



COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE PLANNING
STAFF REPORT SUMMARY

Proposal: CCP202100001 Northern Albemarle Convenience Center	Staff: David Benish, Development Process Manager
Planning Commission Public Hearing: October 22, 2024	Board of Supervisors Hearing: n/a – Planning Commission’s finding forwarded to Board for information only
Owner: Albemarle County	Applicant: Albemarle County Facilities and Environmental Services Dept.
Acreage: 19.77 acres (parcel split by Rio Mills Rd. Proposed site on 6.7 acre northern portion of the parcel)	Comprehensive Plan Consistency for: Proposal to construct a solid waste convenience center for collection of household waste and recycled materials. To be operated by Rivanna Solid Waste Authority (RSWA)
TMPs: TMP 04600-00-00-18B1 Location: Northwest corner of the intersection Rio Mills Road and Berkmar Drive.	Zoning/by-right use: RA, Rural Area. The use is a public use. Public uses are permitted by-right in this zoning district.
Magisterial District: Rio	Entrance Corridor: No
School Districts: N/A	Proffers: None
Proposal: Construct a convenience center to provide a location for community drop off of recyclable materials and bagged household trash.	Requested # of Dwelling Units: N/A
DA: RA: X	Comp. Plan Designation: Rural Areas – preserve and protect agricultural, forestal, open space, and natural, historic, and scenic resources/ density (0.5 unit/ acre in development lots)
Character of Property: Undeveloped, mostly wooded and gently sloping topography	Use of Surrounding Properties: Rural, rural residential
Factors Favorable: 1. the proposed public facility is consistent with the Community Facilities Section of the Comprehensive Plan and the <i>Long-Range Solid Waste Solutions Advisory Committee Final Report (10/7/2015)</i> . 2. The location within the Rural Area is consistent with the Comp Plan, Community Facilities Objectives and guidance allowing for the location facilities in the Rural Area to address unique service needs, in this case providing convenient service to rural area residents. 3. The location of the facility provides a central location to serve the northern Albemarle County RA area and DA populations.	Factors Unfavorable: 1. No unfavorable factors as it relates to the proposal’s consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and the <i>Long-Range Solid Waste Solutions Advisory Committee Final Report</i> .

RECOMMENDATIONS:	

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan: Staff recommends that the Commission find the location, character, and extent of the “Northern Albemarle Convenience Center” public facility and public use thereof, as proposed, to be in substantial accord with the Comprehensive Plan, for the reasons identified as favorable factors in this staff report.

STAFF CONTACT:
PLANNING COMMISSION:
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

David Benish, Development Process Manager
October 22, 2024
N/A

BACKGROUND

Albemarle County, in partnership with the Rivanna Solid Waste Authority (RSWA), is proposing to construct and operate a convenience center for the collection of household trash and recyclable materials. The site is located on the northwest side of the intersection of Rio Mills Road and Berkmar Drive. The parcel is a total of 19.77 acres (TMP 04600-00-00-18B1) but is split by new section of Rio Mills Road. The facility is proposed to be located on the north side of Rio Mills Road. The northern portion of the parcel is approximately 6.7 acres. The facility will be located on the eastern half of the northern portion of the parcel; the western half of the site will remain wooded for the foreseeable future. The parcel is part of a larger area of land that is to be dedicated to the County upon demand, as per proffers associated with the Brookhill development.

PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

A Compliance with the Comprehensive Plan Review (“CCP Review” or “2232 Review”) in reference to the Code of Virginia statute which necessitates this type of local review process to consider whether the general location, character, and extent of a proposed public facility is in substantial accord with the adopted Comprehensive Plan. It is reviewed by the Planning Commission, and the Commission’s findings are forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for their information; no additional action is required of the Board. The Commission’s action is only related to the appropriateness of the site for the proposed public use and is not an action or recommendation on whether the facility should be constructed.

