



The Field School of Charlottesville
Special Use Permit Request
Project Narrative
June 15, 2014
Latest Revision June 6, 2016

Written Description of the Proposal:

In Accordance with Section 10.2.2(5) of the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance, The Field School of Charlottesville is applying for a Special Use Permit to operate a private school in a rural area district. The property consists of two parcels: TM/P 60/68 is currently 21.81 acres, with approximately 2/3 of the acreage currently on the west side of TM/P 60/68E, which is currently 9.28 acres. This SUP request is in conjunction with a boundary line adjustment request to create a 25-acre contiguous parcel 60/68 for the private school use. The remaining 6-acres would become parcel 68E, a separate rural area parcel, not included in this special use permit application.

Parcel 60/68 is owned by Aguilera LLC and parcel 60/68E was recently purchased by Aguilera LLC from the Commonwealth of Virginia-VDOT Right of Way Section. The right-of-way acquisition, done many years ago, bisected parcel 60-68; creating three acreages on two parcels.

The Owner (Aguilera LLC) wishes to make a Boundary Line Adjustment creating a 6-acre (+/-) parcel 60/68E with one residential development right and a 25-acre (+/-) parcel 60/68 school site (please see attached Application Plan and conceptual layout).

Each use is proposed to have its own entrance onto Barracks Road. In addition a gated entrance will remain at the western end of the property to provide for maintenance and repair of the existing dam and pond, which will remain on the school parcel 60/68.

The entire 31-acre site includes critical slopes, a 3-acre pond (to remain on the school property), a stream buffer, and an area that was previously used as a construction demolition waste area. The property lies within the watershed of the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir. There are no existing buildings on the site.

The property is zoned Rural Areas and the Comprehensive Plan Land Use designation is also Rural Areas. The site lies within the Barracks Road entrance corridor and ARB review of the application is required with a future site plan submittal.

The proposed school use will maintain and supplement (where necessary) existing vegetative screening buffers along the Barracks Road frontage, along shared property lines with adjoining residential uses in the Colthurst neighborhood, and along the shared property line for the proposed 6-acre parcel 68E (see attached application plan). Building size and massing will be limited to accommodate the school use. A maximum of 30,000 sf of total building footprint will be constructed and a maximum of 12,000 square feet will be constructed for any individual building footprint. Outdoor

lighting for the school use will be limited to parking and building entrances. No lighting or amplification of noise will be permitted on the athletic fields. Use of the school and school facilities will be limited outside of the hours of the regular school day. The school will enroll boys in grades 5-8 and will be limited to 150 students. The regular hours of operation for the school will be between 9 am and 4 pm for approximately 170 days of the year and some additional summer school options will be made available. Summer school operations will have substantially the same limitations (time of day, number of students, etc.) as the limitations provided during the regular school year.

Approximately 15-20 after school sporting events will occur on the site. These events typically occur directly after school and are over by 5:45 pm. An additional 10-12 evening school events are anticipated throughout the school year. A multipurpose ball field will be graded adjacent to the 100 foot stream buffer (which will not be impacted by the grading). No outdoor lighting or amplified noise is proposed for the ball field. It is anticipated that ten permanent paved parking spaces will be required to accommodate the regular daily needs of the students, and approximately 10 additional paved parking spaces will be required to accommodate school faculty and staff. 20-30 additional "temporary" parking spaces will accommodate overflow parking when needed for events. It is anticipated that these overflow parking spaces will be on grass surfaces, approved in conjunction with site plan review at a future date. It is not anticipated that any onsite parking will be visible from Barracks Road or from adjoining parcels.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan:

