

**Albemarle County Planning Commission
March 31, 2009**

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a public hearing, meeting and work session on Tuesday, March 31, 2009, at 6:00 p.m., at the County Office Building, Lane Auditorium, Second Floor, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Members attending were Marcia Joseph, Calvin Morris, Bill Edgerton, Don Franco, Linda Porterfield, Thomas Loach, Vice Chair and Eric Strucko, Chairman. Bill Edgerton arrived at 6:05 p.m. Julia Monteith, AICP, non-voting representative for the University of Virginia was present.

Other officials present were Wayne Cilimberg, Director of Planning; Judith Wiegand, Senior Planner; Elaine Echols, Principal Planner; David Benish, Chief of Planning and Greg Kamptner, Deputy County Attorney.

Call to Order and Establish Quorum:

Mr. Strucko called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and established a quorum.

Other Matters Not Listed on the Agenda from the Public:

Mr. Strucko invited comment from the public on other matters not listed on the agenda. There being none, the meeting moved to the next item.

Work Sessions:

Places29 Master Plan – the Land Use Tables and Future Land Use Map

Staff will present the details of the Land Use Tables from Chapter 4 of the Master Plan and demonstrate how these tables are coordinated with the Future Land Use Map. Staff would like direction from the Commission about the information and level of detail included in the Land Use Tables.

Ms. Wiegand presented a PowerPoint Presentation to review the use of the Land Use Tables. (See PowerPoint Presentation)

The purpose of the work session is to show how the land use tables work together with the future Land Use Map and to get direction from the Commission. There are basically two land use tables in the Places29 Master Plan with land uses in centers and in areas around the centers. These tables work basically by:

- setting out the uses based on what fits the center or the area around the center;
- by setting the size of building footprints;
- recommending a mix of uses with some flexibility, and
- recommending the type and sizes of open spaces desired in the areas.

Mr. Edgerton arrived at 6:05 p.m.

Ms. Wiegand continued noting that the example chosen was in the southern half of the corridor noted as the Westfield Neighborhood Services Center. According to Table Land Use 1 what an owner/developer in the proposed center could do with his or her property is as follows:

- The residential could be single-family attached or detached multi-family. The type of residential units will vary, which shows what the units are at 3 to 20 units per acre. Retail uses are defined by a maximum footprint and number of stories within. An additional story is allowed if uses are mixed vertically within the building. Auto Commercial Service uses include new and used car dealerships, car repair businesses and gas stations, which is basically any use that is car or vehicle oriented. The concern here is to preserve a pedestrian friendly center. The uses must be

small enough that people feel comfortable walking past to reach uses on the other side and to allow block sizes that facilitate those pedestrian movements. The table indicates maximum footprints. All activities other than parking and gas pumps must be inside the building to avoid impacts on surrounding businesses. The business must demonstrate that it won't have an impact on those adjacent uses.

- For office and office R & D flex uses in this service center staff recommends that they have a single building footprint of 15,000 square foot maximum, a two-story maximum height for office only buildings; and if they put retail on the ground floor or put residential units above office uses they can have up to three stories. This cell of the table has been updated since the copies were made for the Commission.

Mr. Strucko asked what the rationale was for these limitations.

Ms. Wiegand replied that it was similar to the limitations in other cases where staff was looking to have buildings that are Neighborhood Service Center size with that being the smallest center. It is not going to have many acres and they would like to have multiple uses and create a pedestrian environment. The three types of uses listed are allowed. Basically the industrial uses are not permitted in the Neighborhood Service Center because they simply have larger buildings and usually bring more traffic by both car and truck delivery vehicles than would be compatible with the Neighborhood Service Center.

