

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2021-28: Biscuit Run Park Initial Site Plan
Review Type	Initial Site Development Plan
Parcel Identification	09000-00-00-006D0
Location	On the west side of Rt. 20 just south of the intersection of Avon Street Ext. and Rt. 20.
Zoned	Rural Areas (RA)/Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Commonwealth of Virginia, Dept of Conservation and Recreation; County of Albemarle (Property Lessee, Steve Hoffman)/ Anhold Associates (David Anhold)
Magisterial District	Scottsville
Proposal	To construct access, parking, and related landscaping on approximately 5 acres of the 891-acre Biscuit Run Park property.
Context	The subject property is comprised of a mostly wooded parcel, a portion of which is bounded by the Rt. 20 Entrance Corridor. Small residential parcels with some industrial properties interspersed are to the north and large residential parcels are directly to the east and south. The character of this portion of the Entrance Corridor is largely residential and rural (Fig. 1).
Visibility	Site access and related features will have maximum visibility from the Rt. 20 Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	April 19, 2021
Staff Contact	Khris Taggart

PROJECT HISTORY

The ARB has reviewed no previous proposals for this site. A site development plan application for the proposed development was submitted to the County on March 8, 2021 and is under review.

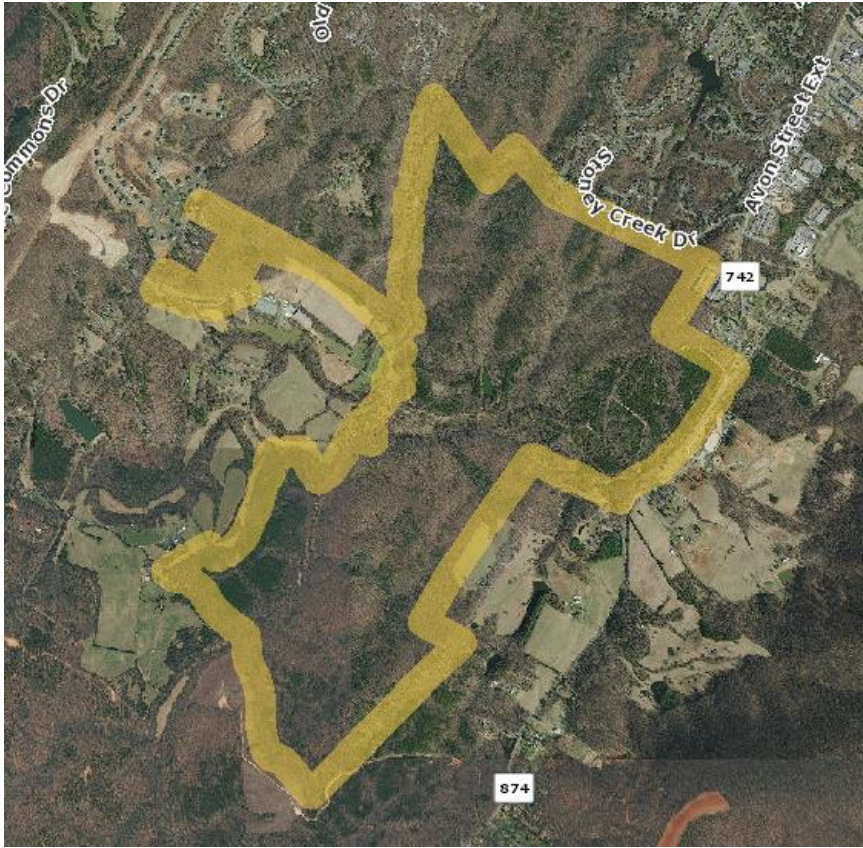


Figure 1: County GIS map (left) highlighting subject property and an enlarged Google map (right) showing project area along the Entrance Corridor.

