**Albemarle County Planning Commission**
**Work Session and Regular Meeting**
**Draft Minutes April 8, 2025**

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a public meeting on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

Members attending were Luis Carrazana, Vice-Chair; Julian Bivins; Corey Clayborne; Nathan Moore; Lonnie Murray (remote).

Members absent: Fred Missel, Chair; Karen Firehock.

Other officials present were Michael Barnes, Director of Planning; Ben Holt; Tori Kanellopoulos; Dr. Stacy Pethia; Khris Taggart; Andy Herrick, County Attorney; and Carolyn Shaffer, Clerk to the Planning Commissions.

### Call to Order and Establish Quorum

Ms. Shaffer called the roll.

Mr. Carrazana established a quorum.

Mr. Murray requested to participate in the meeting remotely because a tree was about to fall and block his driveway. He said that he was located at his home in White Hall.

Mr. Bivins motioned that the Planning Commission allow Commissioner Murray to participate in the meeting remotely. Mr. Moore seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously (4-0). (Mr. Missel and Ms. Firehock were absent)

### Work Session

**CCP202100002 AC44 Comp Plan - Housing**

Tori Kanellopoulos, Principal Planner on the Long Range Planning Team, said that she was joined by Dr. Stacy Pethia, Assistant Director of Housing. She said that they will be discussing the housing chapter of AC44. She said that they will summarize previous Planning Commission feedback on this topic, review community input themes from engagement, provide a brief overview of the chapter and its overlap with Housing Albemarle, examine the upcoming schedule for the Comprehensive Plan, and then focus on specific topics for the Commission to discuss. She said that she will start by providing an overview of these topics and then return to them at the end of the presentation. She said that they have two focus topic questions for the Commission, and they welcomed feedback on the objectives and actions outlined in the chapter.

Ms. Kanellopoulos said that the questions were designed to guide updates to the chapter, providing more guidance for future projects. She said that the first question related to land use and activity centers, and it asks: What factors should they use to analyze other locations for allowing more housing when updating area plans, such as Southern and Western, Places 29, and other area plans? She said that the second question addressed recent development applications and asks: What factors should they consider when reviewing affordable housing proposals outside of the development areas?

Ms. Kanellopoulos said that a summary of previous Planning Commission feedback from Phase 2 highlighted the need for more strategies to encourage missing middle housing in the comprehensive plan, as well as encouragement of housing, activity centers, and employment

districts, and partnerships to support aging in the community, which overlapped with other chapters like transportation. She said that the Commission emphasized the importance of preserving existing units and supporting individuals in maintaining their homes.

Ms. Kanellopoulos said that the Commission said they should explore options for implementation, including community land trusts, housing trust funds, regional collaboration, and utilizing County-owned land. She said that they highlighted the overlap with other chapters. She said that through community input, they heard a strong need for a variety of housing types, including units for smaller households, first-time homebuyers, and aging community members.

Ms. Kanellopoulos said that there was also a need for more multifamily housing and addressing housing affordability in rural areas, primarily focusing on maintaining existing units. She said that some community members had expressed interest in other types of small-scale housing. She said that they had heard about the importance of coordinated planning for housing, land use, transportation, economic development, and parks and recreation, as well as the overlap with walkability and housing.

Ms. Kanellopoulos said that maintaining existing homes and supporting aging in place, including one-story homes and smaller units, was also crucial. She said that the need for more assisted living facilities, ideally in walkable locations, and weatherization, energy efficiency, and home repair programs had been emphasized. She said that for energy efficiency, they had heard interest in requirements and incentives, as well as the importance of housing location and proximity to daily destinations, with a focus on how this overlapped with transportation.

Ms. Kanellopoulos said that the goal for this chapter aligned with the AC44 framework and overlapped with sections on transportation, parks, economic development, and other chapters. She said that housing was a foundational community need. She said that there were seven objectives that focused on land use, increasing the overall housing supply, preserving and maintaining aging housing, addressing energy cost burdens, and addressing unmet needs for people who were unsheltered.