- For institutional uses they have a maximum single building footprint to make it compatible with the area. They have an open space requirement of at least one green space with a minimum of one-quarter acre in this area. The entire center area is about seven acres.
- In going through the tables there are a couple of things that are different with this Master Plan than they have seen for other ones. They have building footprints and number of stories. The chart shows how the two are arranged in the three types of centers. Neighborhood Service Centers, for example, have a 15,000 square foot building footprint maximum. Again, that is to preserve a smaller center and pedestrian feel to it and make the buildings in the center to be more compatible with the areas around it. In 15,000 square feet they could easier have a small grocery store. Reid's across the street is just less than 13,000 square feet. Foods of All Nations is about 12,000 square feet. Therefore, they could get a good size neighborhood grocery store in there as well as a number of auto repair type places to fit within that building footprint.
- The Community Center is recommended for a 60,000 square foot maximum footprint. That is the kind of center that they would like to have anchored by a grocery store and a 50,000 to 60,000 square foot grocery store, which is a standard size for the full sized ones. The new Harris Teeter on Pantops is going to be between 42,000 and 43,000 square feet. In all of these cases the buildings could be more than one story, which gives the owner of the building the option of a larger business than the square footages. But, they would have to build up rather than out further.
- In the Destination Centers they are looking at a slightly smaller footprint because they would really like to see a more intensive mix. The smaller stores in Barracks Road Shopping Center are the types of stores found in the Destination Center, which are all comfortably less than 50,000 square feet.
- In the Uptown there is a 25,000 square foot maximum, but the number of stories is six. So they could easily have more than a one-story business or retail on the ground floor and more above it. This is designed because they want a very fine grained pedestrian and street network in the Uptown area. The number of stories increases with the type of center. Some of the larger ones, particularly the Destination Center and the Uptown, could easily be transit targets. They want to get a lot of uses within the Uptown to attract more people to the area. The maximum building heights and the maximum building footprints are basically new with Places29.

Staff welcomes any comments and concerns from the Commission on the first table.

The Planning Commission discussed the first table and provided comments as included in the summary after the staff's presentation on the second table.

Ms. Wiegand reviewed the second table, which governs the area around the centers. The table is color coded across the top to match the future land use map. The primary and secondary uses are listed down the left side. She explained the contents of the table by calling out some of the things that a property owner would face if they decided to develop a parcel. Staff reviewed the following:

1. Urban Mixed Use – Mix of Uses (outside of center)

- Want it to be at Neighborhood Scale.
- Office R&D flex has a restriction on the amount of development to be no more than 25 percent light manufacturing. Don't want uses in there that might have impacts on adjacent uses.

2. Maximum Single Building Footprint and Maximum Business Size

- It varies from one land use designation to another. The intent of these limits is to encourage more vertical development in the areas around centers by keeping the footprint smaller and also to encourage larger businesses to locate in the centers.

Staff would welcome any comments on this kind of footprint and maximum business size, which is usually double the size of the maximum footprint. They would have at least a possible two-story business if they wanted.

3. Height Limits – Around Center

4. Institutional Uses Comment

Generally staff has said not more than four stories, which is less than in some of the more defined centers. A developer might be required to mix uses vertically in order to reach the full four stories. Single use buildings might have fewer stories. Some uses have by an exception provision, which means that it is something handled during development review with possibly a special use permit. There would be criteria by which the Planning Commission would review the exception with the Board of Supervisors making the final decision. The criteria would be similar to those used for special use permits for compatibility with the surrounding area. The Planning Commission may put a limit on the number of stories or just leave it at four as suggested. It will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Ms. Echols noted that they would have to look at both the surroundings and what the future land use would be on a case-by-case basis. Staff would like the Commission's direction regarding the general scale in terms of how by exception things would fit in. The Commission might want to get some input from the Architectural Review Board. She noted that the height limit was 65' in conventional development, which translates to five or six stories.

The Planning Commission discussed the second table and provided comments as included in the summary after the public comment.

Mr. Strucko invited public comment.

Public comment was taken from the following persons:

- Neil Williamson, Free Enterprise Forum;
- Jeff Werner, Piedmont Environmental Council and City of Charlottesville resident; and
- Morgan Butler, Southern Environmental Law Center.

Based on staff's presentation and public input received, the Commission noted some areas for possible clarification or changes to be made:

- Concern was raised about the mixture of uses allowed in the multi-story buildings and being able to provide an adequate amount of parking behind the buildings. Concern was raised that the combination of the building size and parking required might end up yielding smaller buildings, negatively impacting the streetscape and building capacity called for in this Neighborhood Center.
- The feasibility of a two-story grocery store in the centers was questioned.
- Ms. Monteith expressed less concern about building height than building massing. She would prefer less building footprint and more building height.
- Question was raised as to what is in the tables that would help avoid some of the existing problems on US 29, such as large parking lots fronting the road.
- Caution was expressed about being too specific since Places 29 will be part of the Comp Plan. It needs to be written as a guide to direct the developer away from the usual suburban center-type of development.
- Request that staff provide visual examples of each type of center showing schematics and mock layouts of buildings and parking and building heights with step back requirements as they get taller.
- Interest expressed in maximizing the amount of mixed use so services are close to where the people live.
- Ms. Monteith asked that the open space wording be articulated clearly to make sure that open space does not end up just being a fountain. Mr. Edgerton asked that open space be defined with ten percent as an absolute minimum.

Staff will incorporate the Commission's comments into the next draft of the Places 29 document and bring the revised draft back for Commission review at a future work session. No formal action was taken.

