

**Weekender:** Jazz concert celebrates a night of legends | **Inside**

# The Journal

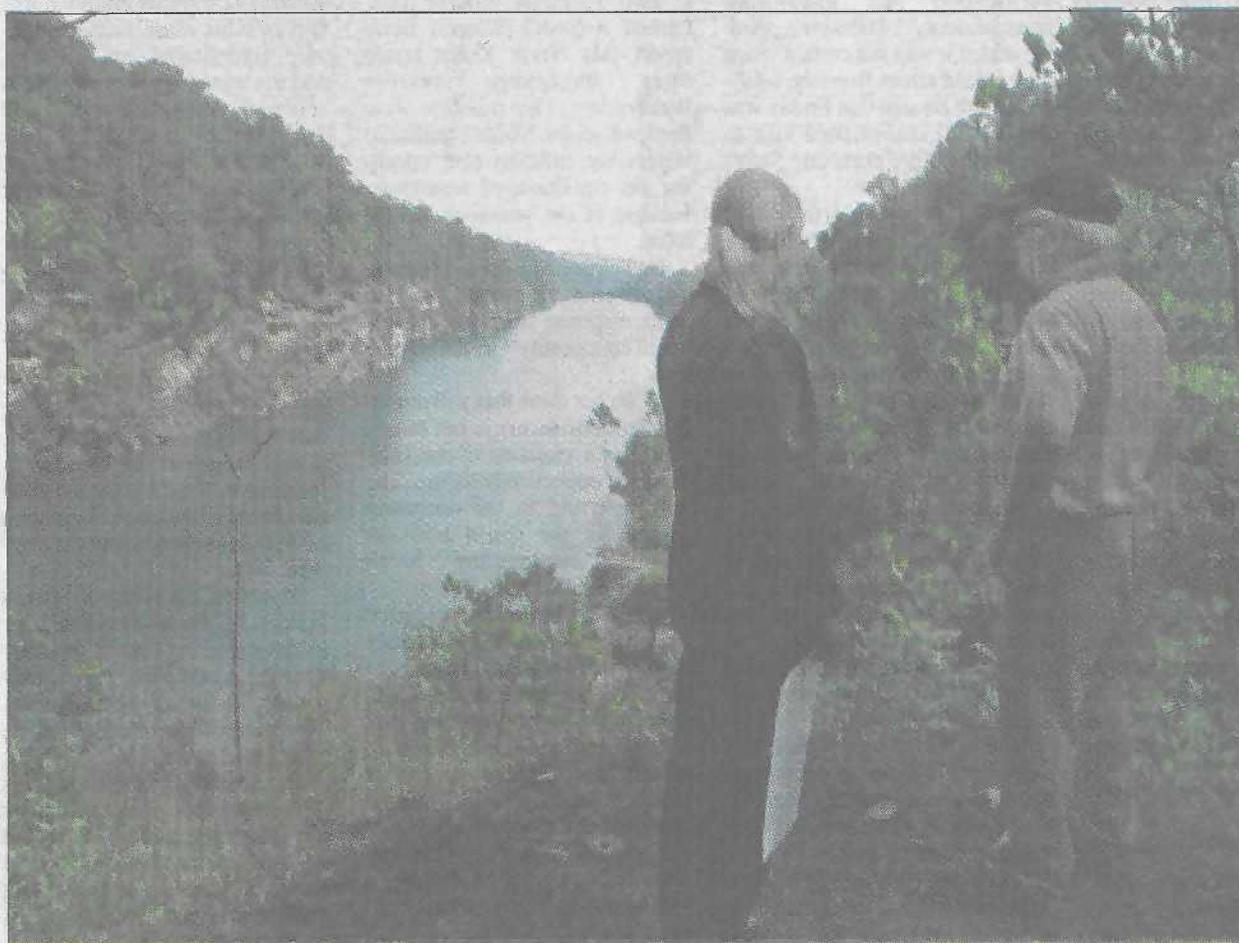
**THURSDAY**

June 28, 2007

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## JEFFERSON COUNTY



Journal photo by Beth Henry

Jefferson County commissioners Frances Morgan, left, and Rusty Morgan look at the Old Standard Quarry's lake on Wednesday afternoon as part of a tour of what developers hope will be an upscale commercial project. See more photos at [cu.journal-news.net](http://cu.journal-news.net).

## Leaders tour quarry site

### Old Standard LLC project work session planned for today

By **BETH HENRY**  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

CHARLES TOWN — Jefferson County commissioners got a good look Wednesday at the site of a proposed commercial development at the Old Standard Quarry in advance of a work session scheduled for this afternoon.

Commissioners Frances Morgan, Greg Corliss, Rusty Morgan and Dale Manuel toured the project site Wednesday afternoon with developers Gene Capriotti and Herb Jonkers and attorney



Find more photos online

J. Michael Cassell. Members of the media also went along for the tour, as well as concerned citizen Paul Rosa, who has spoken out against the proposed development.