Dr. Stacy Pethia, Assistant Director of Housing, said that the AC44 Housing chapter aligned well with the housing policy framework, Housing Albemarle. She said that staff from housing collaborated with staff from planning and the long-range planning team to distill the housing policy document into a more land-use oriented format. She said that the goals and objectives remained the same, with some expanded and others condensed for better readability.

Dr. Pethia said that the Housing Albemarle policy, adopted in July 2021, replaced the Housing Chapter from the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, and the Housing Policy would be incorporated as an appendix into AC44. She said that this was not a replacement, but rather a presentation of the policy in a new light through the Housing Chapter, which would continue to move forward as an appendix. She said that they had identified several priorities, including exploring options for using County-owned land for affordable housing, providing incentives to increase affordable housing production, and considering the implementation of an affordable dwelling unit ordinance and a housing trust fund,

Dr. Pethia said that the Housing Advisory Committee would help track progress toward reaching goals. She said that a goal was focused on expanding permanent supportive housing opportunities for chronically homeless households. She said that she was pleased to report that the Premier Circle, now known as Vista 29, had achieved this final goal with its 80-unit permanent supportive housing development. She said that many of the recommendations in Housing Albemarle also influenced zoning code modernization efforts.

Dr. Pethia said that some of the new items included the incorporation of activity centers, middle housing types, and adaptive reuse of existing buildings. She said that the housing policy now included a greater emphasis on climate action, as the climate action plan had not yet been adopted at the time of its writing. She said that this integration allowed for a more comprehensive approach to addressing housing needs and aligned with the Housing Policy framework.

Dr. Pethia said that the housing plan focused on the County's most vulnerable community members, including those experiencing homelessness, as well as the least vulnerable community members, such as workforce housing for households earning up to 120% of the area median income, which was increasing annually. She said that for context, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development had recently updated the area median income for the Charlottesville metropolitan statistical area, which was now $125,800.

Ms. Kanellopoulos said that she would like to highlight the significant overlap with other chapters, particularly transportation, which will be released soon, connecting housing to daily destinations and daily needs, land use, and how they designate future land use categories on the future land use map, which in turn encourage different housing types, a thriving economy, and community facilities. She said that this includes having places for employees to live in the community, public facilities, and services needed to support growth and development, as well as a resilient community with housing and transportation choices, nature as green infrastructure, and community health and well-being, and local food systems.

Ms. Kanellopoulos said that a quick overview of the schedule for housing is as follows: the proposed plan will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on May 7. She said that a lunch and learn session for housing and community facilities will take place on April 24 at noon, and both chapters were posted on the website. She said that for the thriving economy and community facilities chapters, they had already been presented to the Planning Commission, with the next step being a work session on April 16 for the Board.

Ms. Kanellopoulos said that the transportation chapter will be presented to the Commission on May 6 and the Board on May 28, with an in-person community meeting on May 22. She said that she would like to draw attention to the housing chapter, which was now posted on the Phase 3 page, and she encouraged the public to visit and share feedback on the proposed actions. She said that staff was looking for additional guidance on land use topics.

Mr. Moore said that he had a question regarding Objective 3.3, specifically the language used. He said that the phrase "develop and implement a sustainable housing trust fund" stood out to him, as he was not familiar with the term "sustainable" being used in that context before. He said that he was curious to know what staff intended by using that adjective.

Dr. Pethia said that this meant that it was not reliant on annual budget allocations, so it had an identified source of revenue that automatically went into the budget every year.

Mr. Moore said that he had a question regarding Objective 4.2, which involved examining the need and feasibility of implementing a rental inspection district program to ensure safe, decent, and sanitary living conditions for tenants. He said that he was curious to know what happened currently. He said that if there were rental homes with complaints or issues, what process did they follow to address these concerns. He said that he was aware that there had been instances of this in the past, but he was unclear on the current process for handling such situations.

Dr. Pethia said that was a good question for Community Development.

Mr. Bivins said that part of this issue was that the state had considered legislation where landlords with a certain number of units would have mandatory inspections. He said that the jurisdiction

would then have the authority to send someone to inspect those units or respond to potential violations.

