Albemarle County Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
Draft Minutes October 27, 2026

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a public meeting on Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Members attending were: Karen Firehock, Vice Chair; Corey Clayborne; Mary Katherine King (arrived at 6:05 p.m.); Nathan Moore; Lonnie Murray; and Catherine Brown.

Members absent: Luis Carrazana, Chair.

Other officials present were: Michael Barnes, Director of Planning; Bart Svoboda, Director of Zoning; Francis MacCall, Deputy Zoning Administrator; Kevin McDermott; Rebecca Ragsdale; Scott Clark; Jered Tate; Margaret Maliszewski; Jenny Tevendale, Deputy County Attorney; and Carolyn Shaffer, Clerk to the Planning Commission.

Call to Order and Establish Quorum

Carolyn Shaffer called the roll.

Public Hearing

AFD-2026-00005 Glen Oaks AFD Review

AFD-2026-00006 South Garden AFD Review

Scott Clark, Conservation Program Manager, said he would present on the Glen Oaks and South Garden agricultural and forestal district reviews. He said that the AFD program was a voluntary land conservation program that provides benefits to both landowners and the community. He said that community benefits are largely provided through land use restrictions in Chapter 3 of the County Code, which prohibits small-lot subdivisions on rural AF district land and limits development to more intensive uses.

Mr. Clark said that, for example, a sample parcel not in an AFD can develop both small development right lots and larger 21-acre by-right lots. He noted that for a parcel in the AFD, those development right lots are not permitted, except in the case of family subdivisions; therefore, he noted that any parcel that has or has the potential for those development right lots cannot use them in most cases if it is an AFD. Regarding the periodic five to 10-year reviews, he said that the ordinance provides several factors to be considered when reviewing a district.

Mr. Clark said that, per County policy, parcels determined to have no development rights and that cannot be further divided to create one or more parcels less than 21 acres in size are not included, because for those parcels, there is virtually no restriction applied by their status in the district. He said that the Glen Oaks district was located on the southeast side of the Glenmoore Rivanna Village development area, with the Rivanna River at the bottom of the district. He said that the 354-acre district contains five parcels.

Mr. Clark said that the review process began in August, and all landowners were notified by mail. He said that no withdrawal requests had been received. He said that of the five parcels in the district, four had no remaining small-lot development rights, and three of these parcels can be removed from the district immediately. He said that one parcel was in open space taxation, and

removing it immediately would impose rollback taxes on the landowner. He said that, as has been the practice for the past few years, the district was being renewed for five years to allow the landowner time to adjust to the taxation before being withdrawn at the end of the five-year period.

Mr. Clark said that staff recommended renewing the district for a five-year period with the noted removals of the three parcels. He said that the AFD committee voted five to two to recommend renewal of the district for five years without the recommended removals.

Mr. Clark said that the South Garden district was an older district created in 1999, located between Crozet along US-29 and Albemarle on Barbershop Hill Road. He said that the nine-parcel district consisted of just over 2,200 acres. He said that no withdrawal requests had been received for the district, and he noted that all parcels in the district retained some small-lot development potential. He said that both staff and the committee recommended renewal as is for another 10-year period. He said that a single public hearing can be held for both districts.

Mr. Clayborne asked why the two committee members voted against the recommendation for the Glen Oaks AFD.

Mr. Clark said that the two members who voted against that motion were in favor of carrying out the removals in accordance with County policy.

Mr. Murray asked whether there were statistics regarding the number of family subdivisions that had occurred over the past five to 10 years, noting that individuals may exercise small-lot developments by performing a family subdivision.

Mr. Clark said that research conducted several years ago indicated there was very little use of that option. He said that although it had not been tracked since then, it had not been a significant factor in division in the districts. He said that further research could be conducted to find specific numbers.

Mr. Moore asked if the Glen Oaks AFD would only have two parcels.

Mr. Clark said that it was unusual. He said that Glen Oaks had always been a small district, but if the recommended action was taken, there would be two parcels left; one was under a conservation easement, and the other would presumably be removed in five years. He said that the district would not be tremendously effective overall, given that the remaining large parcel was under an easement that was more restrictive than the AFDs.

Mr. Moore said that it felt unusual to have a district consisting effectively of one person's property.

Mr. Clark said that there had been one or two other very small districts in the past, and staff had raised the option of eliminating small or single-parcel districts; however, that had not happened at the Board level.

Mr. Moore said that regarding the AFD reviews, he asked for an explanation of how restricting uses of large land holdings benefited the community.

Mr. Clark said that they were an effective tool for reducing residential development in rural areas, which is a stated County policy in the comprehensive plan. He said that for parcels in districts with small-lot development potential, these tools prevent that development from occurring. He said that for land in a district presumably devoted to open space, agriculture, or forestry, a slightly higher level of review is required for legislative acts, such as rezonings or special use permits; he

added that as part of the normal review process, an additional step was added where the advisory committee was able to comment on how the adjacent use might affect the favored uses in that district.

Mr. Moore said that given the significant housing needs currently facing the community, limiting housing production may not provide an immediate benefit. He said that one of the key goals of the AFDs, based on County policy regarding rural areas, was to encourage a robust and successful agricultural and forestry economy. He said that it would be beneficial to see the impact of those AFDs on the agricultural and forestry economy, specifically regarding what they produce that would not be produced otherwise, to provide information for future discussions.

Ms. Firehock said that a longer conversation should be scheduled at some point and noted that she would discuss it with the chair.

Ms. Firehock opened the public hearing for comments from the public. There were none, so the public hearing was closed, and the matter was brought back before the Commission.

Mr. Clayborne motioned that the Planning Commission recommend renewal of the Glen Oaks AFD for five years with the recommended removals. Ms. Brown seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0). (Mr. Carrazana was absent)

Mr. Clayborne motioned that the Planning Commission recommend renewal of the South Garden AFD for a 10-year period. Ms. Brown seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0). (Mr. Carrazana was absent)

Adjournment

At 9:45 p.m., the Commission adjourned to November 10, 2026, Albemarle County Planning Commission meeting, 6:00 p.m.

Michael Barnes, Director of Planning

(Recorded by Carolyn S. Shaffer, Clerk to Planning Commission & Planning Boards; transcribed by Golden Transcription Services)

Approved by Planning Commission
Date:
Initials: