

Crozet Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes from January 10, 2024

Members Present:

Joe Fore - Chair
Michael Monaco - Secretary
Nathan Alderman
Bruce Butala
Grace Remer
Kostas Alibertis
Valerie Long
Lonnie Murray, Planning Commission
Ann Mallek, Board of Supervisors

Staff Present:

Allison Wrabel, Community Connector
Abby Stumpf

Call to Order, Agenda Review, Introductions

Chair Joe Fore called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. Members & community members introduced themselves, including new CCAC member Nathan Alderman.

June, August, September, and November minutes are approved with a motion from Valerie, seconded by Kostas.

Board of Supervisors/Planning Commission Liaison Updates

Planning Commission

Lonnie: AC44 proceeds. Seems definite that there will be a Rural Areas chapter in the comp plan. Amendments to the Water Protection Ordinance are in progress - Riparian Overlay District on the county website. Joint session with BOS on Affordable Housing. Board members seem supportive of AH incentives. PC members voiced skepticism about the efficacy of the free market as sole creator of affordable housing; BOS seemed receptive to the idea of more direct county intervention. Staff is beginning work on guidelines for solar projects in Albemarle County.

Joe asks for clarity on Riparian Buffer District timeline - Lonnie clarifies that PC has given feedback on draft to staff. Speaking personally - Lonnie laments the loss of riparian buffers around row crops, a past decision that remains in place.

Joe asks - any other feedback from Lonnie on the water protection ordinance?

Lonnie - A sweeping revision of the WPO in 2014 effectively eliminated stream buffers in the rural area, and created a loophole for developers in development areas. This loophole will be fixed by the new ordinance. Would prefer to see language that would re-establish 100' buffers where they were erased procedurally after 2014.

Bruce - how does it look to get that changed?

Lonnie - The opportunity to give feedback was here: <https://engage.albemarle.org/riparian-buffer-overlay-district>, but has closed. There may be more opportunities for feedback with the next draft.

Discussion Topic (Crozet Master Plan Implementation Review: Affordable Housing in Downtown Crozet Neighborhoods)

NOAH Study

Michael - Prince William County did one a few years ago; methodologically, it seems straightforward, although a Crozet-scale NOAH study might make less sense than an Albemarle-wide study.

Joe - Supervisor Mallek's recollection was that there was a "plan to make a plan;" staff has been focused almost entirely on AC44, and it sounds like it's still sitting there.

Downtown Overlay

Joe - There was very specific language drafted for the overlay to create opportunities for small-scale redevelopment, but that didn't make it into the draft. Instead, the Master Plan included an Architectural Study and then a public input process/study to create the same thing.

Nathan - Is that irrevocable?

Valerie - We could've used the public input process to develop those big ideas and throw it to staff for the specific wording.

Joe - Also true that this could be a county-wide issue/project - is this being incorporated in some way in AC44?

Lonnie - This is tied to the environmental concerns - I would be less concerned about density in a parcel if it felt like there were good constraints around the footprints of the buildings.

Nathan - How does height play into this - how do you balance taller buildings with reduced footprints?

Lonnie - I'd rather see taller buildings with smaller footprints, personally.

Joe mentions re-using the language from that first stab at the downtown overlay.

Lonnie expresses a concern on speculative buying - speculation on future density creating short-term financial incentives that drive up home prices.

General Discussion

Joe - We know the naturally occurring affordable housing is already being bought up and potentially vanishing.

Bruce - Would like to see more old lots converted to parks/green space.

Nathan - Increasing tree canopy replenishment requirements could reduce footprints and increase green space.

Lonnie - We need to increase funding for redevelopment & renovations.

Kostas - Still get into a circle of taxes - if the value of your home increases because the rising home values around you.

Nathan - Households at or below a certain level of value could receive some tax relief.

Kostas - Need to offset increased home values from renovation to preserve affordability.

Valerie - Renovating lots to maintain the existing character of the home would be good - for example, C'ville recently made it so that you could reno to 2 units but got a bonus unit for preserving the original structure.

Other Committee Business - Future Topics?

Joe - We know upcoming - Barnes Lumber/DCI is February, Transportation update, Parks update.

Valerie - Implementation of the master plan as an emphasis - checking in on implementation goals with staff at those specific meetings.

Lonnie - Conservation mowing - started by Natural Heritage Committee to create wildlife habitats on county lands.

Kostas - recycling initiatives.

Nathan - any plans to add composting to municipal services?

Michael - Three Notch'd Trail update - Valerie suggests that slots into Transportation update.

FINAL

Joe - Water Protection - once the Riparian Buffer District Overlay revision is done, we can update on that. Rescue squad, fire department, police department (PD comes to the Crozet Community Association regularly).

Lonnie - VA native plants & invasives - a conservation themed meeting. (Need to eliminate the Nandina plants!)

Closing

Next meeting scheduled for February 14, at 6:00 pm, at the Crozet Library. Details will be posted on the County calendar on the website. <https://www.albemarle.org/community/county-calendar>

Kostas motioned to adjourn; Valerie seconded. Joe Fore adjourned the meeting at 7:51 pm.