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Project Narrative For: **ZMA2023-00018 An Amendment to ZMA2021-14 that originally amended ZMA2019-03 "Albemarle Business Campus"**

Parcel IDs: **76-46AA, 76-46AB, 76-54**

Pre-App Meeting Date: **October 16, 2023**

Submit 1: **December 18, 2023**

Revised: **July 08, 2024**

Revised: **March 7, 2025 (correlates to 11.18.2024 COD and Application Plan)**

	ACREAGE	EXISTING ZONING	ZMA PROPOSED	COMP PLAN DESIGNATION
TMP 76-54	**7.02**	**NMD**	**NMD**	**Community Mixed Use**
TMP 76-46AA	**4.82**	**NMD**	**NMD**	**Urban Density**
TMP 76-46AB	**1.48**	**NMD**	**NMD**	**Community Mixed Use**

Additional Zoning Considerations:

Entrance Corridor, Steep Slopes – Managed, Airport Impact Area

Location:

Northern quadrant of the intersection of Fifth Street Extended and Old Lynchburg Road (TMP 76-54 and 76-46AB) and between the intersections of Mountainwood Road and Old Lynchburg Road and Mountainwood Road and Country Green Road (76-46AA)

Surrounding Uses:

The subject property is located on Fifth Street Extended, across from the County Office Building – 5th Street. The property is located immediately adjacent to Region Ten and Cavalier Crossing.

Project Background:

Fifth Street Forest LLC is the owner (the "Owner") of properties identified as Albemarle County tax parcels 76-46AA (the "Block 1 property"), 76-46AB (the "Block 5 property"), and 76-54 (the "Blocks 2-4 property") (collectively, the Block 1 property, the Block 5 property, and the Blocks 2-4 property are referred to herein as the "ABC property"). The ABC property was rezoned to Neighborhood Model District (NMD) with the Board of Supervisors approval of ZMA2019-00003 (the "2019 NMD"), a project commonly known as "Albemarle Business Campus" (ABC). The 2019 NMD was subsequently amended by ZMA2021-00014 (the "2021 NMD") which was specific to the Blocks 2-4 property and amended the Application Plan and Code of Development to permit a building typology that was more conducive to attracting a biotechnology tenant. The Owner has been actively marketing the Blocks 2-4 property to commercial and biotechnology tenants however, since the approval of the 2021 NMD several changes to the local market, including the University of Virginia's significant investment in a Biotechnology Institute at Fontaine Research Park which provides tens of thousands of square feet of lab space and the relatively low interest in the reserved Class A Office Space within ABC, have pushed the Owner to seek greater land use flexibility to provide the Blocks 2-4 property with the greatest opportunity for successful development and ultimate completion of the project. The zoning framework for Albemarle Business Campus establishes a walkable, workable, livable interconnected community and this ZMA amendment seeks to uphold and expand upon that framework.

Project Proposal:

The Owner respectfully requests to amend the Code of Development approved with the 2021 NMD, which amended the 2019 NMD. The primary requested revisions are specific to the Blocks 2-4 property, where the Owner requests to increase the maximum permitted density to 34 dwelling units per acre (DUA), a residential density that is aligned with the "Community Mixed Use" land use designation of the Blocks 2-4 property in the Southern and Western Neighborhoods Master Plan.

Since the approval of the 2019 NMD in October 2020, ABC has been actively taking shape. A mixed use building with climate controlled self-storage and tenant spaces for offices is completed and occupied and the construction of multi-family residences in Block 1 is nearing completion. Blocks 2-4 remain actively marketed to potential office and biotechnology tenants. Development of the ABC property is subject to a Development Agreement, which outlines specific development standards and improvements; the Owner has complied with and will continue to comply with the terms of that agreement if this zoning map amendment request is approved.