Mr. Herrick said that the Virginia Maintenance Code was an optional provision for localities. He said that the County did adopt and enforce the building code for new construction. He said that it had not yet chosen to enforce the Virginia Maintenance Code, which focused on the maintenance of existing structures.

Mr. Clayborne said that one thing that had been a challenge for them was the notion of infrastructure and whether they had enough of it to accommodate the development they were requesting. He said that he recalled reading in the chapter that they may need approximately 10,000 additional units by 2040 to meet their goals. He said that his question was how they could address these infrastructure needs within this document, ensuring that if someone were to approve 10,000 units tomorrow, they would be prepared to take them on. He said that they often struggled with issues such as roads, schools, and other necessary facilities, which could be likened to a chicken and egg problem. He said that he had not seen this issue adequately addressed in the chapter or throughout the document.

Michael Barnes, Director of Planning, said that in some respects, the other chapters were preparing to offer that. He said that there was often a delicate balance between what came first. He said that for instance, did the use that required the service come first, or did the supporting services come first. He said that this balance could apply in both directions. He said that if the specific question was whether they could accommodate an additional 10,000 units of affordable housing, then the answer was nuanced.

Mr. Barnes said that one aspect was that it depended on the location, and certain areas were more acceptable than others. He said that in general, they were always planning to accommodate future growth within the community and work to get the necessary infrastructure in place. He said that they were not always as successful as they would like to be, and that was due to funding and time constraints.

Mr. Clayborne said that they should consider being more explicit in the objectives and goals to ensure they were working towards them.

Mr. Murray said that he believed it was one of those opportunities to link to other chapters. He said that part of this was the need to ensure that, as they were thinking about housing, they were also considering the need to increase the supply of commercial properties and other revenue-generating properties. He said that this was because, as they increased the supply of housing, they must also increase the supply of commercial properties to fund the infrastructure necessary to support those additional houses. He said that otherwise, they risked creating an infrastructure deficit. He said that he thought it was essential to consider the overall mix of development, not just the number of houses, but the variety of properties that could provide revenue and support the necessary infrastructure.

Mr. Clayborne said that for the first point, he would like to flag the need to clarify whether they were moving from implied to explicit language. He said that the second point was for Dr. Pethia. He said that he recalled their previous discussions about the units that were available for purchase, which had a limited timeframe. He said that if purchased within that timeframe, the units were available at a discounted rate; otherwise, they reverted to market rate. He said that he did not see any mention of improving or implementing technology to address the barriers to this process. He said that he was wondering if staff could comment on whether this process had been strengthened or if they were better equipped to handle it now.

Dr. Pethia said that she would like to revisit the first question that was posed regarding the 10,000 units. She said that to clarify, this did not necessarily mean that they needed to build 10,000 units. She said that rather, it aimed to create 10,000 additional affordable housing units in some form. She said that this could involve new construction, as well as working with existing rental property owners to make some of their units affordable. She said that she wanted to emphasize that the housing policy did not suggest a one-size-fits-all approach.

Dr. Pethia said that they were actively working to improve their processes. She said that one of the initiatives they had undertaken was creating a list of affordable units, which could be thought of as a waiting list for proffered units that became available. She said that they aimed to expand this list in the future. She said that one of the challenges with this list was that proffered units were not consistently coming online. She said that as a result, it could be difficult to convince people to sign up for the possibility of purchasing a house that may not be built for some time. She said that they were aware of the number of proffered units currently in the pipeline, estimated to be around 3,000 to 2,000.

Dr. Pethia said that it was challenging to advertise these units and generate excitement, as they did not know when they would be completed. She said that to address this, they were exploring alternative methods, such as partnering with developers to connect them with nonprofits like the Piedmont Community Land Trust. She said that these organizations could then purchase the proffered units from the developers, making them affordable in perpetuity. She said that this was achieved through 90-year ground leases, which had proven successful in the past.

