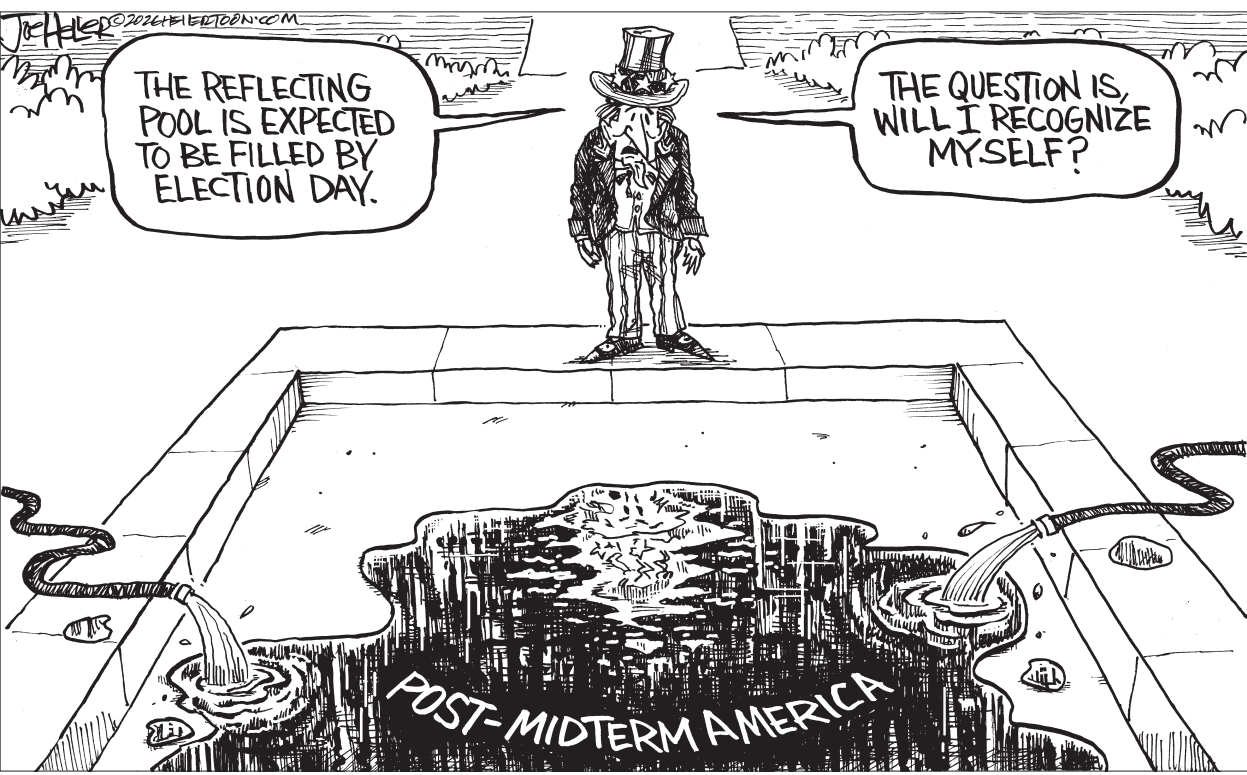


JOBE PUBLISHING, INC.

OPINION

The opinions of writers on this page are not necessarily those of the newspaper, or management. We encourage our readers to share their views for publication. Thanks so much for choosing the Barren County Progress.

October 28, 2026



PROJECT, CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

Bunnell, Tommy Burris, Chasity Lowery, James “Happy” Neal and Joe Trigg voted in favor of the rezoning. Marna Kirkpatrick, Freddie Norris and Randy Wilkinson voted against it. Elizabeth Shoemaker was absent.

The vote changes approximately 2.94 acres at 318 W. Washington St. from R-2 medium-density residential and OP office and professional zoning to R-4 medium-density multifamily residential.

The proposed \$18.3 million Highland Heights development would include a three-story building with 75 one-bedroom apartments for adults ages 55 and older. The Hero Foundation, a nonprofit associated with the Glasgow Housing Authority, is pursuing the project with Wabuck Development Company.

The property is owned by the Barren County Fiscal Court and contains the former Howard Clinic, which most recently housed the county health department. Plans call for removing the building, placing historic preservation and affordable senior housing at the center of the debate.

The Joint City-County Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval Aug. 17 following a public hearing. The council gave the ordinance its first reading Oct. 12 but tabled further consideration while litigation was pending.

Six nearby residents filed suit Sept. 14 against the Planning Commission and Hero Foundation, challenging the recommendation. Barren Circuit Judge John T. Alexander later dismissed the case because the plaintiffs had not included the Fiscal Court, the property owner, as a necessary defendant.