ANALYSIS

Gray highlight = means the guideline can't be reviewed at initial site plan stage, but recommendations can be provided for final

Yellow highlight = means the guideline can only be reviewed for location/configuration at the initial plan stage

Regular text = means the guideline can be reviewed at initial plan stage, can be made a condition of initial plan approval, and can be the basis for denial

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	GENERAL GUIDELINES		
	<i>Purpose</i>		
1	The goal of the regulation of the design of development within the designated Entrance Corridors is to ensure that new development within the corridors reflects the traditional architecture of the area. Therefore, it is the purpose of ARB review and of these Guidelines, that proposed development within the designated Entrance Corridors reflect elements of design characteristic of the significant historical landmarks, buildings, and structures of the Charlottesville and Albemarle area, and to promote orderly and attractive development within these corridors. Applicants should note that replication of historic structures is neither required nor desired.	The site plan shows a restroom facility and kiosk located between the proposed parking areas. Due to the proposed location and height (11'5" and 10'2") of the structures, and existing and proposed landscaping, these buildings are not expected to be visible from the Entrance Corridor. An integrated, orderly and attractive development would be promoted with an appropriate landscape treatment along the EC frontage.	See landscape recommendations below.
2	Visitors to the significant historical sites in the Charlottesville and Albemarle area experience these sites as ensembles of buildings, land, and vegetation. In order to accomplish the integration of buildings, land, and vegetation characteristic of these sites, the Guidelines require attention to four primary factors: compatibility with significant historic sites in the area; the character of the Entrance Corridor; site development and layout; and landscaping.		
3-5, 9-16	<i>Compatibility with significant historic sites, compatibility with character of the Entrance Corridor, structure design</i>		
	Accessory structures and equipment		
17	Accessory structures and equipment should be integrated into the overall plan of development and shall, to the extent possible, be compatible with the building designs used on the site.	The structures proposed in this development are not expected to be visible from the EC. The lone mechanical equipment shown on the plans is restroom facility-related equipment. This equipment is within the structure and will not be visible from the EC.	None.
18	The following should be located to eliminate visibility from the Entrance Corridor street. If, after appropriate	The plans (L-101, C-210 and - 211) show some existing pipes along the frontage, pipes extended with ends in various locations	Provide information on the visibility and

	siting, these features will still have a negative visual impact on the Entrance Corridor street, screening should be provided to eliminate visibility. a. Loading areas, b. Service areas, c. Refuse areas, d. Storage areas, e. Mechanical equipment, f. Above-ground utilities, and g. Chain link fence, barbed wire, razor wire, and similar security fencing devices.	along the frontage, some with new end walls, and new block walls at existing utility poles. The visibility and appearance of these features isn't clear. No details on these features have been provided with the initial plan.	appearance of the pipes with end walls and the block walls at utility poles in the site plan.
19	Screening devices should be compatible with the design of the buildings and surrounding natural vegetation and may consist of: a. Walls, b. Plantings, and c. Fencing.		
21	The following note should be added to the site plan and the architectural plan: "Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated."	The note is not present on the site plan.	Include the standard mechanical equipment note on the site plan.
22-31	Lighting	A note on the cover sheet states that no electrical service will be provided or constructed as part of this project. However, a note on sheet C200 states that a new conduit north of the entrance is to service lighted entrance signs. Signage that is externally illuminated as opposed to internally illuminated would be better relate to the surrounding context.	Consider external down lighting for proposed signage.
	Landscaping		
7	The requirements of the Guidelines regarding landscaping are intended to reflect the landscaping characteristic of many of the area's significant historic sites which is characterized by large shade trees and lawns. Landscaping should promote visual order within the Entrance Corridor and help to integrate buildings into the existing environment of the corridor.	This portion of the Rt. 20 EC is largely a mixture of open and wooded areas. No new frontage landscaping is proposed. Existing wooded area would remain along the frontage north of the proposed site entrance. Some of this is beyond the utility line as viewed from the EC street (60'-90' from the street) and some is closer to the street in the right-of-way. South of the proposed site entrance, there would be an open view into the site for a distance of approximately 300'. Further west, existing wooded area would remain beyond the new paving and grading along the street (10'-50' from the street). While the standard, regularly spaced EC street trees would not be appropriate in this case, adding trees in available spaces to distract from the overhead lines and to integrate the area south of the entrance drive would be appropriate. Tree species have not yet been identified.	Provide additional trees along the frontage to help integrate the site into the surrounding context. Provide a complete plant schedule with the next submittal.
8	Continuity within the Entrance Corridor should be obtained by planting different types of plant materials that share similar characteristics. Such common elements allow for more flexibility in the design of structures because common landscape features will help to harmonize the appearance of development as seen from the street upon which the Corridor is centered.		
32	Landscaping along the frontage of Entrance Corridor streets should include the following:		