CHARACTER OF SURROUNDING AREA

The proposed site for the facility is wooded with a sloping topography with the higher elevation in the northwest corner of the site downward to the southeastern portion of the site. The surrounding area consists of is largely wooded to the south and east (across the Adjacent Berkmar Drive) with rural and suburban scale residential to the northeast of the site along Rio Mills Road. Some areas to the south of the site have been recently timbered, but the timbering is not related to approved development. A stone quarry exists to the south and east of the site. As noted above, some land to the south has been proffered to the County for public use, but there are no proposed uses on that site at this time.

This site and immediate surrounding area is designated as Rural Area in the Comprehensive Plan/Places29 Master Plan. It is also located near to the Hollymead Development area.

PLANNING AND ZONING HISTORY:

This parcel was proffered to the County for a high school or other public use(s) as part the approval of the Brookhill Development (ZMA201500007 Brookhill, approved 11/9/2016).

SPECIFICS OF THE PROPOSAL

The applicant has provided a narrative that describes the project (Attachment 3). A flyer describing the facility is also attached (Attachment 4).

The convenience center would be managed by the RSWA and would provide service to County residents in the same manner as those provided at the Ivy Convenience Center and the recently constructed Southern Albemarle Convenience Center in Keene. The following is a summary of the components of the site and its operation.

- Daily service six days/week in coordination with other convenience centers to minimize days with no center open
- Service hours are seasonally set (8:30 AM to 5:30 winter months; 8:30 to 6:30 PM summer)
- Recyclable materials collection of types consistent with the Ivy and Southern Convenience Centers (glass, cardboard, mixed paper, office paper, newsprint, plastic containers and film, aluminum and mixed metals-may vary with market conditions)
- Compostable food waste (potential)
- “Tag-A-Bag” household waste collection, less than 32-gallon bags (tickets sold offsite)
- Annual special waste collection days
- Staffing:
 - one attendant at all times during the operating hours;
 - equipment/truck operator to haul containers
- Structures/containers/improvements onsite:
 - Two (2) municipal solid waste compactors and one (1) cardboard compactor
 - Eight (8) roll-off containers for recyclable materials
 - Port-a-john and attendant station
 - One entrance on to Rio Mills Road
 - Developed portion of the site fenced and gated

COMMUNITY MEETING

Two community meetings were held as part of the Places29 North CAC (6/13/2024) and the Places29 Rio CAC (6/27/2024).

Community members expressed concern about the potential traffic impacts anticipated with this proposal, particularly on Rio Mills Road. Concerns focused on increased traffic volumes and speeding.

Community members also asked about potential noise and visual impacts, especially to adjacent and nearby properties. The applicant responded that they would be retaining as many trees on the site as possible. The perimeter of the site would be fully fenced, and the frontage of the site would be landscaped. Of the total 6.7-acre portion of the parcel, less than half will be developed with the use. The remainder of the site will stay wooded.

Concern was raised about the environmental and health impacts from runoff associated with solid waste materials and associated vectors (vermin). The applicant explained that the use of contained and enclosed compactors for household waste would significantly reduce or eliminate any runoff issues (in addition to County requirements for stormwater runoff measures).

Opinions were expressed that the site should be located more central to the rural populations it is intended to serve. The applicant responded that the proposed location is near arterial and collector roads that serve commuters and connectors to the rural population. Further, it is a location that provides access to the entire whole northern rural area, including portions east of Route 29 who would have more difficulty accessing the site if it were to be located more towards Earlysville for example.

TRAFFIC IMPACTS

The applicant has provided estimated traffic information for the proposed facility (p. 9 of Attachment 3, Applicant’s Project Narrative). The existing Ivy Convenience Center is considered the most direct comparable in terms of usage/traffic anticipated from the proposed Northern Convenience Center.

The Ivy Center averages 96 visitors per open business day, with Saturdays being the busiest days with approximately 190 visitors. Usage should be similar to, and potentially less than, the Ivy facility. The applicant notes that the “anticipated maximum trips to the proposed facility are 67-96 trips/day for weekdays and 118-190 trips/day on Saturday (based on average to high traffic counts at the Ivy Convenience Center). Assuming Saturday as a maximum, and equal trips over eight hours of operation, this would equate to an estimated maximum of 15-24 vehicles per hour on Rio Mills Road. Equally divided for each direction equates to approximately 8-12 vehicles per hour per direction as a one-day-per-week maximum.”

The 2021 traffic count (AADT) for Berkmar Drive was 9400 trips per day and 850 trips per day for Rio Mills Road. While the facility will likely generate additional traffic on these roads, both roads can accommodate additional trips. In addition, this location provides convenient access to the service from frequently used commuter routes (Earlsville Rd/Rio Mills Road, Berkmar Drive, Rt 29) from the northern rural area to the Urban Area and Charlottesville, where commuters can use the convenience center as part of other planned/daily trips.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Staff provides the following information for the Planning Commission to consider regarding the compliance of this proposal in relation to the County’s Comprehensive Plan. Relevant Comprehensive Plan text is in underline print and staff comments are in *italic print*.

Community Facilities chapter of the Comprehensive Plan (p.12.1):

Objective 1: Continue to provide public facilities and services in a fiscally responsible and equitable manner.

The nature of public service delivery:

- The location of new public facilities should be within the County’s Development Areas per County land use policies.
- Residents in the Rural Area should not anticipate levels of service delivery equal to those provided in the Development Area.
- Development Areas serve as service center locations for the Rural Area.
- **Public facilities are allowed in the Rural Area only in cases where it is not possible in the Development Areas due to physical constraints, the nature of the facility, and/or the service(s) provided.** [emphasis added] (p. 12-5)

The above guidance for public service delivery is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s Growth Management policy to generally encourage public facilities to be located in the County’s designated Development Areas. However, the Community Facilities component of the Plan (highlighted bullet, above) also recognizes that there may be a need to locate community/public facilities and services outside of the Development Areas to provide adequate and equitable service to the County residents. The purpose of the proposed convenience center facility is to provide convenient and relatively equitable solid waste collection service to rural residents. The proposed facility is intended to provide trash collection and recycling facilities to an area of the county that is not well served by private collection services or existing public facilities. Therefore, the nature of the proposed service and facility would be best provided by a location in the Rural Area, consent with bullet 4, above.

Development Areas are currently adequately served for trash collection and recycling by private/commercial collection services, the McIntire Recycling Center and the Ivy Material Utilization Center (MUC). The proposed facility will provide collection and recycling services to the northern portions of the county both east and west of Route 29 that are not well served by private haulers. The proposed facility may help to reduce cases of illegal dumping in the rural

areas by providing more convenient and accessible facilities for solid waste disposal. Attachment 5 is a map showing service areas for both existing and planned facilities. With the addition of this proposed convenience facility, most of the County will have some level collection and recycling facility/service through a combination of private services and county facilities.

The County's Long Range Solid Waste Solution's Advisory Committee Final Report (Oct. 7, 2015) has been accepted and used as the County's plan for implementing solid waste management services and improvements. The study contains the following recommendation:

5.7 Foster Rural Services

Carefully plan and establish recycling locations in more distance areas of the County. (p 22 of the final report)

The general location, proposed services, and conceptual design of the facility is consistent with the recommendations of this report. The location of the facility, in close to reasonable proximity to Rt. 29, Berkmar Drive, Earlysville Drive and Proffit Road, primary and collector roads connecting northern Albemarle to County urban areas and Charlottesville, provides a central location to for this facility to serve northern Albemarle County. This location also can provide service to the County's northern Development Areas.

Strategy 1e: Schedule funding of government facilities through the Capital Improvements Program, based on the needs identified in the Development Area Master Plans, other chapters of this Plan, and other adopted County Plans.