The goal of this ZMA request is to create greater flexibility so that this project can meet a variety of development demand in the Development Areas of Albemarle County whether it be for biotechnology space, office space, or additional housing. Currently, the ABC property has reached its maximum permitted residential density approved with the 2019 NMD and this ZMA seeks to permit additional residential density on the Blocks 2-4 property. Creating the opportunity for additional residential units on this property is not only consistent with the Comprehensive Plan but it is consistent with economic development goals as housing, and especially affordable and workforce housing, is a key tool for economic development. Availability of housing is a key factor for business attraction and retention as employees must be able to access housing within communities where they are employed for businesses to continually be able to attract talent and hire from a diverse pool of applicants (see "Consistency with Comprehensive Plan Analysis" Strategy 1d for further evaluation).

Albemarle Business Campus was founded on the principles of developing a mixed-use community and enabling more housing within the Blocks 2-4 property will uphold those principles.

The Code of Development and Application Plan submitted with this ZMA amendment demonstrate the requested changes to the 2021 NMD, specifically, those changes are:

- Table A. Use Table
  - Blocks 3 & 4: Included parking structure as a permitted use and clarified that parking structures are only permitted as accessory uses
  - Blocks 3 & 4: Included drive-through windows as a use by special use permit provided that additional use requirements listed in Note 5 are adhered to
- Table B. Square Footage
  - Block 4: Revised minimum non-residential square footage to 10,000 SF
- Table C. Residential Density (Net Density Calc)
  - Blocks 2-4: Revised maximum residential units to 240
  - Blocks 2-4: Revised max block gross density to 34 DUA
  - Updated "Notes to Table C" accordingly
- Table E. Lot & Building Regulation
  - Block 4: Increased maximum permissible building height to 4 stories
  - Block 5: Reduced minimum required primary front setback from 5' to 0'
  - Notes to Table E: revised to note that covered porches, balconies, eaves and like architectural features may project not more than four feet into any required yard

Consistency with Comprehensive Plan:

The Southern and Western Neighborhoods Master Plan (the "Master Plan") designates the Blocks 2-4 property as "Community Mixed Use," the community mixed designation identifies community serving retail, service uses, office uses, and residential density up to 34 units per acre as the primary uses that should take shape within the community mixed use areas. The uses permitted within Block 2 are directly consistent with those uses and enabling additional density with the ABC property and specifically, the Blocks 2-4 property will be more aligned with the Community Mixed Use Designation than the current zoning, as the current zoning has reached the limit of permitted residential units approved with the 2019 NMD.

Below are the ways in which this proposal is consistent with goals and objectives of the adopted 2015 Comprehensive Plan:

Economic Development:

Strategy 1a: *Promote new employment activities in the Development Areas and encourage developers of commercial and industrial projects to incorporate the Neighborhood Model principles.*

This ZMA request seeks to expand flexibility by creating the opportunity for additional residential units within the ABC property. The Block 5 property has already developed and created office space that has established new employment activities and the project will continue to develop with additional employment activities to meet non-residential zoning requirements. Being as the project is a Neighborhood Model District, it is directly consistent with Strategy 1a of the Economic Development chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

Strategy 1d: *Promote a balance of jobs to housing.*

Strategy 1d notes that "jobs and housing have a strong relationship in a community" and that "workers need to be able to find housing at prices, sizes, and locations that enable them to live in the area in which they work." This ZMA request seeks to create additional zoning flexibility specifically within the undeveloped Blocks 2-4 property so that the project can be responsive to providing additional housing and space for employment opportunities.

Development Areas:

Objective 2: *Create a physical environment that supports healthy lifestyle through application of the Neighborhood Model Principles.*

As a Neighborhood Model District with a well-connected and robust pedestrian network, ABC is directly consistent with Objective 2 of the Development Areas chapter.

Strategy 2e: *Continue to approve mixed-use developments that are in keeping with the Neighborhood Model and Master Plans.*

As a mixed use development that has been previously evaluated for its consistency with the Neighborhood Model, ABC is directly consistent with Strategy 2e.

Strategy 2n: *Continue to work with developers to design and build projects that relegate parking to the side or rear of sites, which results in the fronts of buildings facing the street.*

Relegated parking is provided throughout the ABC property and the development of this principle is evidenced by the two blocks which have already been built-out.

Objective 4: *Use Development Area land efficiently to prevent premature expansion of the Development Areas.*

Enabling additional zoning flexibility within ABC permits more efficient use of the land to permit a greater diversity of uses and a more dense mixed use development.

Strategy 5b: *On greenfield sites, encourage developers to build at the higher end of the density range, provided that development will be in keeping with design recommendations in the Neighborhood Model.*

The ABC property is a former greenfield site and enabling additional density is directly consistent with Strategy 5b as this will permit the project to build closer to the maximum density range.

Consistency with the Neighborhood Model:

Pedestrian Orientation:

This ZMA amendment retains a commitment to pedestrian orientation throughout ABC. The following text describes the pedestrian orientation committed to with the 2019 NMD and amended with the 2021 NMD that will not be compromised with this ZMA amendment. The area surrounding ABC is predominately residential; these areas include the Villas at Southern Ridge, Cavalier Crossing, The Woodlands, Brookdale, and Redfields, among others. The considerable number of existing residents in nearby proximity to the property creates an ideal opportunity for supporting active transportation networks that are proposed to be constructed within ABC. ABC intends to attract users with a mixture of uses and provide the pedestrian infrastructure to these destinations. Currently there are areas that lack sufficient infrastructure, barring safe movement for pedestrians, specifically along Country Green Road and Mountainwood Road. Old Lynchburg Road features an existing asphalt path, however, this is only on one side of the road with intermittent crosswalks. The Southern and Western Urban Neighborhoods Master Plan identifies improvements to be made on 5th Street Extended and Old Lynchburg Road, such as bike/ped connectivity, street trees, and better stormwater management (curb & gutter). ABC proposes right-of-way reservation on both sides of the property to reserve ample area for sidewalks/paths and landscape buffers. The application plan provides circulation diagrams on both sides of the development, which contribute to heightened internal and external connections. Notably, the existing asphalt path on 5th Street will be improved to a two-way shared use path 10' in width (with additional 2' graded shoulder on either side), with primary pedestrian routes branching off of the path into the mixed-use development.

Multi-Modal Transportation Networks:

This ZMA amendment retains a commitment to multi-modal transportation networks that was established with the 2019 NMD and maintained with the 2021 NMD. The transportation network proposed with this development includes sidewalk installations and improvements as well as shared-use path improvements beyond those proposed to be constructed by VDOT concurrent with the funded SMARTScale improvements to the Old Lynchburg Road / 5th St Intersection. Existing and proposed street sections provided with this rezoning application support a variety of transportation modes, with an emphasis on 5th Street Extended as a main transportation corridor.

Interconnected Streets and Transportation Networks:

Transportation networks consist of "1) streets and roads, 2) pedestrian paths, 3) bikeways, 4) bus routes, and 5) light rail lines." Interconnected streets are not exclusive to cars, but call for multimodal connections. There are a multitude of connectivity improvements proposed with this application including sidewalk, multi-use path, pedestrian pathway, and bus stop improvements.

Parks, Recreational Amenities, and Open Space:

As a mixed-use development, recreational and open space within Albemarle Business Campus will be an integral community gathering space, especially as more residences are proposed within ABC. As discussed, the surrounding areas are predominately residential; mixed-use development and thoughtful greenspace provides destination points. Although Azalea Park is only 0.5-mile away from these neighborhoods, the I-64 bridge creates a barrier to those without car access, as the underpass bars safe pedestrian movement. With additions and improvements of sidewalks and shared-use paths, greenspace within this NMD could serve people within the community who had previously lacked access to greenspace.

Neighborhood Center:

The Southern and Western Urban Neighborhoods Master Plan identifies the County Office Building on 5th Street Extended as an existing center, which is a neighbor to ABC. Neighborhood Centers are intended to be "a focal point of a neighborhood. A mix of uses is important to a neighborhood and usually, the mix will occur at the center…a center will be a high-intensity area, containing a mixture of businesses, services, public facilities, and employment that connects to residential areas and attracts activities of all kinds." Around the COB 5th center are single-family detached housing and the Covenant School, with the multifamily uses and Region Ten across the street. As an immediate neighbor to COB 5th, Albemarle Business Campus is able to further bolster COB 5th as a center by providing a strong presence of a mixture of uses and interconnectivity. Additionally, the proposed active transportation improvements would contribute to the walkability around this Center.

Buildings and Spaces of Human Scale:

The ABC property is subject to Architectural Review Board (ARB) review, which will ensure that buildings and spaces of Human Scale that are regulated by the ABC Application Plan and Code of Development continue to develop as such, as the buildings and site plans come to final form. The building heights and forms proposed are consistent with recommendations put forth in the Southern and Western Neighborhoods Master Plan.

Relegated Parking:

"Restricted Parking Areas" remain designated on the application plan with this ZMA amendment to provide a buffer between surface parking areas and the Entrance Corridor. This buffered area is in addition to the area required to provide multi-use path improvements in accordance with the section shown on Sheet 19 of the application plan. The multi-use path section will work in conjunction with the "restricted parking area" to provide *at least* a 20' buffer between the 5th St. travel way and any future surface parking area on the site. The "amenities" section of the Code of Development also notes a linear greenway improvement adjacent to the multi-use path which would contribute to additional buffering between the surface parking areas and the 5th St. corridor. The topography of the site contributes to screening of parking areas in the southeast corner of the site; this will diminish the appearance of any surface parking lot in this location from the Entrance Corridor as vehicles approach the site from the northeast on 5th St. An outdoor amenity that is envisioned as a "gateway plaza" is sited at the intersection of Old Lynchburg Rd and 5th St. and there are buildings proposed to help frame this plaza and this heavily traveled intersection. The plaza and the proposed buildings at this intersection will aid in screening surface parking areas in Blocks 3 and 4 as travelers approach the site from the south on 5th St.

Mixture of Uses:

A mixture of uses will be realized within ABC and has already begun to take shape with the construction of the mixed-use self-storage and retail building and the multi-family units in Block 1. This ZMA amendment retains a mixture of uses in the code of development which ensures both residential and commercial uses will be realized on the property. Community Mixed Use calls for the "a mixture of residential and retail uses and services that serve the community…[with] the proportion of non-residential uses to…residential uses [as] area dependent." Such land use designations, and the appropriate mixture of uses is achieved through this application plan.

Mixture of Housing Types and Affordability:

This Neighborhood Model principle was met with the approval of the 2019 NMD which included a commitment that 15% of the total residential dwelling units built within areas designated for residential use shall be Affordable Dwelling Units (the "15% Affordable Housing Requirement). Concurrent with the approval of the 2019 NMD, a special exception waiving the requirement for a Neighborhood Model District to have a minimum of two housing types was approved because of the context surrounding the development where there is an established mixture of housing types including single family, single family attached, and multi-family. This ZMA request does not modify the affordability requirement and so any additional housing built must comply with the 15% affordability standard included within the Code of Development.

Redevelopment:

This principle is not applicable to this ZMA request.

Respecting Terrain and Careful Grading and Regrading of Terrain:

Managed slopes are present on the property and any grading in managed slopes will comply with Section 18-30.7.5 of the Albemarle County Code.

Zoning Intent:

Section 20A.1 of the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance states, "The purpose of the Neighborhood Model District (hereinafter referred to as the "NMD") is to establish a planned development district in which traditional neighborhood development, as established in the county's Neighborhood Model, will occur." The 2019 NMD set forth a code of development and application plan that will inform future development on the property that is consistent with the intent of the Neighborhood Model District by regulating building mass and placement, programmed green space and amenity areas, connected pedestrian networks, and a mixture of complimentary uses to contribute to a more connected community hub in the Southern and Western development areas. The Neighborhood Model ordinance states, "the mixture of uses shall be based upon the uses recommended in the land use element of the comprehensive plan," and Albemarle Business Campus proposes a development that aligns with this regulation as the code of development allows for commercial uses and residential densities that are recommended for areas designated as "Community Mixed Use" and "Urban Density Residential" by the Southern and Western Neighborhoods Master Plan.

Impacts to Public Facilities and Infrastructure:

Transportation:

Since the approval of the 2019 NMD, a major transportation improvement along the 5th St. corridor has been funded via the Smart Scale program, this funding will ultimately result in the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Old Lynchburg Road and 5th St. Ext. The 2019 NMD committed to a cash proffer to the County's Capital Improvement Program for the construction of transportation improvements along the 5th St. corridor. Since the approval of the 2019 NMD, VDOT has proposed obtaining additional right-of-way from the Owner for the roundabout construction. This additional right-of-way was not contemplated during the 2019 NMD process; the Owner now proposes to reduce the proffered cash amount but to increase the right-of-way dedicated to VDOT for the construction of the roundabout.

The trip generation analysis from the 2019 NMD is included below for reference:

Table 1: Trip Generation Details

Use	Square Footage	LU Code	IV	AM			PM			Daily Total
				In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
Office	102,000	710 - General Office Building	102 (1,000 SF GFA)	105	17	122	19	97	116	1082
Retail	5,000	932 - High Turnover (Sit-Down) Restaurant	5 (1,000 SF GFA)	27	23	50	30	19	49	561
	5,000	876 - Apparel Store	5 (1,000 SF GFA)	4	1	5	11	10	21	332
	4,000	814 - Variety Store	4 (1,000 SF GFA)	7	6	13	14	13	27	254
Hotel		312 - Business Hotel	125 Rooms	20	29	49	22	18	40	514
Self Storage	100,000	151 - Mini Warehousing	100 (1000 sq ft GFA)	6	4	10	8	9	17	151
			COMBINED	169	80	249	104	166	270	2894
Residential	150 units	221 - Multifamily Housing	150 Units*	14	40	54	40	26	66	816

*128 Units at Site 2 (West of Old Lynchburg Rd) and 22 Units at Site 1 (East of Old Lynchburg Rd)

ITE trip generation figures from the ITE Trip Generation Manual 10th Edition for 240 multi-family residential units are below:

		AM			PM			
LU Code	IV	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	DAILY
221 – Multifamily Housing (Mid-Rise)	240 Units	22	72	94	57	37	94	1098

As previously stated, there is no additional transportation impact with this ZMA request as the trip generation affiliated with the ABC property is limited by a proffered condition. It should be noted that the trips from the 240 units will not be in addition to all of the trips listed in Table 1; the square footages listed in Table 1 and 240 units cannot be built on the property given the required parking minimums, building form regulations, and required 20% minimum green and amenity space requirement; the final build-out of the project will be some combination of the uses, square footages, and units listed above.

Schools

Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) publishes an official calculator to estimate the number of children living within a proposed development. This calculation is derived from pre-existing neighborhoods in each school district. For the purposes of this evaluation, the highest number of permissible residential units was evaluated to analyze the greatest potential impact. At maximum permissible density build-out (34 DUA) only multi-family units can be accommodated on the property and so only multi-family units are evaluated in this estimate.

Dwelling Type	**Mountain View Elementary**	**Walton Middle School**	**Monticello High**	**Total**
Multi-family (240 units)	.05	.01	.03	.09
Total at Each Level	12	2.4	7.2	21.6

Impacts to Environmental Features:

All design and engineering for improving the property will comply with applicable County and State regulations. Regional Stormwater Management facilities have been constructed for the Sterling University Housing project (Wahoo Way). These facilities have been designed to accommodate some of, if not all, of the proposed runoff from the property. Any additional stormwater management design will be consistent with similar urban development projects and will utilize a combination of features, such as on-site surface facilities, on-site underground stormwater management facilities, and/or off-site nutrient credits.

Proffers to Address Impacts:

The cash amount proffered for transportation improvements along the 5th Street corridor is proposed to be reduced however; additional right of way may be dedicated to facilitate VDOT's construction of the roundabout at 5th St. Extended / Old Lynchburg Road. There will be an amendment to the Performance Agreement, which is subject of Proffer 3 that will need to be executed so that the terms of the Performance Agreement are consistent with VDOT's most recent plans for the 5th St. Extended / Old Lynchburg intersection improvements. A draft of that amendment is included with this application.