	<p>a. Large shade trees should be planted parallel to the Entrance Corridor Street. Such trees should be at least 3½ inches caliper (measured 6 inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 35 feet on center.</p> <p>b. Flowering ornamental trees of a species common to the area should be interspersed among the trees required by the preceding paragraph. The ornamental trees need not alternate one for one with the large shade trees. They may be planted among the large shade trees in a less regular spacing pattern.</p> <p>c. In situations where appropriate, a three or four board fence or low stone wall, typical of the area, should align the frontage of the Entrance Corridor street.</p> <p>d. An area of sufficient width to accommodate the foregoing plantings and fencing should be reserved parallel to the Entrance Corridor street, and exclusive of road right-of-way and utility easements.</p>		
33	<p>Landscaping along interior roads:</p> <p>a. Large trees should be planted parallel to all interior roads. Such trees should be at least 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 40 feet on center.</p>	<p>The proposed species have not been provided with the initial plan, but trees are provided along most of the length of the northern and southern perimeters of the entrance drive.</p>	<p>Provide a complete plant schedule with the next submittal.</p>
34	<p>Landscaping along interior pedestrian ways:</p> <p>a. Medium trees should be planted parallel to all interior pedestrian ways. Such trees should be at least 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground) and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 25 feet on center.</p>	<p>An informal arrangement of trees is shown along the interior pedestrian ways. These arrangements exceed the landscaping requirement along interior pedestrian ways and are consistent with the surrounding context of wooded areas.</p>	<p>None.</p>

35	<p>Landscaping of parking areas:</p> <p>a. Large trees should align the perimeter of parking areas, located 40 feet on center. Trees should be planted in the interior of parking areas at the rate of one tree for every 10 parking spaces provided and should be evenly distributed throughout the interior of the parking area.</p> <p>b. Trees required by the preceding paragraph should measure 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground); should be evenly spaced; and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be planted in planters or medians sufficiently large to maintain the health of the tree and shall be protected by curbing.</p> <p>c. Shrubs should be provided as necessary to minimize the parking area’s impact on Entrance Corridor streets. Shrubs should measure 24 inches in height.</p>	<p>An informal arrangement of trees is shown along the parking areas within the site, with some separated from the paved area by a sidewalk or a sidewalk and a stormwater conveyance channel. Most interior trees are grouped in a central planting area, rather than in individual tree islands. The quantity of trees shown exceeds the landscaping requirement for parking areas and is consistent with the surrounding context of wooded areas.</p>	<p>Provide a complete plant schedule with the next submittal.</p>
36	<p>Landscaping of buildings and other structures:</p> <p>a. Trees or other vegetation should be planted along the front of long buildings as necessary to soften the appearance of exterior walls. The spacing, size, and type of such trees or vegetation should be determined by the length, height, and blankness of such walls.</p> <p>b. Shrubs should be used to integrate the site, buildings, and other structures; dumpsters, accessory buildings and structures; “drive thru” windows; service areas; and signs. Shrubs should measure at least 24 inches in height.</p>	<p>The structures shown in the initial plan are minimal in nature and will not have long elevations or a degree of visibility that would require landscaping to soften their appearance.</p>	<p>None.</p>
37	<p>Plant species:</p> <p>a. Plant species required should be as approved by the Staff based upon but not limited to the <i>Generic Landscape Plan Recommended Species List</i> and <i>Native Plants for Virginia Landscapes (Appendix D)</i>.</p>	<p>Plant species have not been identified in this submittal.</p>	<p>Provide a complete plant schedule with the next submittal.</p>
38	<p>Plant health:</p> <p>The following note should be added to the landscape plan: “All site plantings of trees and shrubs shall be allowed to reach, and be maintained at, mature height; the topping of trees is prohibited. Shrubs and trees shall be pruned minimally and only to support the overall health of the plant.”</p>	<p>The plant health note does not appear on the landscape plan.</p>	<p>Add the standard landscaping note to the landscape plan.</p>

	Development pattern		
	<i>Site development and layout</i>		
6	<p>Site development should be sensitive to the existing natural landscape and should contribute to the creation of an organized development plan. This may be accomplished, to the extent practical, by preserving the trees and rolling terrain typical of the area; planting new trees along streets and pedestrian ways and choosing species that reflect native forest elements; insuring that any grading will blend into the surrounding topography thereby creating a continuous landscape; preserving, to the extent practical, existing significant river and stream valleys which may be located on the site and integrating these features into the design of surrounding development; and limiting the building mass and height to a scale that does not overpower the natural settings of the site, or the Entrance Corridor.</p>	<p>The overall property is wooded. In the project area much of the wooded area would be removed to accommodate the proposed development. Three small areas of trees are designated to remain north and east of biofilter #2 and a fourth is located just southeast of the parking area. The scale of structures proposed in this phase of development would not overpower the setting or site.</p>	None.
39	<p>The relationship of buildings and other structures to the Entrance Corridor street and to other development within the corridor should be as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> An organized pattern of roads, service lanes, bike paths, and pedestrian walks should guide the layout of the site. In general, buildings fronting the Entrance Corridor street should be parallel to the street. Building groupings should be arranged to parallel the Entrance Corridor street. Provisions should be made for connections to adjacent pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems. Open spaces should be tied into surrounding areas to provide continuity within the Entrance Corridor. If significant natural features exist on the site (including creek valleys, steep slopes, significant trees or rock outcroppings), to the extent practical, then such natural features should be reflected in the site layout. If the provisions of Section 32.5.2.n of the <i>Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance</i> apply, then improvements required by that section should be located so as to 	<p>The site is accessed from Rt 20. The travelway and parking areas have an organized pattern.</p> <p>The proposed building and kiosk are not expected to be visible from the EC, so their orientation is not an issue.</p> <p>There are no existing pedestrian ways along this frontage. Connections to existing and proposed trails are shown along the northern and southern perimeters of the site.</p> <p>The site is wooded and much of the wooded area will be removed to accommodate site related features.</p> <p>Views around the site are not expected to be negatively impacted.</p>	None.

	<p>maximize the use of existing features in screening such improvements from Entrance Corridor streets.</p> <p>f. The placement of structures on the site should respect existing views and vistas on and around the site.</p>		
	Site Grading		
40	<p>Site grading should maintain the basic relationship of the site to surrounding conditions by limiting the use of retaining walls and by shaping the terrain through the use of smooth, rounded landforms that blend with the existing terrain. Steep cut or fill sections are generally unacceptable. Proposed contours on the grading plan shall be rounded with a ten-foot minimum radius where they meet the adjacent condition. Final grading should achieve a natural, rather than engineered, appearance. Retaining walls 6 feet in height and taller, when necessary, shall be terraced and planted to blend with the landscape.</p>	<p>Only a portion of the park is being developed with this plan, so the relationship of the overall site to the surrounding conditions will not change with this proposal. Within this phase of development, the existing site rises gradually but steadily from the EC street toward the northwest (though the slope is not noticeable due to the density of the wooded area). Grading is proposed all along the frontage to establish a turn lane, entrance drive, and transition lane. As proposed, these graded areas will have a regular, engineered appearance. Site walls are proposed, flanking the entrance drive, but no details are included in the plan.</p> <p>An existing overhead line runs more or less parallel to the street, approximately 30' to 100' from the proposed turn lanes. At the north end of the frontage, a group of trees in the right-of-way is shown as to remain. This will continue to minimize visibility of the overhead line from the street. Beyond, trees on the street side of the line would be removed with the proposed grading, making the overhead line and support poles more visible. Block walls are proposed at existing utility poles along the frontage, and pipes (new and extended) end in locations near the street. Some of these walls and pipes may be visible from the street.</p>	<p>Provide details of the entrance walls and utility pole walls in the plan. Indicate material(s) and color(s). Physical samples may be necessary for review.</p>
41	<p>No grading, trenching, or tunneling should occur within the drip line of any trees or other existing features designated for preservation in the final Certificate of Appropriateness. Adequate tree protection fencing should be shown on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping and erosion and sediment control plans.</p>	<p>No grading is proposed within the tree save areas. The plan does not locate individual trees or their canopies, so conflicts between grading and drip lines cannot be determined. Tree protection is not called out on the plans.</p>	<p>Show tree protection fencing on the plans.</p> <p>Provide information to confirm that grading is not proposed within the dripline of trees to remain.</p>
42	<p>Areas designated for preservation in the final Certificate of Appropriateness should be clearly delineated and protected on the site prior to any grading activity on the site. This protection should remain in place until completion of the development of the site.</p>		

43	Preservation areas should be protected from storage or movement of heavy equipment within this area.		
20	Surface runoff structures and detention ponds should be designed to fit into the natural topography to avoid the need for screening. When visible from the Entrance Corridor street, these features must be fully integrated into the landscape. They should not have the appearance of engineered features.	The site plan shows a stormwater basin approximately 90' from the proposed edge of pavement of Rt. 20, south of the entrance to the site. Because the street elevation in this area (510') is lower than that of the basin's top (517'), the basin is not expected to be visible from the EC. However, the character of the proposed grading around the basin will denote the presence of an engineered structure. Landscaping could help integrate this area into the surroundings.	Provide landscaping between Biofilter #2 and the street to soften the regular, engineered appearance of the grading in this area.
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.		

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. Landscaping along the frontage.
2. Entrance and site walls: treatment.

Staff recommends that the ARB forward the following recommendations to the Agent for the Site Review Committee:

- Regarding requirements to satisfy the design guidelines as per § 18-30.6.4c(2), (3) and (5) and recommended conditions of initial plan approval:
 - Prior to Initial Plan approval the following items shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the ARB: None. The ARB recommends approval of the Initial Plan without conditions.
- Regarding recommendations on the plan as it relates to the guidelines: None.
- Regarding conditions to be satisfied prior to issuance of a grading permit: None
- Regarding the final site plan submittal:

A Certificate of Appropriateness is required prior to final site plan approval. The following items and all items on the ARB Final Site Plan Checklist must be addressed:

 1. Provide information on the visibility and appearance of the pipes with end walls and the block walls at utility poles in the site plan.
 2. Include the standard mechanical equipment note on the site plan: “Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”
 3. Consider external down lighting for proposed signage.
 4. Provide additional trees along the frontage to help integrate the site into the surrounding context.
 5. Provide a complete plant schedule with the next submittal.
 6. Add the standard landscaping note to the landscape plan: “All site plantings of trees and shrubs shall be allowed to reach, and be maintained at, mature height; the topping of trees is prohibited. Shrubs and trees shall be pruned minimally and only to support the overall health of the plant.”
 7. Provide details of the entrance walls and utility pole walls in the plan. Indicate material(s) and color(s). Physical samples may be necessary for review.
 8. Show tree protection fencing on the plans.
 9. Provide information to confirm that grading is not proposed within the dripline of trees to remain.
 10. Provide landscaping between Biofilter #2 and the street to soften the regular, engineered appearance of the grading in this area.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Attach. 1: [ARB2021-28: Biscuit Run Park Initial Site Plan](#)**

TABLE A

This report is based on the following submittal items:

Initial Site Plan		
G-001	Cover	02/25/2021
G-002	General Civil Site Notes	
G-003	Site Context and Key Plan	
G-004	Site Boundary Survey – Partial North	
S-120	Site Boundary Survey – Partial South	
S-121	Existing Conditions & Site Demo Plan North	
C-101	Existing Conditions & Site Demo Plan South	
C-110	E&S Plan – Partial North	
C-111	E&S Plan – Partial South & Notes	
C-112	E&S Details	
L-100	Landscape Site Plan – Partial North	
L-101	Landscape Site Plan – Partial South	
L-200	Landscape Site Details – Paving	
L-201	Landscape Site Details	
L-202	Landscape Site Details – Cont’d	
L-203	Landscape Site Details – Kiosk	
L-210	Vault Toilet Details	
C-200	Civil Layout & Utilities Plan – Partial North	
C-201	Civil Layout & Utilities Plan – Partial South & Notes	
C-210	Grading and Drainage Plan – Partial North	
C-211	Grading and Drainage Plan – Partial South	
C-500	Road Plan and Profile	
C-501	Road Plan and Profile	
C-502	Road Plan and Profiles	

C-503	Roadways Details	02/25/2021
C-600	Storm Water Management Plans	
C-610	Storm Water Management Details	
C-700	Maintenance of Traffic Plan	
C-701	Maintenance of Traffic	
C-711	Maintenance of Traffic Details	
L-300	Landscape Planting Plan – Partial North	
L-301	Landscape Planting Plan – Partial South	
L-302	Landscape Planting Details	