

# Tri-State

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## Commissioners express concern over invitation to tour quarry



Frances Morgan

### CHARLES TOWN, W.VA.

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The Jefferson County Commissioners have been invited to tour an old quarry next to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park that has been proposed for a controversial office project.

The commissioners have not decided whether to view the property.

Jim Campbell, who is representing the developers of the project, talked to the commissioners last Thursday about touring the property.

The developers were unsuccessful in their attempt to have the City of Charles

Town annex the property as part of its development plan. Now they have asked the commissioners to change the site's land designation from agricultural to commercial use to allow it.

Although the developers have said their project is a way to generate high-paying jobs for the county, it has drawn criticism from some people who believe it is too close to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

The commissioners have expressed concern about whether they should tour the property.

Commission President Frances Morgan said such a tour would have to be handled carefully to avoid a perception from the public that the commission

might be receiving "insider information" or "special advocacy" during the tour.

To avoid that, Campbell offered to let local news media and groups representing the interests of the park join the tour, Commissioner Rusty Morgan said.

Rusty Morgan said last Thursday that he wants to know who is going on the tour before he commits himself to taking part.

The project would involve construction of 2 million square feet of office space and a 150-room hotel off Millville Road.

County officials have talked about how they would be able to control how the project is developed.

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## Tour: Invitation to view quarry raises concerns

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Although an attorney for the developers said the builders would be able to guarantee the project's design through "proffer" agreements, a lawyer for the county said he would have to research that issue.

The Jefferson County Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the proposed land-use designation change for the property

on June 5 at 7 p.m. at the Charles Town Library, 200 E. Washington St.

In a related matter, the board of directors for the Jefferson County Development Authority announced that it voted to support the land-use designation change at a meeting May 15.

The development authority is a county agency that works to attract business to the county.