

Crozet Community Advisory Council – Minutes – Draft
Wednesday, January 21, 2015 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Crozet Public Library, Crozet

CCAC members present: Meg Holden (Chair), Jennie More (Vice Chair), George Barlow, Mary Gallo, Beth Bassett, Dave Stoner, Kim Guenther, Leslie Burns, Kim Connolly, Brenda Plantz, John Savage, Jon McKeon, Lisa Marshall, Susan Munson, Ann Mallek (Board of Supervisors), Tom Loach (Planning Commission)

CCAC members absent: Phil Best

Public attendees: Paul Grady, Bill Schrader, Mike Marshall, Jim Duncan, Susan Stimart, Cliff Fox, Scott Collins, Al Taylor, Emily Kilroy, Lacy Seville, Keith Collier, Tim Dodson, Bevin Boisvert, John Oprandy, Karen Ingersoll, Steve Kostiw, Teri Kostiw, Terri Miyamoto, Carol Wisinski, Michael Wisinski, John Anderson Jr., Nick Nacey, Tony Frazier, Dale Castle, Nicholas Castle, Jane Frazier, Rob Moore, Maynard Davis, Karen Moore, Frank Stoner, Tim Tolson, Tammy Garber, Rachel Hawkins, Ben Wilson

Chair Meg Holden called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Agenda Review (Meg Holden – CCAC chair): Meg Holden welcomed our visitors, distributed the agenda and reviewed it with the Council, and welcomed any additions.

2. Approval of Minutes from the December 17, 2014 meeting: John Savage moved to accept the minutes of the December 17, 2014 meeting as presented, seconded by Kim Guenther, and the minutes of the December 17, 2014 meeting were approved by vote of the Council, subject to any corrections given to the Secretary within a week from today.

3. Project Updates/Information:

- Streetscape updates/issues, safe walks to school, Harris-Teeter crossing: Ann reported that the final approval has been given for the safe routes to school project at Crozet Elementary and construction will commence soon.

- Scott Collins to discuss neighborhood rezoning in Foothills Crossing: Mr. Collins spoke with the CCAC about his proposed residential project in Foothills Crossing. He said that they have not submitted their rezoning request yet, and wanted to share their ideas and seek input from the community before they did so. Mr. Collins presented a map of the area depicting their plans. He said that Foothills Crossing is under construction now, and Westlake Hills has been started too, and their project would tie all these together, being located between Westhall, Westlake Hills, and Foothills Crossing. Their project would tie into the road to Westhall, and Park Ridge Drive will extend through this parcel, to go out to Parkside Village. As a result, it will give several areas two points of access. The parcel contains approximately fifteen acres and would be rezoned to single-family detached, and serve as a transition between the denser development nearer to Crozet (the Villas at Foothills Crossing), and the larger, less dense lots at Westlake Hills. Right now the zoning is R-1 (as is Foothills Crossing), allowing one unit per

acre and they want to rezone to Planned Residential Development (“PRD”), which would allow three or four units per acre. Alan Taylor with Riverbend Development is the developer.

A question was raised about road connection to the south to Route 250 and access to the west to Park Drive. Mr. Collins said that there is a spur road to Park Drive in Phase 4 of Westhall that allows access to the west. The timetable for any access to Route 250 is uncertain at this time because there is no concrete plan to cross Lickinghole Creek. Ann noted that the County had hoped that this could be done with a large rezoning, but that has not been possible. Ultimately it is hoped that this property would connect more directly to Route 240 through the former Acme Visible Records property (now owned by Beam Inc.). For the time being, access will be on Park Ridge Drive through Western Ridge. The new Villas at Foothill Crossing will be built west of the subject parcel, and this development will afford Parkside with access to Route 240. Ann said that there are several unknowns right now, and the challenge with the Acme site is getting over the railroad tracks. The general idea is to have east and west access routes for residents. A commenter asked whether residents living near Crozet Park will have a new way to get to Charlottesville and Mr. Collins confirmed that they will. Another commenter asked why they must rezone from R-1. Mr. Collins said that this would provide a transition from larger lots on the east side of the connector road to the villas that will be located to the west. This property was zoned R-1 in the 1980s when the whole county was zoned. The Crozet Master Plan and the Comprehensive Plan call for this property to be developed at a density of three to six units per acre, and so this request is consistent with that. Note that Foothills Crossing is a by-right development in the R-1 zone.

