

Opinion: Manassas National Battlefield Park land is too important to history to be developed

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Debate over building data centers in the rural crescent of Northern Virginia, a stone's throw from Manassas National Battlefield Park, sheds light on a divisive topic. More than a squabble over municipal zoning and construction, this is about the dangerous precedent our leaders would set by allowing developers to build gigantic, loud industrial facilities on hallowed ground.

More than 150,000 men fought over the hills of Manassas National Battlefield Park, through two major Civil War battles. Thousands bled and died there, and it is likely that some are still buried there. Their actions changed the course of U.S. history.

Rezoning this land for risky commercial development would permanently alter the historic landscape that allows visitors to stand in the footsteps of the past and learn from it. It is a grievous insult to those who sacrificed — particularly when there is available land in Prince William County that is already allotted for data centers.

The chair of the Prince William Board of County Supervisors defends this rezoning and potential development as bringing in “commercial revenue.” What dollar amount does she think is worth trampling the memory of American soldiers and the legacy left for future generations?

Joseph Eaves, *Manassas*

The writer is president of the Manassas Battlefield Trust.

I echo the Jan. 20 letter “[It’s about the water](#)” that the Jan. 16 Metro article “[Fight over data centers roils rural Prince William](#)” glossed over the real issues. The article read as inexplicably sympathetic to large landowners requesting rezoning so they can sell at premium prices to developers to create the Prince William “Digital Gateway.” Their disingenuous narrative that they are just poor disadvantaged farmers who will reluctantly give up their land for the greater good of Prince William County is pure farce.

The principal architects of this scheme are heavily lobbying the Prince William Board of County Supervisors to railroad their proposal through before there is time to thoroughly examine its detrimental effects or showcase the proposal before the voters.

Bill Wright, *Gainesville*

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