Mr. Bivins said that he would like to thank him for presenting the information in a clear and concise manner, making it easier for everyone to understand. He said that this was particularly important, as it was at the heart of their discussion. He said that to prepare AC44, and specifically this chapter, they needed to make it accessible to a wider audience. He said that he appreciated that staff had taken the time to incorporate their previous conversations into this work.

Mr. Bivins said that they had recently experienced a significant shock to the system, particularly in the last two weeks. He said that this impact would likely affect their public partners, such as the project on Route 29, where the principal was struggling to determine if the funding would ever materialize due to the messages received from Washington. He said that given that 80% AMI was $100,000 or more per year for their region, they needed to consider the implications of this shift on their community's needs and expectations.

Mr. Bivins said that as someone who had hired a significant number of people, he could not say how many made more than $100,000 per year, or $8,300 per month. He said that he was not sure where those jobs were for non-certified, graduate-degree workers. He said that the community's affluence was hurting their ability to provide a quality of life for the rest of the community. He said that the fact that someone could earn $100,000 per month and only meet 80% AMI was stunning.

Mr. Carrazana said that while some of this growth could be attributed to the presence of people living in the area, he was concerned about the impact of people leaving due to unaffordability, which was then being replaced by individuals with higher incomes. He said that he was wondering if they had any data available on the exodus of residents, particularly those of lower income, and if they had any charts or visual aids that could help illustrate this trend.

Mr. Carrazana said that he would like to discuss the workforce data they have, particularly the percentage of their workforce that was coming from outside the area. He said that some of these individuals may have lived in Albemarle County for a few years but were no longer able to afford it, so they were relocating to nearby areas such as Nelson, Augusta, Greene, and others. He said that based on the data, it appeared that more than half of the workforce was no longer living in the area.

Mr. Carrazana said that he was curious to know if they had any awareness of the exodus, including the percentage of people leaving and their income. He said that understanding this demographic trend could provide valuable insights, as it may be contributing to the County's continual growth. He said that it may be worth examining the impact of lower-income individuals leaving the area, as this could have a double-edged effect on the AMI.

Mr. Bivins said that the data presented to them suggested that this trend was indeed occurring. He said that if they saw increases in the AMI, it implied that the pool from which this income was derived was shifting towards higher values. He said that this meant that they were likely to see a skewing of the data towards the higher end. He said that in essence, this indicated that they had a couple of factors at play. He said that there were individuals who were underemployed. He said that their community had a larger-than-expected number of people who worked outside the traditional economy.

Mr. Clayborne asked what that meant.

Mr. Bivins said that these individuals may not be formally employed, but they did work, often in cash or without declaring their income. He said that a significant portion of their economy was "off the books". He said that this shift was likely driven by the realization that the makeup of economic agents was changing. He said that as a result, they were seeing a trend towards wealth, retirement, and entrepreneurship, with individuals able to work anywhere and choose to work in their community. He said that the income generated by these individuals was not a function of Albemarle County, but rather of other locations around the world. He said that this trend was becoming increasingly apparent in their income data.

Mr. Clayborne said that this issue was also tied to economic development. He said that individuals could earn a salary comparable to those in cities like San Francisco, New York, or Washington, D.C., and still live in the County. He said that this could be another factor to consider when determining how many people were actually working locally, rather than just living there, but working elsewhere.

Mr. Carrazana said that individuals from Northern Virginia and other parts of the country who had relocated there and continued to work remotely were earning salaries from the Northern Virginia or San Francisco areas.

Mr. Moore said that it was clear that this issue was not just a possibility, but it was happening. He said that even a year and a half ago, when Sunshine Mathon discussed this, the 70% increase in AMI over a seven-year period could not be attributed solely to wage increases or salary increases. He said that it also had to account for displacement. He said that there was no other way to achieve such a high increase in such a short period.

Mr. Moore said that college towns with growing tech sectors, such as Austin, Madison, Wisconsin, Boulder, and others, had experienced significant spikes in housing costs during the pandemic. He said that only one had managed to reduce rents in recent years through the housing ecosystems and policies, and that was Austin, Texas. He said that Austin built 50,000 units in 2022 and 2023, which was a significant number for a city of a million people. He said that even scaling this down to 4,500 or 5,000 units, they were still far from addressing the spike in rents and housing costs.

