

Crozet Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes from November 9, 2022

Members Present:

Joe Fore - Chair
Michael Monaco - Secretary
Mallory DeCoster
Kostas Alibertis
Allie Pesch
Jim Duncan
Sandra Hausman
Shawn Bird
Lonnie Murray, Planning Commission
Ann Mallek, Board of Supervisors

County Staff:

Emily Kilroy, assistant to county executive
Serena Gruia, Public Engagement Coordinator

Community Attendees:

(see the sign in sheet)
Rod Bukowski
Terri Miyamoto
Joe Abbate
David Miyamoto
John Woodworth
Tim Tolson
Matt Helt
Karen & Larry Zipprich

Chair Joe Fore called the meeting to order at 7:04

Call to Order, Agenda Review, Introductions

The CCAC did not achieve a quorum. Meeting minutes and committee business moved to the end of the meeting as we don't have a quorum.

Scheduled Presentations 1 - CAC/County staffing & operations

Emily Kilroy:

Following a joint meeting of all CAC chairs a few weeks ago, Joe invited them to this meeting. The county staff typically assigned to CACs are focused almost entirely on the comprehensive plan, which is currently in a peak activity cycle aimed at 2024. The BOS approved two temporary positions to help backfill the CAC liaison role, which will sit in the Community and Public Engagement department. These staff roles have sat in both Community Development and CPE in the past. These two staff positions will start later in November.

This past year has been more structured than CACs usually are; we look forward to returning CACs back to the business of community engagement. The staff liaison will be here in January. They are coming out of the joint CAC chair meeting with an intent to bring in CAC members at large to the conversation. That too is aimed for January.

Serena Gruia:

To clarify: those temp positions are 3-year positions. One goal is having more a reference library/backlog of information - plain English, common language approaches to government projects. Understanding those information needs is one way the CACs can help the county.

Joe Fore adds some clarity: The staff liaison will not replace relevant county staff for presentations. Joe invites CAC feedback.

CAC feedback:

Joe Fore: It's nice to have staff capacity to build consistent and complete agendas with all relevant resources.

Mallory DeCoster: I've received zero training on how to operate, FOIA training. Formal onboarding program would be great.

Emily Kilroy: We can work on that and get old materials back out by the Spring.

Kostas Alibertis: The biggest issue we've had there is Reply-Alls, which are dangerous via FOIA.

Lonnie Murray: The VA state FOIA training has been very helpful.

Serena: any topics of interest in particular?

Joe Fore: (recaps some of last meeting). The regular topics are good - parks etc. One of Valerie's points last meeting was how we hold peoples' feet to the fire re: master plan implementation.

Matt Helt: Why is this position 3-year, temporary, at the usually-low comp/benefits the county provides?

Emily Kilroy: We'll get the comp/benefits study back in the winter, so we can look at that accurately. We are excited about the staff we've identified for these roles, which were funded as backfill positions. We hope that this leads to a different conversation in a couple years.

Joe Fore: It has felt that not having a dedicated staff liaison like this for the past few years made it hard to get County attention. This feels proactive to me, re: providing staff support; a commitment/investment from the board, as opposed to continued inaction.

Emily Kilroy: We won't parachute the new folks in alone in January. Invites CAC members to reach out with feedback throughout the process.

Matt Helt: Has found some issues using the website. Emily invites him to direct specific issues to the county.

Jim Duncan: I would like to know specifically about the onboarding process. We do want to have regular updates on ongoing projects - Eastern Ave, for instance - but we do also want to know more, so we can do a better job at what we do.

Joe Fore: A priority - how to help the community have a voice in long-term, five-year goals. If you don't have a specific project in mind, it can be hard to visualize the future - we can guide that process.

Allie Pesch: The development dashboard on the website was great - we miss Andrew Knueppel's work.

Joe Fore: The inter-CAC meeting was valuable, it would be good to keep that going.

Emily Kilroy: That's a priority for us - we used to do more joint meetings, and more meetings that put CACs in other contexts - sitting in the BOS seat etc.

Matt Helt: It would be helpful as a community member to have a reminder at the start of the meeting re: the purpose of the CAC. Also, would appreciate improved GIS data & UI at the county level.

Emily: We actually are in the early stages of a plan to improve that technology - it's coming eventually.

Lonnie: It would be great to see community input on those improvements to technology.

Supervisor Mallek: Definitely helpful to know that something is brewing, and to have ways to tell the community that. Creating a larger group of people ready to plug in.

Announcements, Updates, Committee Business

With Sandra Hausman's arrival, we reach quorum.

Sandra Hausman moves to approve minutes, Mallory DeCoster seconds. Unanimous approval.

Joe Fore shows off the draft all-virtual meeting policy, which is essentially verbatim from state law. Joe notes that we are permitted 3 meetings per year, non-consecutively. CCAC needs to think about how we would exercise this power, if the policy is implemented. Thanks Supervisor Mallek for advocating at the state level for more virtual meetings. Joe Fore's formal disappointment is noted. (that was a joke, take that last sentence out).

The biggest impediment at the county level is staffing, according to Supervisor Mallek, when it comes to offering a hybrid meeting.

Lonnie Murray poses the question of whether or not this could be done on a volunteer basis with community members.

