SHIMP ENGINEERING, P.C.
Design Focused Engineering

County of Albemarle
Department of Community Development
401 McIntire Road
Charlottesville, VA 22902

January 20, 2026

Regarding: **Alberene Yoga Center (SP 2026-XX)**

Request for Exception from Section 4.12.17a

Requirement for 10% maximum grade

We respectfully submit this request for exception from the requirements of Section 4.12.17a of the Code of Albemarle for TMP 119-52C2. Section 4.12.17a of Chapter 18 of the Code of Albemarle requires maximum travel way grade of ten percent: *"Grade for vehicle access aisles not adjacent to parking spaces. Vehicle access aisles that are not adjacent to parking spaces, shall not exceed a grade of ten percent. The developer must request the waiver in writing and provide all information necessary to justify that no reasonable design alternative exists. In no case shall the grade exceed private road standards set forth in section 14-514 of the Code."*

Section 4.12.17a also permits the Board of Supervisors to waive this requirement: "*The Board of Supervisors may increase the maximum grade, upon a finding that no reasonable design alternative would reduce or alleviate the need and that the increase in grade would be in the best interest of public health, safety and welfare."*

In accordance with Section 4.12.17a. it is our request for the Board of Supervisors to grant an exception from the maximum grade requirements for Alberene Yoga Retreat.

In your review of this request, please consider the following:

- **No reasonable design alternative would reduce or alleviate the need for this request:**

The steepest portion of the existing driveway is between a grade of 694 and 640, as shown in Figure 1 Below. The distance between these points on the existing driveway is currently 387 feet, making the average slope between these points 14%. In order to meet a slope of 10% with the current alignment of the driveway along this portion, the lowest point of 640 would need to be raised to 656. This would necessitate 16 feet of fill, and would require an unreasonably extensive amount of earthwork. Alternatively, to maintain the existing grade of 640 and 10% slope, a new road alignment would require 540 feet of length. As shown in the figure below, this would also require extremely extensive earthwork. Given the anticipated traffic volume of less than 50 trips per day along this travel way, it is not reasonable to require this much extensive regrading for the proposed yoga retreat center.

- **The increase in grade would be in the best interest of public health, safety, and welfare:**

Maintaining a greater than 10% grade along the route of the existing driveway will have significantly less negative environmental impact. Unnecessary earthwork is not a reasonable requirement for this scale of project. The public health, safety and welfare will be better served by simply upgrading the existing driveway to meet fire access standards. This would be less disruptive to the environment and surrounding slopes. Requiring strict adherence to the 10% grade requirement would cause more environmental harm than necessary, thereby negatively impacting the health and safety of the public. Following the existing travel way layout will be sufficient for the maximum 50 attendees per day that will be traveling to the yoga center.

Figure 1. Grades Along Existing Driveway