The mission of The Field School is similar to the mission of Albemarle County Public Schools and includes a substantial outdoor component, requiring a significant campus. It would be convenient and practical to locate a school campus on 20-30 acres within a County Development Area. Doing so would provide a convenience for families within the development area and would limit vehicle trips on rural roads. In actuality, there are many hardships that prevent school campuses from locating within community development areas. Section 3 of the *Public Facilities* chapter of the Comprehensive Plan notes the following: *"...In cases where it is not possible to locate a new school in the Development Areas due to physical constraints, land area needs or availability, or service considerations, they may be located adjacent to or in very close proximity to the Development Areas where infrastructure and utilities can easily be provided."* In addition, private schools require a special use permit in every district except the recently created Downtown Crozet District. This additional hardship further limits private schools from competing with by-right uses for land within the development area. Over half of Albemarle County public schools, which are publicly funded and do not require special use permits, are located within the rural areas of Albemarle County.

Section 3 of the *Public Facilities* chapter continues to provide guidelines for the siting of new schools in Albemarle County:

"When siting new schools, as many of the characteristics below as possible should be met:

- *Elementary schools should be located within neighborhoods or at the edge of neighborhoods to promote walkability;*
- *Middle schools and high schools should be located in a central location relative to elementary schools, which feed these schools, to support the feeder pattern policy of the School Board;*
- *Safe and convenient access should be provided between the schools and pedestrian and road networks;*
- *Compatibility with adjoining planned and existing land uses should be achieved. Though not preferred, locations near industrial and major commercial developments are not prohibited;*

- *Public water and sewer service should be provided;*
- *Police and fire rescue service should be in close proximity; and*
- *The site should be developed with respect for environmental features such as topography, soils, floodplains, and wetlands and final design should result in aesthetically pleasing physical qualities."*

The proposed site for The Field School of Charlottesville is consistent with these guidelines.

Additionally, the *Rural Area* Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan provides the following criteria for review of new uses within the rural areas:

"As new uses are proposed in the Rural Area, it is essential that they be able to meet the following standards. New uses should:

- *Relate directly to the Rural Area and need a Rural Area location in order to be successful, (e.g., a farm winery has to be located in the Rural Area and would be unlikely to succeed in the Development Areas);*
- *Be compatible with, and have a negligible impact, on natural, cultural, and historic resources;*
- *Not conflict with nearby agricultural and forestall uses;*
- *Reflect a size and scale that complements the character of the area in which they will be located;*
- *Be reversible so that the land can easily return to farming, forestry, conservation, or other preferred rural uses;*
- *Be suitable for existing rural roads and result in little discernible difference in traffic patterns;*
- *Generate little demand for fire and rescue and police service;*
- *Be able to operate without the need for public water and sewer;*
- *Be sustainable with available groundwater; and*
- *Be consistent with other Rural Area policies."*

In evaluating the proposed site for The Field School of Charlottesville in accordance with these two sections of the Comprehensive Plan as outlined above; the following should be noted:

1. The site is centrally located relative to elementary schools and high schools,
2. Safe and convenient access is available to road networks,
3. The site is located adjacent to residential neighborhoods with vegetative buffers provided, in close proximity of higher density neighborhoods, and not close enough to be affected by nearby industrial or major commercial developments,
4. Public sewer is not available; however public water is available with approval of a jurisdictional area expansion for service, requested in conjunction with this SP.
5. Police and fire rescue services are in close proximity to the site,
6. Consistent with this SP request, the site will be developed with respect to environmental features,
7. The fields and open space plan submitted with this SP request relate directly with the Rural Area objectives,
8. The proposed plan will be compatible with and have negligible impact on natural, cultural, and historic resources,
9. The school use will not conflict with nearby agricultural and forestall uses, neither of which are adjacent to the site,
10. The school use will reflect a size and scale that complements the character of the Barracks Road area,

11. The school use will not be easily reversible, however a school campus, as shown on the application plan, could serve other uses, with additional County approval, that are appropriate within this rural area of the County.
12. The school use is suitable for existing rural roads and results in little discernible difference in traffic patterns,
13. The school use will generate little demand for fire and rescue and police service,
14. The school use will be able to operate without the need for public water and sewer; however a request is made in conjunction to allow an expansion of the jurisdictional area for public water.
15. The school use is sustainable with available groundwater, and
16. The use is consistent with other Rural Area policies.