Leslie asked about the target cost of the homes there. Mr. Collins said that these homes are intended to be less expensive than those in Foothills Crossing, primarily because the lots are smaller. However, he could not estimate a price because this will be a multi-year process. They will be detached homes with off street parking in driveways and garages. Green space will be included and the development will tie into the Crozet trail system; they are coordinating this with Dan Mahon with the County (Outdoor Recreation Supervisor). As currently planned, the project would contain about sixty homes (it would have been between fifteen and twenty homes by right). It was noted that a maximum of fifty homes can use one egress, and it was asked where the other egress would be for this project. Mr. Collins said that the plan is for the property to have access on the east and west sides, and so it meets the requirement. A commenter expressed concern that there is no new access to residents living on or near Park Road, and that events at the park can create difficulties in ingress and egress. Mr. Collins said that the phasing will be done in a way that the roads and lots will all be created at the onset. Other commenters expressed concern about more residents having to use Park Ridge Road. When the fifth phase of Westhall is built, there will be another access there for Westlake. Ann said that access across the railroad track out to Route 240 is in the Master Plan, but the County has always hoped that the private sector would do this, because the County is not in the roadbuilding business. Another concern was raised about emergency access to Riverbend’s new development. Meg noted that the CCAC is familiar with road and connectivity issues. Dave asked how this proposal would fare with the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, as it does appear to be consistent with the Master Plan. Tom said that much will depend on the details and it is very difficult to predict the PC and BOS votes. They will look at the green space and other factors. Looking at it under the Comprehensive Plan, they are permitted to request this rezoning and it comes in below

the maximum density by one-third, and does afford some connectivity between existing neighborhoods. Asked about the sequence to connect to Parkside Village, Mr. Collins said that this is being designed now, and will likely happen first. The Westlake connector is under construction now. The Villas at Foothill Crossing are zoned R-6 and are being developed at about five units per acre.

One commenter approved of the diversity of housing options that this proposed development affords, although the connectors are through existing neighborhoods. Susan M. said that we should press the County to try to get the connector roads built. Should we require a developer to build roads first? John noted that he used to live in Fairfax County where the County builds the roads, and the taxes are three times higher than they are here. Ann reminded the CCAC that this is the first look and that this will be an ongoing project. Asked about their timing for the rezoning application, Mr. Collins said that it would occur in the next couple of months. Tom then commented on infrastructure development generally, noting that we have been fighting for concurrency of infrastructure (that it should come at the same time as growth). The County is now \$130 million behind in capital improvement needs. Infrastructure takes time, and the County has not invested in its capital improvement fund for the last two years.

- Update on Barnes Lumber – Frank Stoner: Mr. Stoner reported that they closed their purchase of the Barnes Lumber tract just before Christmas. Noting that he has already spoken with several people, including some present this evening, about where to go from here, he said that there are a number of things we can work together on constructively. Tom then read from Mr. Stoner’s letter in December and referenced the statement in the letter that there is uncertainty over the amount of commercial space the downtown can support. Tom said that he talked with Dave Benish about this and Mr. Benish has asked the Planning Department staff to conduct an evaluation of the Downtown District as a commercial space from a land use perspective. In addition, when the new County economic development director is hired, it may be possible to have that person review the economic viability of the District.

4. Prepare to nominate/elect officers, discuss idea of a nominating committee; try to elect officers in February: Meg said that Jennie has served as co-chair with Meg this year, in anticipation of assuming the chair after Meg. However, Jennie said that with many new faces on the CCAC she is willing to reconsider whether to take that role. Meg asked that we consider appointing a two-person nominating committee to identify candidates, and that we begin the process of identifying ombudsman for the various issue areas for the CCAC. Jennie said that elections are to some degree connected to the changes made by the Board of Supervisors in how members of Community Advisory Councils are elected, noting that she will need to reapply for her position. It is the understanding from the County that members who are participating and active stand a good chance of being reelected. Ann said that participation has not been an issue with the CCAC, but there needs to be a way for people to assert their interest. Emily Kilroy said that of the three new members elected in October, two are completing existing terms and can apply to come back. The rule change is that at end of a member’s first term, the position will come up as a vacancy and be advertised, and the current member may reapply, but others may do so as well. This change gives the BOS an opportunity to determine whether the existing member should be reappointed. It also relieves the County staff of the need to follow up with members to see if they want to be reelected; the burden is on the member to stay on the Council. Leslie

moved that a nominating committee consisting of Meg Holden and John Savage be appointed, seconded by Susan. Upon unanimous vote of the Council, Meg and John were appointed as the nominating committee, and elections will be held next month. The committee will contact current officers to see if they wish to stand for reelection, members may nominate others, and members may self-nominate. Jennie noted that we need to be clear on the election process so that existing officer members may reapply and that their position may be noted by the BOS in whether to reappoint them. The Council then discussed how the terms for the officers should be coordinated with CCAC terms generally. John moved to hold elections in February with terms to begin as of April 1, for chair, vice chair and secretary. Beth seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Discuss new term application renewal process and how it relates to election – Emily Kilroy: Lee began the discussion by explaining the recent changes with the Places 29 Advisory Council, noting that with the bypass and other difficult issues, it has been a difficult 3-4 years for them. They represent a large geographic area with a lot going on. In light of all these issues, the BOS members that work with Places 29 decided to suspend meetings for a couple of months to reassess the Council. They did an assessment and survey, received good feedback, and are still finalizing recommendations to get Places 29 back up and running. After not having anyone in the community engagement specialist position for several years, Emily Kilroy will be providing support to the advisory councils. The County will be reviewing its procedures and looking to reinstitute support for all of the advisory councils. Support may include requiring staff to provide full orientation for new advisory council members and keeping the councils advised of the three to four month planning calendar. This would allow the councils to be apprised of upcoming issues so that they may provide the BOS and staff with feedback. Emily said that she will send us a copy of the proposal that will go to the BOS.