Some discussion ensues - prompted by Allie Pesch - about whether or not the CCAC feels a need to prioritize hybrid meetings. (this includes a note from Matt Helt that we have asked the state for other things and not yet received them). Jim Duncan notes later that his opinion is that we should have either in-person or all-virtual, until we can successfully integrate hybrid.

Joe Fore asks for a motion on the draft policy. Sandra Hausman moves to accept the draft policy. Jim Duncan seconds the motion.

Mallory DeCoster opposed. Kostas Alibertis abstains. Six to one, the virtual meeting policy is approved.

There will be a future public meeting on the mobile home park by Crozet Park re: land use; they sent in a development use application for a slight increase in the number of units. This is likely our topic in January; we may not hold a December meet.

Announcements

Supervisor Mallek: the strategic plan was adopted last month, leading into the five-year financial plan; from that, we'll begin development of a proposed budget, to be released by the county executive in February. The stream assessment from Montclair can be appealed by the landowner; once the appeal period is over, we move forward. Ongoing work in several different departments on how to solve these processes to avoid occurrences where the county is drifting without authority between state and federal law. There will be a public engagement process about the stream health.

Matt Helt: Has outside counsel been called in on an ethical matter in the stream?

Supervisor Mallek: There was an investigation inside; I don't have the details here.

Tim Tolson: CAC will meet tomorrow night, with a presentation from Erik Schmitz on the Montclair development.

Joe Fore: The Vue. There were supposed to be 61 trees at the Vue; they have planted zero since the place opened. I emailed Supervisor Mallek and code enforcement; they were aware of it and have been working on the owners. October 31 was the deadline for compliance; they have been issued a notice of violation for not planting the trees, and now can go forward with any penalties.

Supervisor Mallek: These things have taken very, very long in the past. It's a very cumbersome delivery system for zoning issues period. The owner is William Park, the owner is William Park.

Lonnie Murray: I would like to see an Albemarle Tree Commission, like the City of Charlottesville has. There are best practices that would be benefited by citizen oversight.

Supervisor Mallek: There is a tree-related ordinance in the strategic plan, from which we can feel bolstered.

Scheduled Presentations 2 - Crozet Trails Crew

[Presentation available here](#)

Staffed by community, with the goal of making trails easier to use or more attractive - bridges, benches, signs, etc. Coordinate with the County on various projects. County Parks and Rec uses their mowers to get to the big trails; we do the rest. Community engagement work, including guided tours; also work to identify significant trees.

Some specific tasks accomplished:

- Trail from creekside to jarman's gap
- Blue Ridge Homebuilders Association sent out a team to build
- On the east side of Crozet Park, added a new foot connection to Myrtle Street - a master plan project
- Extended westhall trails down around the retention ponds
- Created trails behind Chesterfield Landing to Sparrow Hill
- There's a trail on school property connecting the Meadows to Old Trail Drive behind Brownsville Elementary; since it's on school property, the teachers don't need permission slips! There was an outdoor classroom there which may require some rebuilding.
- Added a small bridge to connect western old trail trails to Western Park

Some specific upcoming tasks:

- Need to go through Cory Farm HOA property to connect Chesterfield Landing to Sparrow Hill
 - This reqs a small footbridge over Lickinghole Creek
 - This discussion brought in Tim Padalino, and sparked discussion about a Foundation or MOU to get money from Crozet Trails to the County
 - Army Corps of Engineers said that location is fine for a bridge.
 - County (Tim and Butch) applied for a grant; grant was denied because the easement wasn't clarified with Cory Farm.
 - Next steps for progress:
 - Cory Farm easement
 - Crozet Trails can pay for engineering and design
 - Then, community fundraising for the ~\$50,000 needed for the bridge
- The Vue and Pleasant Green have provided easements to the county for trails, which would connect at the north to, eventually, the Mint Springs
- Upcoming work along the Barnes Lumber site, connecting to parkside village

- From Old Trail to Crozet Ave; the end of that trail would have to be a stopping point/circle unless we can get a crosswalk at Oxbow.
- A new retention pond below the Lodge at Old Trail messed up some of the existing trails there

Obstacles:

Our biggest obstacle: EASEMENTS. We got No Trespassing notices along the trails.

Otherwise: physical barriers, railroad tracks, Crozet Ave, streams

Wayfinding (new kiosk, map styles, mobile apps, signage)

Mother Nature herself

Money (Coordination w/county? Annual 5K? We <3 Starr Hill? Donations? Trail sponsorships? Grants? Etc).

How can people help?

Advocacy

Insisting on connections between neighborworks

Walk the trails and know where they are

Provide funding

Lonnie asks about managing invasive species.

Terri Miyamoto: Managing invasive species is beyond our capacity, unfortunately.

Matt Helt: Who actually has ownership over the trails - what's the liability? Is the County responsible for my liability?

Terri: I believe our volunteer form waives liability.

Supervisor Mallek: Can we forward the presentation?

Terri: Yes!

Closing Material

Next meeting tentatively scheduled for December 14 at 7:00 pm, at the Crozet Library. Details will be posted on the County calendar on the website. <https://www.albemarle.org/community/county-calendar>

Joe Fore adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm.