

## Roakes, Raymond A. - PDR

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**From:** Mechelle Esparza-Harris <meme1982@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 16, 2022 6:05 PM  
**To:** Roakes, Raymond A. - PDR  
**Subject:** Monday, December 19, 2022, Item # UDC 2022-27

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Mr. Roakes,

Good day.

**Serene Wildlife Sanctuary, LLC.**, is an urban wildlife sanctuary situated between Richmond's Deerbourn District and Hickory Hill School. It was established in 2019 to preserve its wildlife habitat, protect its unique natural area, enhance migratory bird habitats, provide soil & water conservation and maintain its aesthetic, scenic forest. The mission and goals sited were submitted in an application to the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) on July 26, 2019. Also in 2019, the land was certified as a wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.

Two weeks ago, I, member & registered agent, **Mechelle Esparza-Harris**, was notified the building of a training facility is being considered at Hickory Hill School. On yesterday, I was made it aware the item has been added to Monday's agenda. The proposed building appears to be less than 1,000 ft., from the sanctuary.

I am writing to provide notice VDOF provided a Virginia Forest Stewardship Management plan on March 17, 2022 which considers the sanctuary a streamside management zone (SMZ) due to its location in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, stream located on the tract and its forested size. In addition, the report included the analysis, *"the creek, such as this in an urban area, provides excellent wildlife habitat and will also serve as a great travel corridor for mammals, reptiles, birds and all other sorts of local fauna,"* and *"the tract provides forest coverage, something that is quite lacking in the city as you move south of the James."* The stream underwent a stream determination by the Department of Environmental Quality in October 2022, received a classification above a creek (rated stream, perennial) with a project ID now established by the US Army Corps of Engineer for recording.

The sanctuary is operating under an active Wildlife Habitat Conservation and Management Plan and its mission, particularly as a sanctuary for migratory birds, is threatened by development so close to its borders.

I will be in attendance at Monday's meeting should there be any questions for me as the representative for the sanctuary.

Thank you - Mechelle