The dismissal left the underlying zoning questions unresolved. Whether opponents will challenge the council’s final action remains uncertain.

Council members amended Monday’s agenda to resume consideration and approved the ordinance on second reading.

Housing need and neighborhood concerns

Highland Heights is intended to serve older residents with limited incomes, including retirees who rely primarily on Social Security. Developers plan to seek financing through the competitive federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program administered in Kentucky by the Kentucky Housing Corporation.

The county’s 2024 comprehensive plan documented a 38.7% increase in residents ages 65 and older between 2000 and 2020. That age group is projected to represent approximately one-quarter of the county’s population by 2050.

Preliminary plans provide 96 off-street parking spaces, approximately 1.28 spaces per apartment. A covered public transportation stop has been discussed but has not received final approval.

Final rents have not been established. A planning example used a hypothetical monthly housing expense of \$560, including utilities, but that figure is not an approved rental rate.

The development team estimates the completed property could generate more than \$36,000 annually in combined city and county property taxes.

Opponents have raised concerns about demolition, the building’s size, traffic, parking and compatibility with surrounding homes. Other questions involve emergency access, storm-water drainage, utility capacity and potential infrastructure costs. No formal traffic study was submitted during the original rezoning application process.

The former clinic is identified as a contributing building within the Southwest Glasgow Residential Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. It is associated with Dr. C.C. Howard, whose work helped expand medical services in Barren County during the early 20th century.

Preliminary development information identifies possible mold, asbestos, lead-based paint and structural concerns that could complicate rehabilitation. Architectural concepts for the replacement building include traditional design elements intended to complement the neighborhood, but the rezoning does not constitute final design approval.

County lease supports project

The Fiscal Court approved an option-to-lease agreement with Wabuck in June, then re-structured it in September to place the option directly with the Hero Foundation. The change was intended to improve the project’s competitiveness for housing tax credits.

The revised agreement provides for a 99-year ground lease at a total stated cost of \$600,000, allowing the county to retain ownership of the land. The county also retained a previously paid, nonrefundable \$5,000 fee.

Hero Foundation has until March 30, 2027, to complete the transaction. It may extend that deadline to Dec. 31, 2027, by paying an additional \$100,000 in nonrefundable earnest money, credited toward the total cost at closing.

Wabuck would remain a consultant and co-developer. The company previously worked on Maddox Manor near Red Cross Elementary School in Glasgow.

Further steps remain

Monday’s discussion reflected continuing disagreement over the site. Some council members emphasized concerns from neighboring residents, while others pointed to the Planning Commission’s unanimous recommendation and the need for affordable senior housing.

Members also discussed alternative locations, including other publicly owned land. An alternative site had previously been explored but was unavailable for purchase. Moving the project could also affect its eligibility for competitive housing tax credits.

The rezoning advances Highland Heights but does not authorize immediate construction. Financing, final plans and applicable site, engineering, utility and building approvals remain outstanding.

No confirmed construction start date or completion schedule has been established.

Andy Barr endorses Jeff Proffitt



Submitted Photo
Jeff Proffitt and U.S. Representative Andy Barr.

STAFF REPORT

U.S. Rep. Andy Barr, the Republican nominee for U.S. Senate, has endorsed Jeff Proffitt for Glasgow City Council.

Barr said Proffitt would work on economic development, public safety and community growth in Glasgow and Barren County. Proffitt said he was pleased to receive Barr’s endorsement and called him a friend and a strong leader for Kentucky.

No-excuse early voting begins Thursday; Austin polling location changes



GLASGOW — No-excuse early voting begins Thursday, Oct. 29, in Barren County ahead of the Nov. 3 general election.

Voters can cast ballots at the Barren County Extension Service Office from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, Oct. 29–31. No qualifying excuse is required.

Wednesday, Oct. 28, is the final day for eligible voters with a qualifying excuse to vote at the Barren County Clerk’s Office. Hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

An Election Day polling location change affects voters who previously cast ballots at the Austin Tracy Volunteer Fire Department. Those voters will now vote across the road at Austin Tracy Elementary School.

Election Day polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 3. The county clerk’s office will be open for election-related business only that day.

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SALE DATES

Nov. 18

Dec. 2

Dec. 16

No Sale

Dec. 30

Doug Browning

(615) 888-7514

Marty Dykes

(931) 319-0740

Michael Page

(270) 427-7840

Sale Every 1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesday, 1:30 p.m.

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Tue. from 12 to 6 p.m. & Wed. from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m.