









The 2022 WV Primary elections are just around the corner. **Early voting locations are now open!** (To find more Jefferson County Primary information and sample ballots, click here.)

Elections are an important opportunity to make your voice heard and advocate for candidates who will fight to protect and preserve Jefferson County for future generations. Our local elections serve as a pivotal opportunity to make positive changes. By electing local leaders who share our values, we can ensure that our county moves in a more

sustainable direction while prioritizing public health and the environment.

Our primary elections are critical because they will determine the selection of final candidates for each political party to run in the general election and the final election of officials for non-partisan races (school board, judges/justices, magistrates, etc)

## **Download Our Voter Guide**



Since May 2020, the Jefferson County Planning Commission (JCPC) has attempted to draft a zoning ordinance to allow solar energy facility development in the County. Residents filed lawsuits against the Jefferson County Commission (JCC) and JCPC regarding the previous passage of the zoning ordinance that would have permitted these utilities almost anywhere of any size, as well as changes to the Comprehensive Plan encouraging the large-scale development. We are happy to announce the JCC reached a settlement addressing the community's concerns to amend the Comprehensive Plan amendment and rewrite the zoning ordinance.

On April 12th, the JCPC had a meeting to discuss these changes to include a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process for solar energy facilities outside of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and Preferred Growth Area (PGA). The previously designated principle permitted use, or by-right land

use, will remain within the smaller UGB and the PGA areas (as shown on this map).

This is a big win for our county. The changes incorporating a Conditional Use designation will allow for evaluation of each project in rural and residential districts with avenues for public input that takes into account the concerns of local residents. CUP permits must consider if "the proposed use is compatible in intensity and scale with the existing and potential land uses on the adjoining and confronting properties, and poses no threat to public health, safety and welfare." Future CUP project applications, if approved to proceed by the Board of Zoning Appeals, will also be required to provide a concept plan of the project to the Planning Commission.

The JCPC held a special meeting on April 19th to review and discuss the first draft of the updated text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to account for the JCC's requested changes. The next step will be a public hearing on **Tuesday**, **5/17 at 7 pm** to receive public input on the recommended Solar Energy Facilities draft zoning ordinance text amendment (File #ZTA22-01). We encourage you to attend this hearing and continue to submit public comments regarding this amendment and conditional use.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the public hearings and provided comments on the Solar Energy Facilities draft zoning ordinance and amendments to the comprehensive plan. Your support has been invaluable throughout this process to help ensure compatible development in Jefferson County.

We will share more details on the revised ordinance and meeting information for the public hearing as soon as it becomes available.

## <u>Legal Update: JCV vs. City of Ranson (Rezoning Case)</u>

In May of 2021, JCV began the appeals process to the Supreme Court of West Virginia regarding the JCV vs. City of Ranson (Rezoning Case). The Rezoning Case claimed Ranson knowingly violated their comprehensive plan and engaged in illegal spot/contract zoning when the Ranson City Council approved the Industrial District Ordinance for Jefferson Orchards. The Circuit Court dismissed the complaint, ruling claims could have been raised earlier in the 2018 Zoning Case. This past week, in

response to the appeal, the Supreme Court decided to uphold the 2021 ruling issued by the Circuit Court. <u>Visit our website</u> for more information on JCV's legal actions.

Attending local government meetings is another important way you can be active in the community. Your presence helps to hold our officials accountable to the values and concerns of Jefferson County's citizens. "Think global, act local!"

**View This Week's Meetings** 

Please consider a gift to support our critical work if you are able to. We greatly appreciate every donation. All proceeds benefit JCV's efforts to lead legal, political, and community action to support sustainable growth, without heavy industry, and to empower our citizen's voices to ensure a clean, transparent government in Jefferson County.

**Donate To Support Our Work** 









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