

Crozet Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes from November 8, 2023

Members Present:

Joe Fore - Chair
Michael Monaco - Secretary
Bruce Butala
Kenneth Thacker
Valerie Long
Lonnie Murray, Planning Commission
Ann Mallek, Board of Supervisors

Staff Present:

Allison Wrabel, Community Connector
Kevin McDermott, Interim Director of PLanning
David Benish, Development Process Manager

Chair Joe Fore called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm

Call to Order, Agenda Review, Introductions

No minutes from the all-CAC meeting in October to approve.

Scheduled Presentation - AC44: Transportation and Land Use

David Benish presents update on AC44 process. Outlines the four-phase process; we are in the tail end of phase 2: "Draft Goals and Objectives," drawing on the four planning toolkits from prior meetings, in turn developed from community priorities.

- The Board decided not to move forward with any expansion to the growth areas, but did ask for development of a process.
- The Board directed continued definition of implementation and intent re: Rural Crossroads Communities.
- The Board directed not to move forward with further comp plan work on Rural Interstate Interchanges, but may direct smaller-scale planning following the completion of the comp plan draft.

Lonnie: While growth management was mentioned in the overall toolkit planning process, those four areas don't necessarily address growth management. Were there any possible toolkits for actual growth management, particularly in rural areas?

David: Not necessarily - we are developing a specific section on county expectations for the rural areas, and hopefully that will address what we intend for the rural areas as opposed to the development area.

Kevin: Would push back a bit - we can't stop population growth, but when we talk about growth management we mean we don't want growth to expand out of the current boundaries.

Lonnie: Yes, but there are also places within the development areas where we don't want development. Comments from the public evidence a need for a specific discussion on smart growth - purchasing parks, acquiring green spaces, etc.

Kevin: Some of these things will fall under environmental protections, but I also see the Activity Centers as an approach to smart growth - we want development specifically here. I think the expansion criteria provide an opportunity for this as well.

Questionnaires are currently up at engage.org/albemarle/org/ac44 for five more topics, with three additional topics incoming. There will be Planning Commission meetings and a check in with the Board before reaching Phase 3.

Kevin presents on:

- Multimodal Planning Approach - a method used by localities across VA, with input from VA transit & VDOT, to emphasize multimodal transportation methods in dense developments for efficient growth.
- Activity Centers - variety of services/housing, multimodal transportation, access to green space, within development areas. Intended to consolidate and update the current Master Plan Centers.
- Combining the Activity Centers with the master plan Bike & Ped networks, arrived at the Multimodal Corridors - Through Corridors, connecting centers, and Placemaking Corridors, destinations in their own right. In multimodal corridors, all modes should be minimally supported.

Discussion/Questions

Community member: Is the map available online yet?

Answer: Not yet - this presentation will go up on the CCAC page, and then there'll be a feedback form on the map itself later in the process.

Community member: Add'l feedback - the Engage AC44 site is unwieldy and not user-friendly - needs to be written in plain language to make sure people can understand the concepts they're being asked about.

Kevin: That's a really fair comment and one we commonly ask and receive - we'll work with the engagement team on that.

Community member: I don't have faith in the master planning process. Eastern Avenue is still on this map, as are Park St sidewalks; with those elements deprioritized, how am I supposed to have faith in this planning process?

Kevin: Specifically regarding Eastern Ave and the transportation priorities - we've received a lot of feedback on that, and we'll revise it.

Community member: When it's not in the top priorities for the county, it's hard to have faith that these maps will ever represent reality?

Joe Fore: Are there elements on this aspirational map that are incorrect or need to be added? For me - access to Beaver Creek reservoir.

Lonnie: The historic bike route touches the growth area as well and should be incorporated.

Community member: I find it difficult to reconcile the aspirations on this map with the necessary boundaries of reality.

Valerie: Consider Jarman's Gap to Chiles - a highly used resource both for Crozet residents and folks from out of town. There's no multimodal access there (or to Shenandoah).

Community member: Would be good to walk Powell's Creek (north-west side of Crozet down to Jarman's Gap). Also recommends Roaring Fork Transit Authority - fantastic 70-mile bus system.