Mr. Moore said that the spike remained, and it continued to rise. He said that supply mattered significantly in these situations, and they had not been utilizing all the available tools to increase supply. He said that he believed they should be striving to hit their targets with precision and

accuracy, utilizing all the available tools and resources at their disposal to increase supply, as well as exploring other social support initiatives that they could discuss further.

Mr. Murray said that he believed it would be beneficial to have data on the median income in their area, particularly in regards to the influx of people from Northern Virginia. He said that as they considered the impact of this influx, it was worth noting that the median income in Northern Virginia was significantly higher than theirs, with estimates ranging from $30,000 to $40,000 more per year. He said that for someone from Northern Virginia, buying a home in their area would be a substantial discount.

Mr. Murray said that he believed it would be valuable to have data on how this disparity was affecting their economy. He said that he thought it was essential to consider two separate economies: wage earners and those who earned their income from investments. He said that a presentation to the Board of Supervisors highlighted the difference between these two groups. He said that he believed many of the people relocating to Albemarle County from other areas, such as Northern Virginia, were not coming there for employment but rather for retirement.

Mr. Murray said that they brought substantial investment income, which was significantly higher than the income of wage earners. He said that when they discussed median income and affordability, they were currently basing their calculations on a mix of these two groups. He said that he was wondering if it would be beneficial to separate these narratives and focus specifically on wage earners versus investment earners as they considered affordable housing and workforce housing.

Mr. Bivins said that he would like to ask that they please stop referring to Northern Virginia as the "boogeyman" on the other side of the road. He said that the people who were moving to Albemarle County were not from Northern Virginia. He said that in fact, they are coming from all over the world. He said that they needed to stop perpetuating this stereotype, as it was not accurate. He said that if someone had a low interest rate in Northern Virginia, they were unlikely to move to Albemarle County because they would not find a lower rate there. He said this was why they were not seeing the same level of inventory turnover that they used to see.

Mr. Carrazana said that he had a couple of questions about the specifics of the chart of page 6. He said that he would like clarification on the term "preserved units" and the 101 preserved units. He asked if there as a program that helped maintain the units.

Dr. Pethia said that the primary units receiving services from the Albemarle Housing Improvement Program were primarily homeownership units, although some may also be potential rental properties. She said that the AHIP program occasionally undertook significant renovations on these houses, with the goal of bringing them back into safe and comfortable condition, ensuring they would last for another 20-30 years. She said that this allowed the existing lower and moderate-income homeowners who resided there to remain in their homes, rather than being forced to relocate.

Mr. Carrazana said that they could have additional low-income housing that was not part of any specific program but that was included in the housing stock.

Dr. Pethia said that was correct. She said that it was challenging to determine which individual houses or properties were affordable solely because they were older or smaller. She said that without conducting a survey, it was difficult to accurately assess the situation.

Mr. Carrazana said that he was trying to point out that there was more than 2,200 affordable houses in the County. He said that some of these were not accounted for because they were not being tracked. He said that he noticed that there were 2,113 proffer units in the pipeline. He said

that he would like to know more about the breakdown of these units, specifically in terms of rentals versus ownership.

Dr. Pethia said that it was challenging to determine the exact percentage. She said that developers often proffered both a percentage of the total built and a percentage that will be for sale or rent as they progress through the process.

Mr. Carrazana asked if they were observing a trend in the number for rent or sale.

Dr. Pethia said that she did not believe so. She said that it ultimately depended on the developer. She said that developers tended to be consistent in their approach. She said that they knew that certain developers would focus on building multifamily housing, which would be rentals, while others would build single-family housing, offering those units for sale. She said that larger developments, such as Old Trail, could be a mix of both.

Mr. Bivins said that by examining the 10 largest employers in Austin, they could see that the major contributors included Dell Technology, Tesla, a large healthcare system, Amazon, Walmart, Apple, IBM, and Accenture.

Mr. Bivins said that the only thing they had that was even close to generating significant income was the two hospitals. He said that they often discussed how to generate revenue to support large projects. He said that one way to achieve this was that they needed more people working in the County, with jobs that paid a living wage, which in turn required attracting companies that could afford to pay those wages. He said that unfortunately, they had a lot of companies that prioritized short-term gains over long-term stability. He said that this was a common issue in the American economy. He said that having a few of the top-ranked companies in the state would make a significant difference in the type of tax income that would come into the County. He said that this would reduce their dependence on real estate revenue.

Mr. Moore said that he would like to bring up some concerns he had regarding certain objectives in section one. He said that he would like to push back on some of the language that he perceived as vague or potentially limiting. He said that in section 1.2, the objective stated that they should "achieve greater housing supply and diversity by allowing small-scale residential structures such as duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes that aligned with the existing neighborhoods." He suggested rephrasing this to remove "align with the existing neighborhoods." He said that this would avoid giving veto power to existing residents and instead focus on increasing the overall housing supply.

Mr. Barnes said that he believed the opposite was true. He said that the idea was that homes like this could fit into a single-family neighborhood. He said that the intent was to make the opposite point. He said that it may be possible to rephrase it to emphasize that point.

Mr. Moore said that his skepticism stemmed from having read numerous strategic plans over the years, which often included clauses that softened the impact. He said that another example that came to mind was the first section of 1.7, which asked them to evaluate County-owned properties suitable for affordable housing development. He said that he would prefer to rephrase it to a more concrete action step, such as committing to develop affordable housing on current and future County-owned land, rather than simply stating that they would "take a look." He said that he believed they should be more proactive in their steps on this matter.

Mr. Clayborne said that he had a specific question regarding Objective 6, particularly in relation to the actions they were taking to address their unsheltered community members. He said that upon reading this, he was struck by the potential distinction between being unhoused due to job or economic reasons versus mental illness, and the possibility that their solutions may differ in

these cases. He said that currently, it appeared that everyone was being lumped together, which he did not believe was the most productive approach. He said that while providing housing was crucial, it would not address mental health issues.

Mr. Carrazana said that it was a good point. He said that it was essential to acknowledge the underlying issues. He said that he would like to ask Mr. Clayborne to elaborate on his point regarding infrastructure, as he believed it addressed a crucial aspect of their discussion. He said that he would like to explore how affordable housing could be achieved when certain factors, such as public transportation and commercial amenities, were lacking. He said that without these amenities, it could be challenging for individuals without cars to access opportunities, leading to increased costs of living.

Mr. Clayborne said that when discussing infrastructure, they often struggled with roads and traffic, particularly with regards to developments. He said that this impacted the CIP as they moved forward. He said that he was familiar with the Smart Scale program run by VDOT. He said that by the time a project was identified and funded, it was likely to be a decade before it was completed. He said that schools also played a role in this. He said that as new schools opened, they needed to consider whether their infrastructure would be sufficient 20 years down the road. He said that the utilities aspect, including water, sewer, and broadband, all needed to be considered to create a safe and livable community.

Mr. Carrazana said that walkability was a crucial factor. He said that in other words, if a location had access to community resources such as jobs, amenities, groceries, and other necessities, it made it a more desirable place to locate housing, especially low-income housing. He said that from his perspective, this was an important consideration.

Mr. Murray said that he thought they could do more to prioritize missing middle development in their development areas. He said that by prioritizing missing middle development, he believed they could improve the amount of housing in development areas. He said that another area where he thought they could improve was by addressing the numerous empty parking lots in the development areas. He said that many of these lots were currently zoned to prohibit residential uses, yet they remained unused and underutilized, contributing to stormwater pollution and stream degradation.

Mr. Murray said that they should provide incentives to encourage residential development in these areas, while also ensuring that existing commercial uses were not eliminated. He said that he recommended offering TIF and other incentives to make these areas more attractive for development. He said that when it came to infrastructure, he believed that areas with existing infrastructure, such as water and sewer, were the best places to develop. He said that by building on top of existing infrastructure, they could create walkable communities where residents could easily access amenities like grocery stores and services. He said that this approach was more efficient and cost-effective than developing on greenfields, where infrastructure had to be built from scratch.