The Planning Commission took a break at 7:22 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:30 p.m.

Places29 Master Plan – Chapter 8, Implementation (text)

Staff will present the details of the text of Chapter 8 to the Commission and the public. Staff requests direction from the Commission about the contents and level of detail in Chapter 8. Public comment will follow the presentation and discussion with the Commission.

Note: The Implementation Table section of Chapter 8 will be distributed to the Commission at the March 31 meeting and will be available to the public later in the week. (Judy Wiegand)

Mr. Benish presented a PowerPoint Presentation on Places 29 Master Plan Chapter 8 Text to begin the implementation section of the Places29 Plan. The implementation discussion is cut up into two work sessions. First, staff will talk about the text section distributed a couple of weeks ago and highlight a couple major parts prior to opening the discussion for Planning Commission input.

- This chapter discusses the public and private actions that are needed to implement the plan. It will establish the timing for project development. It identifies the partners that are part of the process of implementing the projects called for in the plan. Some of the partners include County staff, the Planning Commission, VDOT, the City and residents.
- Within this section of the plan the recommended projects and focused improvements are in four major categories: transportation, land use and development, community facilities and parks & green systems. The projects that are identified in this section of the plan are needed to serve existing and approved development. In this corridor and the Places29 area there is a backlog of infrastructure needs. Those needs have been generated not necessarily by this proposed Master Plan, but the existing approved developments that are out there in this corridor. The Master Plan sets the vision for the future. The implementation section is trying to set a general course for action as a guidance tool for addressing these needs and how they allocate their limited resources in a way that efficiently uses those resources to get the important improvements done. What the Master Plan does contribute in the Neighborhood Model principles is to encourage the form of development that can

help eventually reduce some of the demands that they have or at least delay the need for some of these improvements. The urban form of development they are trying to encourage hopefully will establish and support a multi-modal transportation system that can delay some of the major road improvement projects that are necessary.

- In the presentation staff focused on a new component to our land use planning process, which was adopted in the Pantops Master Plan, to try to establish priorities for implementing the Master Plan. Staff has tried to establish priority areas and priority improvements that are necessary to support the development that has taken place. Again, the priority areas staff has established are focused in on areas where they have existing facilities, infrastructure and service needs based on the existing and proposed development where there are acute regional transportation needs and the investment is important to support the approved developments not built but potentially coming in the future. The other intent and goal of the priority areas is to provide for a priority setting that discourages development and distribution of improvements in those areas that they have not been designated for priority areas. The improvements needed to support development outside the priority areas are a much lower priority.
- Essentially two priority areas have been established. Priority one includes the transportation improvements which are focused on the improvements necessary to support the Route 29 Corridor that serves a full range of users including regional and local users.
- The transportation improvements identified located in this priority corridor focus on improvements to Route 29 that encourage parallel and perpendicular road systems and inter-parcel connections that help to balance traffic impacts and transportation needs in the corridor. The recommendations also encourage a multi-modal form of travel encouraging transit, and bike and pedestrian facilities for a form of development that reduces overall traffic demand. It also includes an access management plan to control traffic impacts and friction points. He reviewed the map that shows the Route 29 transportation corridor that displays the general location of the transportation improvements.
- The five essential transportation projects that are important to move forward on in the implementation plan are as follows:
 1. Improvements recommended in Route 29H250 Studies, which includes the additional lane on Route 29 South from Hydraulic Road to the existing Emmett Street Interchange; additional ramp to the ramp to the Bypass and the other long term improvements including grade separation and Hydraulic Road, and Berkmar Drive Extended;
 2. Hillsdale Drive Extended Project, which is in the City;
 3. Grade-separation at Rio Road at US 29;
 4. Widen Route 29 to 6 lanes north of Polo Grounds Road; and
 5. To establish and enhance the Transit System.
- The list of steps embedded in the plan that helps try to work towards implementing those big five projects

1. Establishing the community advisory council;
2. Small area plan for Rio Road/Route 29 intersections;

- **Priority 2: Areas for Redevelopment & Approved New Development**

- These are the areas where they would intend to focus our resources and improvements in order to support the anticipated development in these areas. There are two geographic areas for the redevelopment areas. The areas are focused in on the Route 29 North Corridor basically from Hydraulic Road to Rio Road and include the four quadrants of Rio Road. The second area is the Hollymead Downtown in the Hollymead Town Center Area and Airport Road area that includes what would be the Uptown Area.
- The remaining areas are considered the non-priority areas. Decisions on development proposals here should be made with an understanding of the level of investment that has taken place to support development in that area. The notion is that all of our resources and efforts should be

focused in on the necessary capital improvements and improvements necessary to support the prior two Priority Areas. The non-priority areas are an area where they would discourage development to take place and discourage the allocation of resources until the Priority Areas are satisfactorily served by services.