Community member: Incorporate the existing Crozet connector trails as well. Also good to incorporate the future 64 park-and-ride.

Michael Monaco: The Master Plan included a trail from 240 to the back of the elementary school - would be good to see that.

Ken Thacker: Would support a few more nodes of community spaces that aren't housing - these activity centers are islands, and we might need smaller pockets of non-residential to link those.

David: The design standards & concepts in phase 3 for individual developments might address some of that - in narrowing the definition of activity centers, we did cut out some of those smaller one-offs.

Updating & Consolidating Land Use Designations in the Comprehensive Plan

David: Currently we have 24 land use designations across 5 master plans - some are similar but have different names, as well as other inconsistencies. Updating & consolidating is recommended by the current Comp Plan and the Housing Albemarle policy.

Summary of how these changes relate to the Crozet MP:

- Neighborhood Residential Low would change from 1-1.99 units/acre to 1-3 units/acre.
- Community and Commercial Mixed Use - increases block length to 300-500 ft from 300-400 ft
- Office/Flex/RD/LI: Increases block length to 300-500 ft from 300-400 ft
- Institutional: Research and development added as a primary recommended use
- Public Lands & Green Space - adds rec. for connections to nearby/adjacent Activity Centers and Neighborhoods, as well as a reference to the Biodiversity Action Plan.
- The Downtown and Middle Density/Missing Middle Residential, which are currently only in the Crozet Master Plan, could now be applied to other growth areas

The first change is likely the most significant one.

Community member: It feels as though proposed developments always see the maximum number of units within the range of recommended units? i.e. the 3-6 units in Neighborhood Residential.

David: Point well-taken, but stratifying down may be more granular than is practical. I do think we need to address that concern, and how we can better explain that in a tool.

Joe Fore: Maybe there can be an opportunity for specific guidance on form and unit type to exemplify the occasions where the range of units will occur.

Lonnie: Regarding industrial - there are areas around Crozet - Yancey Mill - that are agricultural support but would be defined as industrial. There's also a history of food production in Crozet, as well as Starr Hill brewery. Agricultural support industrial - and/or just agricultural - would be helpful to support those.

David: Right now it's focused entirely on the development area.

Bruce: I find "Industrial" to be too vague, and agree with Lonnie - we want industries that don't destroy the land.

Valerie: The rural area designation does limit their abilities to expand.

Community member: Would be good to support those kind of farm and growth areas.

David: This is a possible use for the future Small Area Plans - small focused plans on places exactly like Yancey Mills.

Lonnie: There are already a lot of hoops people have to jump through to can food or clean hops - incorporating that sort of light ag would be useful.

Community member: Would the Acme site be a possible site for a solar farm under these definitions?

David: County's currently revising the solar ordinances, so hard to give a definite answer right now - probably not under current definitions, but that kind of exception is a great point.

Lonnie: Would love to see more about brown field/toxic site redevelopment as well.

Update from Allison Wrabel on Training

Allison: In the past, we used to have a new member orientation mandatory. We're introducing a series of videos talking not only about CACs but also generally about local government. The one that's up right now is specific to CACs, currently working on videos specific to FOIA, Master Plans, Albemarle County 101, Plans (Comp, Master, Small Area), and other topics. Email forthcoming. They'll be on YouTube, so they'll be publicly available; CAC members will be asked to complete a form verifying that they watched the video.

Board of Supervisors/Planning Commission Liaison Updates

Ann: No updates.

Lonnie: Conversation about Economic Development at last planning commission meeting. Broadening tourism and what that means for the local economy, as well as the local recreational economy. Next meeting (next week) will be a discussion of Goals & Objectives for Housing & Economic Development.

Community Concerns

No community concerns volunteered.

Closing

FINAL

No meeting in December, but the space is reserved just in case. Next meeting scheduled for January 10, at 7 pm at the Library. Details will be posted on the County calendar on the website.

<https://www.albemarle.org/community/county-calendar>

Michael motioned to adjourn; Valerie seconded. Joe Fore adjourned the meeting at 8:32 pm.