



# Commission members tour former quarry site

HARPERS FERRY, W.VA.

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The white van loaded with Jefferson County Commissioners, developers and news reporters jostled back and forth along old trucking roads in the quarry.

The group was led through deeply wooded areas, and at one point, the van eased into an open area next to a huge lake.

The 100-foot-deep lake was formed when rock mining operations at the former Old Standard Quarry struck water, developer Herb Jonkers said.

The lake was a dramatic site, with a 90-foot cliff along one side and its blue-green water reaching depths of 100 feet.

"It's beautiful. Look down



Photo by Dave McMillion

Jefferson County Commissioners Greg Corliss, center, and Rusty Morgan, right, speak with Dixie Wiltshire during a tour of the former Old Standard Quarry. Wiltshire helps oversee the property.

that way," said Jefferson County Commissioner Rusty Morgan, motioning along the long shoreline.

Commissioners doubt property zone will change, A2

See QUARRY, A2

## Quarry: Jefferson County Commissioners tour site

Continued from A1

The 411-acre quarry site along Millville Road near the intersection with U.S. 340 is where a group of five developers wants to build a \$250 million office and hotel complex.

The developers say the project could create 6,000 new jobs in the county, and they are asking the commission to change the land-use designation of the site from an agricultural zone to a commercial zone.

There has been opposition to the proposal from dozens of county residents and Harpers Ferry National Historical Park officials, who say the office complex would be too close to the park, among other concerns.

Two of the developers, Jonkers and Gene Capriotti, took Rusty Morgan, commis-

sion President Frances Morgan, and Commissioners Greg Corliss and Dale Manuel on a tour of the property Wednesday afternoon to explain to them how the property would be developed.

Also joining the tour was Charles Town attorney J. Michael Cassell, who is representing the developers, and Paul Rosa, executive director of the Harpers Ferry Conservancy.

As part of the project, the developers said they would open about 1.4 miles of Shenandoah riverfront property at the site to the public and build facilities such as bathrooms, picnic areas, a boat ramp and hiking trails for visitors to enjoy.

The tour started by going through the riverfront area, and it was a serene area that included a fishing camp,

which Jonkers said would be left there.

The commissioners later were taken to areas where huge piles of burned limestone were left on the property. The developers said they will remove the burned limestone and use much of the material in the development of the office and hotel project.

Besides being a rock quarry, the Old Standard Quarry also was where rock wool and powdered lime were produced, Jonkers said.

Rock wool was an insulation product, and the powdered lime was a product that was used in the steel industry, Jonkers said.

There were kilns on the property, which were used to burn limestone and make powdered lime, and ruins of quarry operations still could be seen.

There was conversation in the van about relatives and others who worked in the quarry.

"There was a lot of folks who worked this pit," Jonkers said.

The office buildings and a 150-room hotel would be built around the lake.

The commissioners were taken to one end of the lake, where developers have said the hotel will have different levels that will staircase down to the lake's edge in a "Frank Lloyd Wright" style.

"It's an astonishing piece of property," Frances Morgan said after the tour. "That view of the quarry lake ... wow."

Jonkers said the other developers in the project are Lee Snyder, a county resident, and Jim Jost and Tony DelBalzo, developers from Columbia, Md.