- **Evaluation of Development Proposal** – Evaluation Criteria established by which to look at development proposals within both of these areas with an eye to how one would step through these questions as to whether an area that is in a non-priority area is appropriate to consider and approve development on. If the existing facilities are there and if the service standards are adequately met in those areas, then these might be appropriate areas to consider for a rezoning or a new development. If these measures can't be met, then accounting for that development in those locations is probably not appropriate.
- **Funding -**
- Given the current environment where the traditional resources are currently more limited, this is a difficult issue. This chapter outlines some alternative funding mechanisms that are available. Those funding mechanisms ultimately are the responsibility of the Board. In some cases it would include the public to determine whether those are appropriate with regards to bond referendums and tax districts. At this point in time it is difficult to predict what the best alternative funding mechanisms would be. Staff believes it is very important in the master planning process to identify the needs and priorities and the funding mechanisms that are best available to address those priorities. Funding issues will be discussed in detail at the April 14 work session on the Implementation Table. Staff welcomes comments.
- Projects will be monitored and subject to a regular five-year review for updates.

Mr. Strucko invited public comment.

Public comment was taken from the following persons:

- Jeff Werner, City resident, felt that if they build the road network that the uses would take care of themselves. The establishment of the road network is critical.
- Neil Williamson, of Free Enterprise Forum, questioned where the text suggests that they get the funding.
- Morgan Butler, of Southern Environmental Law Center, noted that overall they agree strongly with the need to identify priority area and focusing first on those projects that as page A-1 states are needed now to serve existing development that address the backlog of infrastructure needs. However, they feel that the priority areas set forth in the draft need to be refined so that they more precisely reflect those very types of projects. He suggested that they break down Priority Areas to make them smaller and more focused, particularly along 29 North where the most serious congestion problems currently occur where the proposed improvements are therefore most needed.

There being no further public comment, Mr. Strucko closed the public comment to bring the matter back before the Commission for discussion.

Based on the public input received, the Commission provided comments, questions, and suggestions as follows.

- The Commission wants to know what the cost of the infrastructure is estimated to be, how it will be paid for and how it compares to the other Master Plans in the County. For roads, costs should include an estimate on the right-of-way and utilities, which VDOT can assist with. The Commission also wants to understand what mechanisms can/will be used to pay for it. No formal action was taken.

- There is interest in the implementation table providing the milestones of when things need to start. There is recognition that most of the improvements are long overdue and already needed.
- Question was raised regarding the land use types on the maps and how the boundaries relate to property boundaries. The discussion on the land use boundaries based on parcels was deferred to the next meeting, acknowledging that parcel boundaries change regularly.
- There was some agreement with Morgan Butler's suggestions to break down Priority Areas to make them smaller and more focused, particularly along 29 north.

Mr. Edgerton pointed out that he agreed with Mr. Butler's suggestions regarding breaking down the Priority Areas.

Mr. Strucko agreed with Mr. Edgerton that he found Mr. Butler's suggestions pretty intriguing. It really does focus and narrow down the priorities. He would ask staff to give serious consideration to the following: The Hydraulic/29 intersection is number one. Rio and 29 is number 2. The Polo Grounds Road to Hollymead Towne Center is number 3. He personally saw merit in that order. He did not have all of that information that he needs to make his final opinion on it, but found that suggestion very attractive.

Staff will incorporate the Commission's comments into the next draft of the Places 29 document as summarized and bring the revised draft back for Commission review at a future work session.

Mr. Strucko noted that concludes the work session on this particular section of Places29.

Ms. Wiegand pointed out the next steps in the process, as noted below.

Old Business:

Mr. Strucko asked if there was any old business. There being none, the meeting moved to the next item.

New Business:

Mr. Strucko asked if there was any new business.

- Staff was requested to look into development activity associated with the new Watkins Nursery in Crozet. An email response can be sent to the Commission.
- Packets to be delivered to the Commission next Wednesday, April 8, exclusive of the Places29 information that was handed out at this meeting.
- There is no meeting next week, April 7.

There being none, the meeting moved to the next item.

Adjournment:

With no further items, the meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m. to the Tuesday, April 14, 2009 meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the County Office Building, Second Floor, Auditorium, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

V. Wayne Cilimberg, Secretary

(Recorded and transcribed by Sharon C. Taylor, Clerk to Planning Commission & Planning Boards)