The proposed site for The Field School of Charlottesville is located on a major arterial (Barracks Road) and is less than one mile from the U.S. 29 Bypass. The site is within 800 feet of a Comprehensive Planning Area (Neighborhood 7), within 1,200 feet of a 20-acre site zoned R-15, and less than 1.5 miles from a major retail center (Barracks Road Shopping Center). There are few (if any) reasonable sites in Albemarle County that would require fewer vehicle trips within the rural area of the County and sites that would provide more opportunities to reduce vehicle trips by combining trips for school, work and shopping.

A private school offers a unique opportunity for partnership with Albemarle County, where 54% (or \$202 million) of the budget is allocated toward capital and operational costs of schools. It is anticipated that over half of the students at The Field School will live in households in Albemarle County, paying property taxes toward the Albemarle County school budget. The Field School offers an opportunity to increase the inventory of schools within the County and increase the capacity for students within the public school system...at no additional cost to the County taxpayer.

Impacts on Public Facilities/Infrastructure:

Adjoining properties lie within the Albemarle County Jurisdictional Area for water and Fire hydrants are located along the frontage of the proposed school site. In conjunction with the SP and Boundary Line Adjustment application, the Applicant is requesting for this property to be included within the same jurisdictional area for water to facilitate fire and rescue needs for the school. Should the request for public water be denied, a field investigation has been performed and adequate drainfield areas have been located for the proposed school use and single family detached use. A copy of the field survey is provided with this application. Fire, Rescue, and Emergency response facilities are located close by along the U.S. 250 Bypass and Ivy Road.

Traffic Impacts:

The Field School currently enrolls 75 students and is located on Crozet Avenue (S.R. 810) just north of Crozet, Virginia. **Attachment A** is a study prepared in 2013 evaluating traffic counts and parking needs for the Field School over a one week period during the regular school year. During that week-long study, please note the following: attendance ranged from 65-68 students, daily traffic ranged from 58-62 trips, AM Peak Hour trips ranged from 9-24, PM Peak Hour trips ranged from 4-13, and the maximum utilized parking spaces was 15 car spaces and 2 bus spaces.

Attachment B is a map of Albemarle County showing residential areas (trip originations/destinations) for the existing 2014-15 Field School population. It should be noted that the 18% of the current student population is resided in the Crozet area (where the Field School is currently located) and 15% of the current enrollment is resided in the Ivy area (where The Field Camp is located). If The Field School is permitted to relocate to the proposed site on Barracks Road, it is anticipated that the proportion of students enrolled from the Crozet Area will significantly drop and the proportion of students enrolled from the urban ring of Charlottesville will increase respectively.

Traffic Impacts (continued):

Table 1 below provides a traditional design analysis based on traffic numbers generated from the Institute for Transportation Engineers and similar school projects (such as the Regents School in Albemarle County). The 2013 existing ADT on Barracks Road (S.R. 654) between Old Garth Road (S.R. 601) and Georgetown Road (S.R. 656) is 5,900 trips. This number increases to 21,000 between Georgetown Road and the Charlottesville City limits. From the figures in Table 1, The Field School currently generates 186 trips per day and at full enrollment (150 students) will generate 372 trips per day.

