of the ~~first~~ first part, the receipt whereof
 is hereby acknowledged, and in further consideration of the benefits to
 inure to the said parties of the first part by the construction and use
 of a town hall on the land, the said Gertrude C. Carmines and P. R. Car-
~~mines~~ mines, parties of the first part,
 do give, grant, ^{and convey} unto the said Board of Supervisors of
 York County, Virginia, parties of the second part, ^{forever} their successors or assigns,
 with General Warranty, all
 the following property, to-wit:

All that certain piece, parcel or lot of land situate, lying and
 being in Bethel District, York County, Virginia, described and
 bounded as follows, to-wit: Beginning at a point on the southerly
 margin of State Highway Route #171, which point is the northwest
 corner of the land now or formerly of Tom Russell; thence southerly
 with Russell's line, which line is the center of a ditch, one hundred
 (100) feet to a point thereon cornering with Gertrude C. Carmines;
 thence westerly with Carmines, eighty-five (85) feet to a corner
 point; thence northerly with Carmines, one hundred (100) feet to
 a point on the southerly margin of said Highway #171; thence easterly
 along said Highway #171, eighty-five (85) feet to the point and
 corner of beginning; being a portion of the same land conveyed to
 the said Gertrude C. Carmines, as Parcel 2, by deed of J. W. Taylor,
 et als, dated December 26, 1944, and duly of record in York County
 Deed Book 60A, at page 501; the back line of the land hereby conveyed
 shall be parallel with said Highway #171, and the westerly line shall
 be parallel with Russell's line.

The said parties of the first part

covenant that they have the right to convey the said land to the grantee ; that they ha done no act to encumber the said land; that the grantee shall have quiet possession of the land, free from all encumbrances, and that they, the said parties of the first part will execute such further assurance of the said land as may be requisite.

Witness the following signatures and seals:

Gertrude C. Carmines [SEAL]

P. R. Carmines [SEAL]

[SEAL]

[SEAL]

STATE OF VIRGINIA,

County of York, to-wit:

I, Rodgers A. Smith, a notary public, in and

for the county aforesaid, in the State of Virginia, do certify that Gertrude C. Carmines and P. R. Carmines whose names are signed

to the foregoing writing bearing date on the 17th day of November, 1953, have acknowledged the same before me in my county aforesaid.

Given under my hand, this 17th day of November, 1953.

My term expires May 22, 1957.

Rodgers A. Smith Notary Public.

MEMO.—To be acknowledged before any officer authorized to take acknowledgments. If acknowledged before a notary public the certificate should contain the date of expiration of the commission of the notary.

VIRGINIA: County of York to-wit:

In the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court for the County of York, the 4th day of December, 1953. This deed was presented with the certificate annexed and admitted to record at 2:30 o'clock P.M.

Tests:

Melville D. Bryant Clerk By: Peggy D. Sheppard Deputy Clerk

Noted to O. E. Bush 1-8-54

Gertrude Curtis Taylor Carmines, widow of P.R. Carmines, died Wednesday, Sept. 26, 2001, at 97. Mrs. Carmines was a member of Bethel Baptist Church in her childhood and widowhood, and joined her husband at Tabernacle and St. Luke's Methodist churches during their marriage. She contributed her faith and works to all these church communities and to the WCTU. Mrs. Carmines was a loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and aunt who will be treasured in memory.

She is survived by two sons, F.T. Carmines and wife of Edenton, N.C., and J.W. Carmines and wife of Tabb; four grandchildren, Thomas Carmines of Maine, Ameer Carmines of Virginia, Jeffrey Carmines of Maryland and Robbie Carmines of Virginia; and three great-grandchildren.

A graveside service will be held at 1 p.m. today in the family cemetery.

Amory Funeral Home is making the arrangements.

CITATION (MLA STYLE)

"GERTRUDE CURTIS TAYLOR CARMINES." *Daily Press (Newport News, VA)*. Final ed., sec. Obituaries, 29 Sept. 2001, p. C6.

NewsBank: Access World News, https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/openurl?ctx_ver=z39.88-2004&rft_id=info%3Aid/infoweb.newsbank.com&svc_dat=AWNB&req_dat=0DF3B88147EBFB20&rft_val_format=info%3Aofi/fmt%3Akev%3Amtx%3Actx&rft_dat=document_id%3Anews/0EEE18F2A301CE3A

Accessed 2 Feb. 2024.

Copyright 2001 Daily Press (Newport News, VA)

James "Jim" Taylor hopped off the school bus in York County and saw his mama waiting to take him straight to the family farm to set plants, pick collard greens or do "whatever they had to" on the farm.

That was life in York County in the 1940s and 1950s, he said.

"I had friends that come to school, you could tell they had milked the cow," Taylor recalled. "We never had to do that but we'd work until dark. We never had supper until after dark."

Taylor's grandfather, James Harry Taylor, started the 100-acre family farm in the early 1900s, now where the Taylor Farms subdivision sits.

Two of his sons, Tom and Bill Taylor, farmed the land and leased another 100 acres nearby, including the land where Tabb High School is today, to grow tomatoes, squash, corn, sweet potatoes and collard greens. Their sons, Jim and Skip Taylor, started plowing the land and hauling bushels of potatoes from the fields when they were about 10. Skip farmed full time for several years and Jim farmed full time until his late 60s. Then they decided to sell their land.

The Taylor farm and other York County family farms were sold off over the decades. Some residents say that the county hasn't done anything to support agriculture while others say there was nothing the county could have done -- the population grew, developers became interested and the "city came to the country."

That conflict continues today in Dandy, where some residents are pushing for a zoning change that would forbid agriculture and aquaculture.

And that doesn't sit well with others.

Tara Yarkey, a Dandy resident said she and her husband had bought their 9 acres in Dandy with the plan to have commercial livestock such as goats and cows in order to sell milk and cheese.

"As far as I am concerned, that is my human right," Yarkey said. "It's my property. I should be able to raise food here and sell it here."

On Oct. 8, the York County Planning Commission sided with her, voting against the rezoning. The proposal goes before the Board of Supervisors on Nov. 18.

But her property is in the same area as that of Greg Garrett, who had wanted to have a commercial oyster farm. After years of debate, lawsuits and new legislation from the General Assembly that said the county couldn't require a special-use permit for aquaculture in "agricultural districts," several Dandy residents signed a petition in September asking that their neighborhood be rezoned to make sure no one could start a commercial oyster farm in their neighborhood.

Michael Oesterling, the executive director of the Shellfish Growers of Virginia, said he was disappointed that the county decided that shellfish were not agriculture.

"The zoning ordinances were really directed solely at two businesses (Garrett and Anthony Bavuso) and because of that everybody in quote 'agriculture' became impacted," Oesterling said.

"It (York County) started as quote 'rural area' with lots of agriculture," he said. "And it turned into an urban area and when that happened decisions had to be made -- and I don't think that a lot of decisions that were made were made with the future in mind."

Jackson Darst, president of the Charles City-James City-New Kent-York Farm Bureau, agreed. "If York County 40 years ago had established some limits on population in areas that weren't going to be developed you could do something" to protect agriculture, he said, but it's too late now.

Amy Parker, senior planner for York County, said in an email: "None of our plans have ever included future land-use recommendations for agriculture or forestry."

Decrease in farmland

As of 2012, York County had 2,813 acres of farmland, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture census. That's a 73.6 percent decrease from 1969, when the county had 10,642 acres of farmland.

York County's development really started to take off in the 1970s, said Mark Carter, the assistant county administrator.

The county's comprehensive plans don't include measures to preserve large parcels of land for agriculture and forestry but they do designate some of the county's watershed areas and reservoirs as conservation areas. Forty-one percent of the county's land-use is "open space." Agriculture makes up 0.8 percent of that. The next largest land-use category is military and public use, which take up 35 percent.

Carter said the decline in farms in the county is mostly attributable to the federal government's acquisition of former farmland that became Camp Peary, Cheatham Annex and Naval Weapons Station Yorktown.

The original county zoning ordinance from 1957 included A-1, which was the Agriculture-Forestry-Rural Residential zoning district and included uses "primarily for forestry, farming and the raising of livestock and other agriculture." In 1964, the county eliminated the A-1 district and established the "rural residential" district, which allows for agriculture.

The county participated in Virginia's land-use program for agriculture, horticulture, open space and forestry but dropped the forestry and open-space programs in 1998, Carter said. Those programs allowed land to be assessed at the value of the use of the land rather than the market value, which meant landowners could pay

lower real estate taxes. The county got rid of the program because the Board of Supervisors was concerned that the forest land-use program didn't match with the economic opportunity zoning designation of the land, Carter said.

"The land-use assessment policies basically encouraged landowners to keep their property in an undeveloped state while at the same time transferring that forgiven tax burden to the remainder of the taxpayers in the county," Carter said.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Donald Wiggins said the county no longer has an "agriculture area." He said he remembers when Wal-Mart Supercenter was built off of Victory Boulevard and Route 17.

"We had all kinds of opposition to the Wal-Mart from people saying they wanted York County to be the way it used to be," Wiggins said. "They didn't want a big box. Well, the county gets about \$1 million in tax revenue from Wal-Mart and God knows the county needs it."

"That killed it"

Jim Taylor, now 79, said he would rather still have his farmland than the Taylor Farms subdivision but said he couldn't make enough money from farming.

"We got to where we couldn't pay the taxes," Taylor said. "I didn't have any other job, I was just farming. And there won't no way I could hold onto it and farm."

The price of fertilizer went up, gasoline prices rose, hybrid seeds cost more today and many grocery stores stopped buying from local farmers, Taylor said.

"That killed it," said his wife, Anne.

The Taylors and their relatives sold about 60 of their 100 acres in 2005 to Taylor Farms of Yorktown LLC. Pritchard and Miller Real Estate developed the Taylor Farms subdivision, where homes sell for \$950,000.

"One thing about all of them selling at the same time was we were able to keep the name Taylor Farms on the land," Anne Taylor said. "That meant something to us."

Leslie and Sean Callender bought one of the homes in the subdivision. Sean Callender said he is "pretty nostalgic" about the farm and talks to Skip Taylor about how they used to grow watermelon and beans. He said he has a garden of his own and shares his vegetables with Skip.

He and his family appreciate the subdivision because they could build a mother-in-law suite and their children could be close to their grandparents, Sean Callender said.

Joy Taylor, Skip Taylor's wife, said she liked it better when she could ride her horse through the fields but, "You can't stop progress." She said it's nice to be able to get to a grocery store in five minutes, when before she had to drive 20 to 30 minutes.

As for where the county is headed, though, she said "it's going to be one big congested mess."

"It's the same old thing, you know -- people want to move out to the country to get a better quality of life but they want to bring in the street lights and the stop signs and the stores and all of that," Joy Taylor said. "Well, there goes your country."

Somers can be reached by phone at 757-247-4758.

ONLINE

See videos at dailypress.com.

CITATION (MLA STYLE)

Somersjsomers@dailypress.com, Johanna. "YORK: 'CITY CAME TO THE COUNTRY'." *Daily Press (Newport News, VA)*, Final ed., sec. Local, 14 Oct. 2014, p. A1. *NewsBank: Access World News*, https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/openurl?ctx_ver=z39.88-2004&rft_id=info%3Aid/infoweb.newsbank.com&svc_dat=AWNB&req_dat=0DF3B88147EBFB20&rft_val_format=info%3Aofi/ftm%3Akev%3Amtx%3Actx&rft_dat=document_id%3Anews/150F56600A00D250. Accessed 2 Feb. 2024.

Copyright 2014 Daily Press (Newport News, VA)

Preston Carmines

TABB — A funeral service for Preston (Ruxx) Carmines, 80, 230 Yorktown Road, Tabb, chairman of the board of directors of the Citizens Bank of Poquoson, who died Sunday, will be conducted at 2:30 p.m. today in St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Grafton, by the Rev. Norman P. Montgomery.

Burial will be in the family cemetery.

Carmines spent his life in York County.

He was a member of St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Red Cloud Tribe 58, Improved Order of Red Men.

Pallbearers will be Bill Verser, K. T. Smith, Jimmy Taylor, Charles Taylor, Hunter Riggins, Ray Carmines, Hugh Wornom, and E. T. Beskins.

Amory Funeral Home is in charge.

preston r carmines obit 2



Clipped By:

deborahbell

Mon, Jul 13, 2020