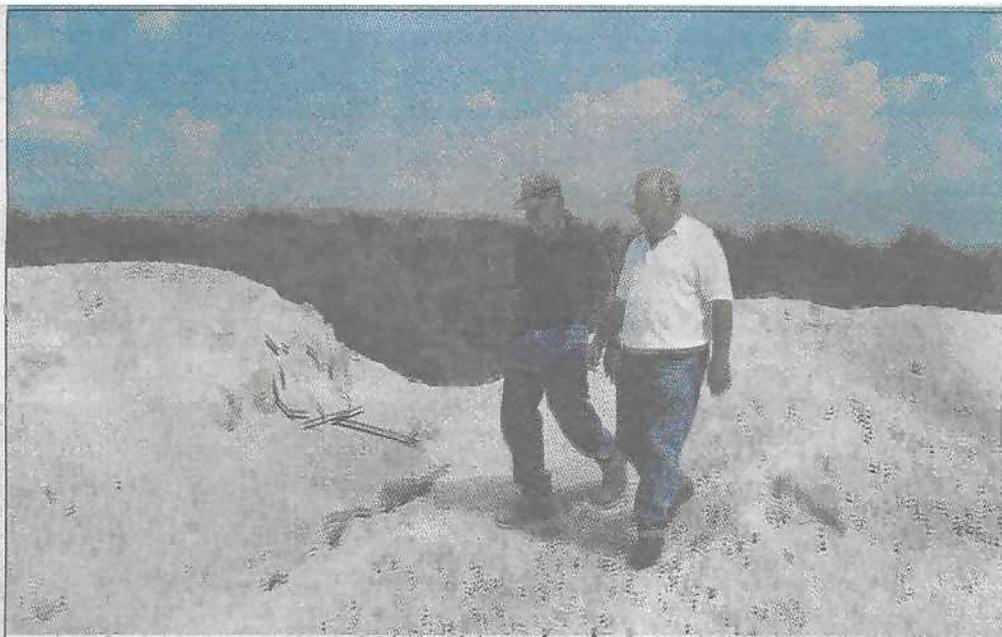
After visiting the area along the Shenandoah River where a hiking/biking trail and park are planned, those on the tour climbed up piles of burnt limestone leftover from the quarry operation, walked along the property's lake

and viewed possible building sites for a hotel and commercial office buildings.

The Old Standard LLC development has drawn a great deal of interest in recent months, as developers were denied annexation into Charles Town and then petitioned the County Commission to rezone the property to allow for commercial use.

After a crowded public hearing on the matter, the Jefferson County Planning Commission decided unanimously June

See **TOUR A2**



Journal photo by Beth Henry

**Mountains of burnt limestone that were left from the Old Standard Quarry would be cleaned up by developers, if they receive approval to build a hotel and commercial buildings on the site near Millville Road. County Commissioner Greg Corliss, left, and developer Gene Capriotti tour the area Wednesday.**

## Tour

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12 that the rezoning petition for the Old Standard Quarry property is not compatible with the county's comprehensive plan, a land use planning document that serves as a set of guidelines for county leaders.

However, the County Commission will make the ultimate decision about whether to grant the rezoning petition and allow the hotel and commercial buildings.

On Wednesday, Rusty Morgan said there are so many issues involved that he would like the County Commission to continue to receive more information about the project and what it means for the community.

"I am getting a sense that we need more time," he said.

Opponents are worried about potential traffic problems on Millville Road and U.S. 340, as well as effects the commercial buildings could have on the viewshed from nearby Harpers Ferry National Historical Park property and historic Civil War sites. Those who support the project say the county needs more commercial development and the 6,000 new jobs that could come with this project, as well as the \$4.4 million in tax revenues that would be generated.

Supporters also say they like the project because the developers would clean up the area's limestone debris and rundown buildings that are left over from the old quarry, which was active from the 1880s through 1974. Part of the property was also once the site of the county's old landfill, which closed in 1962.

The Old Standard Quarry property consists of about 411 acres, which fall into two zoning districts. About 80 acres in the northern part of the property are zoned for high density residential use, while the remaining section is in a rural district. Rosa recently requested that the County Commission consider changing the zoning on the 80 acres from high density residential to rural, a move that the owners strongly oppose.

More than 1,600 homes could be built on the property under the current zoning, and Commissioner Corliss said he is concerned that those who oppose the project don't understand all of the issues involved, particularly how many residential units could be developed if office buildings aren't allowed.

"We need to look at what's best for the county," Corliss said, referring to the tax base and the county's need for more commercial instead of residential development. "We're hurting ourselves, perhaps, economically," if projects like this are denied.

Project plans call for a 60,000-square-foot signature office building, a 150-room hotel with a 22,500-square-foot conference center and additional office buildings along the property's lake and the Shenandoah River.

Twenty acres of the site would be dedicated as parkland, which could be used for hiking and biking trails and picnic areas, as well as public fishing areas. Cassell and Jonkers said the project is still flexible, and the number

of commercial buildings could be 27 or 17, depending on how many stories the buildings are. Also, Cassell said a golf course might be a possibility in the future.

Cassell said the developers have tried to "do the right thing" and work with area leaders on the project, and he also said there is a need for commercial buildings in the area.

As for the viewshed, he said the adjacent federal buildings, including the U.S. Customs facility, are clearly visible from Harpers Ferry National Historical Park property. He said he doesn't think commercial buildings in the Old Standard project would detract from the area's views any more than the federal facilities have, plus the project would involve cleaning up mountains of burnt limestone that are also clearly visible from parkland.

County commissioners have scheduled a work session on the quarry project for 1:30 p.m. today, and after that, the next step is for the commission to decide whether to rezone the property. A decision might be made during the second week in July.

The Jefferson County Commission's regular meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. today in the County Courthouse, and more information is available by calling (304) 728-3284.

— Staff writer Beth Henry can be reached at (304) 725-6581 or [bhenry@journal-news.net](mailto:bhenry@journal-news.net)