Table 1: Field School Trip Generations with 150 Students

Prepared by Shimp Engineering PC

Revised: December 18, 2015

Trip Generation Multipliers:	Daily traffic multiplier =	2.48 per student
	AM peak hour traffic =	0.9 per student
	AM inbound =	55 %
	AM outbound =	45 %
	PM Peak Hour multiplier =	0.19 per student
	PM inbound =	47 %
	PM outbound =	53 %
Assumed Distributions:	AM Inbound from west approach =	25 %
	AM Inbound from east approach =	75 %
(Note: distributions shown are estimates based on current student enrollment (see attachment B - Trip Originations))	AM outbound toward west exit =	20 %
	AM outbound toward east exit =	80 %
	PM inbound from west approach =	20 %
	PM inbound from east approach =	80 %
	PM outbound toward west exit =	25 %
	PM outbound toward east exit =	75 %

Use Description	ITE Code	Unit (number of students)	Population Basis	Daily Traffic	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
					In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Private School (Grade K-8)	534	75	current enrollment	186	37	30	68	7	8	14
Private School (Grade K-8)	534	150	maximum enrollment	372	74	61	135	13	15	29

Note: Trip Generation multipliers (assumed variables) are extrapolated from various online resources including:

http://ww2.cityofpasadena.net/councilagendas/2009%20agendas/Mar_23_09/6A%20ATTACHMENT%202%20PART%204.pdf

http://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/Forms_Center/Departments/Board_of_Supervisors/Forms/Agenda/2014Files/0813/09.0a_RegentsSchoolAttachA.pdf

http://www.pbcgov.com/engineering/traffic/pdf/Trip_Generation_Rates.pdf

The 2013 analysis of actual trips provided in Attachment 1 demonstrates that the actual ADT is significantly lower than the design ADT provided in Table 1 above. It is our opinion herein that the discrepancy in these figures is due to the Field School use of bus service and carpooling. Figures provided in Table 1 are derived from the ITE Code 534 (private school use (K-8)) which includes younger students and apparently does not consider bus services or carpooling.

Additionally, it should be noted that the proposed school location on Barracks Road is 1 ¼ miles west of the Barracks Road Shopping Center. This proximity to a major retail center will further reduce the number of trip originations when considering design ADT. Consider the parent of a student who lives west of the school site, traveling to a regional service use at Barracks Road (Harris Teeter, Kroger, Wells Fargo, CVS, USPS, etc.). This parent will be able to stop by and pick up their children from school on the way home, thus not actually generating a new trip on Barracks Road.

As demonstrated in the 2013 study, the peak hours for the school use are between 8:30-9:30 AM and 3:45-4:45 PM. The AM Peak hours would coincide with peak hours of traffic along Barracks Road and a left turn lane may be required for the school use. While a current analysis shows that a left turn lane is not required for the school use, the site has adequate frontage and sight distance to provide turn lanes as needed if future warrants should change.

Barracks Road (S.R. 654) is a major collector road in Albemarle County with a posted speed limit of 50 MPH (45MPH for trucks). Georgetown Road (S.R. 656) is another major collector road in Albemarle County and is located ½ mile from the proposed site. The U.S. 29/250 Bypass is characterized as a "Freeway or Expressway" and is located 1 mile from the proposed site.

The proposed site has good access and sight distance and is located on a major collector road in close proximity to another major collector road and a freeway. These site characteristics support the proposed school use.

Environmental Impacts and Features:

After meeting with adjoining property owners; it was the consensus of neighbors and a science teacher from The Field School that the lake on the property should be preserved along with the existing stream buffer and adjoining wooded slopes along the southern border of the property (see attached application plan). In later meetings with neighbors, an additional buffer area was requested between the ball fields and the lake to supplement an area with few screening trees. This additional buffer is included in the application plan.

Additionally, a landscaped buffer is proposed along the frontage of Barracks Road and the intent is to match this frontage with existing landscape characteristics along the Barracks Road entrance corridor. The language provided on the application plan is consistent with Albemarle County ARB guidelines and provides an additional level of regulation of these guidelines.

Some critical slopes will need to be disturbed in order to create the ball fields and school campus. A request for disturbance of these slopes is included in conjunction with this SP. A conceptual design of the school campus is provided, demonstrating how the critical slopes can be addressed with minimal disturbances and these disturbances can be mitigated.

Concept / Sketch Plan:

Please see attached application plan.