6. Decide on ombudsmen for specialty areas or begin the dialogue; come up with a list of areas: The secretary will send out the list of current ombudsman positions to the CCAC so that we may be thinking about these for the next meeting. We may want to add or delete focus areas.

7. Discuss possibility of having another meeting and bringing together a larger community group to work on Downtown development (perhaps charrette style): This discussion was covered to some degree in the next item.

8. If time permits continue to brainstorm development issues and ideas led by Dave Stoner and Kim Connolly: Kim and Dave have been acting as ombudsmen to talk with the County about the types of development in Crozet the County can support, which may be difficult for the CCAC to cover in a single two-hour session once a month. Perhaps we could approach the Crozet Community Association or other non-governmental groups that can help to do this work. Because there may be activities that the CCAC cannot do (due to Freedom of Information Act or other concerns), other groups may be able to work with developers and present their findings to the CCAC. As Tom mentioned, the Planning Department is going to be looking at Crozet land uses and feasibility in the Master Plan, which is reviewed every five years. Dave Benish and the Planning Department will look at it from a planning perspective, and will wait for the new economic development director to review it from a financial standpoint. There is a

substantial part of the Master Plan devoted to implementation of economic development. Dave handed out materials from the meeting that he, Kim and Jennie had with Lee, Susan and Emily. The main takeaway from the meeting was to think about what possible economic development activities might be needed, and then come back and talk about resources. Emily sent to the Council the list of what was discussed and Dave made the current handout from that. Kim said that these ideas came out of the community development corporation discussions and Mr. Stoner's proposals for the Barnes property. What is economically feasible or realistic in Crozet? Should CCAC take this on? Or is the CCA the proper forum? Or is this an ombudsman duty to do this research?

It was noted that there is a business development appendix at the end of the Master Plan and Dave summarized the action items. Dave said that his interest in seeing this done derives from the good ideas about development in the Downtown Crozet District and Growth Area already in the Master Plan. First, economic data useful to new and existing businesses must be collected, followed by a market analysis. What can downtown bear? What community input is needed? There is a known redevelopment potential downtown, but the community must look at how it affects the whole Growth Area. John said that this needs to come from broader community, rather than just the CCAC. Further, the CCAC likely does not have time to take this on itself. Ann asks what information already exists in this regard, and Lee said that she and Susan Stimart will review this and identify where these data sources are. Who has this data? As for the timetable, the new economic development director is indeed coming (hopefully in April) and Susan will be part of that office. Some of this research is already in progress.

Tom said that the County has looked at what uses can go in what location without having a negative effect on the community, even if the use is permitted under the zoning category. We have discussed the Acme site and downtown, and also Old Trail, but we need to be proactive as to what we currently have in land uses and what targeted industries can be brought in. What fits in the community? There are likely also some businesses that may be home-based now but will need space soon too; perhaps an incubator could work for these. For a start, it would be helpful to identify all the businesses in Crozet, and from there identify businesses that the community wants or does not want. This determination may include issues like water, pollution, traffic, etc. Lee says that the data exists, but is very general and so it will be necessary to narrow it down to Crozet. Tom noted that many of the towns in the University of North Carolina study were in financial straits, but this is not the case here. At the same time, Crozet is not a political entity but is instead part of a larger place. While we want to be proactive, we historically have had to be reactive. Now, we want to determine what we want and be pro-active to make that happen. Leslie said that to hold a successful charrette, it is necessary to bring in professionals who are able to frame the issues and keep participants focused and within the sideboards. The CCAC can use ombudsmen to help gather information about all this. The downtown Master Plan was done this way; the County provided funds to bring in experts. Ann said that it might be possible to find funding for such a project, and perhaps Delegate Steve Landes could be helpful for this. The community here is passionate and money will come if people are united behind it. Ann asked the CCAC not to feel inhibited by having to react to people's ideas because this does enable us to find what we want. It will be a help to have County staff start working through this data. Meg agreed that community involvement will be important and this may be a role for the CCA. Tim Tolson introduced the CCA as a non-partisan community organization that wants to

invest in Crozet's unique qualities. The CCA provides a forum for discussion about Crozet and disseminates information out to the community. The next meeting is March 12 at 7:30 p.m. at the Field School. The celebration will be on July 4.

9. Items not listed on the Agenda: None.

10. Announcements: Tim Tolson said that the Crozet Independence Day Celebration will be on July 4 this year. The CCAC was reminded to send in its officer nominations to John. The March 18 CCAC meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Meadows (because the library space will be in use by the Virginia Festival of the Book).

11. Future Agenda Items: Send these to Meg or Jennie.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

George Barlow
Secretary