County of Albemarle
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MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Commission

From: Charles Rapp, Director of Planning

Date: August 23, 2022

Re: Zoning Modernization

In early 2022, staff engaged a consulting firm to assist with a multi-year effort to modernize the County's zoning and subdivision ordinances. This work has been planned in coordination with the current update to the County's Comprehensive Plan. The proposed amendments are intended to establish more efficient administrative procedures, provide a clear and user-friendly format, and create an adaptive, modern ordinance meeting the current needs of Albemarle County. By addressing the zoning modernization process in a comprehensive manner, staff will be able to involve multiple levels of stakeholders, including staff, residents, developers, and landowners.

In the spring, staff began work on two objectives:
- Simplifying our setbacks within each zoning designation
- Creating a new land use matrix to reflect a more modern application with broad categories

Over the past several months, staff has presented initial findings and potential recommendations for each of these topics. This preliminary work included a review of our current requirements, an analysis of peer localities, and potential amendments and/or modifications for discussion. Based on the feedback received, staff determined that the zoning modernization process would require a holistic strategy with buy-in from all levels before drafting could begin on individual ordinance sections. Without a strategic, well-scoped plan, any changes to our current code could have unwanted impacts on related sections. Using the lessons learned from this preliminary work, staff is currently proposing an alternative approach to help guide the zoning modernization initiative through a more comprehensive approach.

The Planning Commission work session on August 23, 2022 will include a presentation that outlines:
- An overview of the proposed phased approach to this proposed amendment
- A detailed schedule for Phase 1, including:
    - Meeting schedules and topics
    - Public engagement and stakeholder interviews
- A broad outline of Phase 2
- Coordination between the scheduled Comprehensive Plan revision and the Zoning Modernization text amendments

Following the work session, staff intends to request the Board of Supervisors adopt a Resolution of Intent to begin work on the amendment, and initiate engagement with stakeholders, returning to the Planning Commission after the drafting of the Phase 1 amendments has commenced.

The following is a summary of work intended for the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance update facilitated by the Berkley Group. The project is being broken up into five different phases of work and is expected to last between three and four years. Timing of phases may shift based on the County's review and update of the Comprehensive Plan. The phases include:

Phase 1: Administrative Provisions

1. Ordinance Diagnostic
2. Proposed Table of Contents
3. Draft articles for:
    a. General
    b. Administration
    c. Permits and Applications
    d. Nonconformities

Phase 2: Community Design Standards

1. Draft articles addressing Community Design Standards with potential zoning ordinance updates covering such items as:
    a. Lighting standards
    b. Landscaping standards
    c. Tree preservation
    d. Entrance corridors
    e. Historic preservation
    f. Additional community design standards as may be identified

Phase 3: District Standards

1. Draft articles addressing District Standards with potential zoning ordinance updates covering such items as:
    a. Setbacks
    b. Building height
    c. Stepbacks
    d. Lot size
    e. Density
    f. Map updates

Phase 4: Uses and Use Standards

1. Draft articles addressing Uses and Use Standards with potential updates covering such items as:
    a. Use permissions
    b. Performance standards for specific uses
    c. Housing types to include missing middle
    d. Accessory dwelling units
    e. Potential changes to Rural Area uses, based on Comp Plan and community engagement

Phase 5: Final Compilation and Review

1. Compilation of all draft articles into a consolidated draft ordinance
2. Public review and hearings on the draft ordinance leading to adoption

Phase I Schedule