As noted above, the County's Long Range Solid Waste Solution's Advisory Committee Final Report has been accepted and used a county's plan for implementing solid waste management services and improvements. The report recommends establishing recycling locations in more distance areas of the County to provide for services to the rural areas. The location, character and extent of the proposed facility is consistent with the recommendations of this guiding document for solid waste services in the County.

Strategy 1g: Ensure that all government facilities conform to County regulations, site development standards, and policies.

The site will need to meet the design requirements of the zoning ordinance and water protection ordinance. The site will be subject to Site Development Plan review and approval. Landscaping along the southern and eastern boundary adjacent to Rio Mills Road and Berkmar Drive will be a point of emphasis as part of the site review process.

Objective 7: Enable efficient and cost-effective solid waste disposal and sustainable materials management to reduce waste, conserve resources, protect human and environmental health, and decrease greenhouse emissions.

Providing convenient collection and recycling services to rural populations will help implement this objective. The proposed facility will make waste disposal and recycling more convenient and available to rural residents, encourage recycling efforts, better assuring of sanitary disposal of household, and discouraging illegal dumping in the rural area. This site also provides a convenient location that serve the northern Development Areas (Hollymead, Piney Mountain).

Strategy 7b: Ensure that solid waste generated in the County is collected, processed, and disposed of in a manner consistent with the waste management hierarchy, the TJPDC Solid Waste Plan and the County's Environmental Management Policy.

This site will be consistent with this strategy and the waste management hierarchy. The location of this facility should encourage a higher level of recycling by providing more convenient access to rural residents in northern Albemarle County.

Strategy 7d: Continue to identify best practices for the management of solid waste in order to provide guidance for the County.

The Albemarle County Long Range Solid Waste Solutions Advisory Committee was formed by the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors and the committee identified in its Final Report best practices and recommendations for the management of solid waste in the County now and in the future. Their Final Report has been accepted and used as the County's plan for implementing solid waste management services and improvements. As noted previously, that report recommended Fostering Rural Services by establishing recycling centers in more distance areas of the County that are currently underserved by private haulers.

Strategy 7j: Update strategies for solid waste management, if needed, after the Long-Range Solid Waste Solutions Advisory Committee completes its work.

The Committee's Final Report was not completed in time to be included in the current Comprehensive Plan when it was last adopted. It is anticipated that the recommendations of the Final Report will be considered and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan with the upcoming five-year update of the Comprehensive Plan.

SUMMARY

Staff find the following factors favorable to this request:

1. The proposed public facility is consistent with the Community Facilities Section of the Comprehensive and the *Long-Range Solid Waste Solutions Advisory Committee Final Report* (10/7/2015).
2. The location within the Rural Area is consistent with the Comp Plan, Community Facilities Objective and guidance allowing for the location facilities in the Rural Area to address unique service needs, in this case providing convenient service to rural area residents.
3. The location of the facility provides a central location to serve the northern Albemarle County RA area and DA populations.

Staff find the following factors unfavorable to this request:

1. no unfavorable factors as it relates to the proposal's consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and the *Long-Range Solid Waste Solutions Advisory Committee Final Report*.

RECOMMENDATION

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan: Staff recommends that the Commission find the location, character, and extent of the “Northern Albemarle Convenience Center” public facility and public use thereof, as proposed, to be in substantial accord with the Comprehensive Plan, for the reasons identified as favorable factors in this staff report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach 1: [CCP2024-01: Northern Albemarle Convenience Center - Location and Vicinity Map](#)

Attach 2: [CCP2024-01: Northern Albemarle Convenience Center - Aerial Map of Vicinity](#)

Attach 3: [CCP2024-01: Northern Albemarle Convenience Center - Applicant's Project Narrative](#)

Attach 4: [CCP2024-01: Northern Albemarle Convenience Center - Flyer with Summary](#)

[Description of Facility](#)

Attach 5: [CCP2024-01: Northern Albemarle Convenience Center - Solid Waste Convenience Centers Service Areas](#)

Attach 6: [CCP2024-01: Northern Albemarle Convenience Center - Conceptual Design and Site Plan](#)