Mr. Bivins said that he agreed with the perspective, but he wanted to emphasize that this was private property, and each individual owner had their own unique approach to deciding whether to support a project. He said that he was not convinced that a reduction in property taxes would be the deciding factor for someone to take on tens of millions of dollars in expenses to build an apartment complex. He said that he had dealt with similar situations in the past, and he did not believe that property tax relief would be the key to securing funding.

Mr. Bivins said that his concern was that he had been examining the local apartment market, which included newer developments in the community. He said that these apartments were commanding high prices, such as $1,700 to $1,800 for a studio and $3,500 to $4,000 for a three-

bedroom unit. He said that when considering a location close to a business, the premium for proximity would also be reflected in the price.

Mr. Bivins said that the location, location, location adage held true, but he believed the County needed to take a more active role in facilitating projects, which was something he had always advocated for. He said that if the County was willing to be the primary agent on a project, that was how they would get it done. He said that the free market could not afford to invest in projects at a price point that would make them accessible to the community. He said that was the key issue he would like to address.

Mr. Bivins said that transit should be removed from the list, as CAT was currently undergoing a rebuilding process. He said that he was unsure if CAT would be able to provide the necessary routes to reach the desired locations. He said that currently, they only served a limited number of locations on 30-minute intervals. He said that for many of them, 30 minutes was not a convenient way to get anywhere. He said that he would argue that walkability and proximity to employment centers were more important than relying on the CAT system.

Mr. Carrazana said that his wife worked in a non-profit, and many of the clients she served relied on mass transit. He said that while some did walk, the majority used a combination of transit and walking, which accounted for a significant percentage of the total.

Mr. Carrazana said that the majority of people came from within the County. He said that there was actually a significant amount of data available on this topic, including ridership information. He said that he still believed that transit was an essential component of their approach to low-income housing. He said that even if individuals had access to a vehicle, they may only have one car, and if a family member was leaving for work, others in the household may not have access to a vehicle. He said that he agreed that changes were necessary, but he thought transit remained an important consideration.

Mr. Bivins said that if he had to choose the first option, he would say that the County should play a more active role in providing long-term, income-accessible housing. He said that in contrast, the private sector's answer was to offer affordable pricing for only a limited time. He said that he was concerned that this approach would lead to a lack of permanent solutions for income-accessible housing.

Mr. Clayborne said that he was wondering if staff could provide more information on the feasibility of the housing trust. He said that he knew this was speculative, but he was thinking about the timeline for its implementation.

Dr. Pethia said that she believed that it was closer than one might think. She said that there was currently an active discussion taking place with the Board of Supervisors regarding identifying long-term funding solutions for the Housing Trust Fund.

Mr. Moore said that he would like to expand on question number one, which he assumed pertained to the development areas. He said that in terms of factors used to analyze other locations for allowing more housing, for him, the key factor was simply yes. He said that if it was a development area, they should allow more housing. He said that as the population grew, they should adjust their systems, infrastructure, and transit accordingly.

Mr. Bivins said that he would support the idea of limiting the size of parcels to make the footprint of the houses smaller. He said that his concern was that they must balance the reduction of parcels with the increase in quality of life that came with it, ensuring they did not overcrowd areas and deprive individuals of green space or opportunities for interaction.

Mr. Bivins said that this approach would allow them to create intentional communities. He said that he believed density should be used to enhance quality of life, not solely for the sake of density. He said that he agreed with Commissioner Moore's comments on neighborhood scales and the importance of having conversations with HOAs to understand how flexibility in community design could benefit them. He said that by offering options, such as allowing family members to downsize without disrupting their lives, HOAs may be more willing to adapt and create positive outcomes.

Mr. Bivins said that ultimately, he thought they needed to rethink what community meant in a multi-generational context. He said that the fastest growing demographic was people over 55. He said that considering this, he thought about what kind of community would look like if they aimed to increase flexibility in HOA-driven areas. He said that he was not going to elaborate on why HOAs existed, but rather how they could present this as a positive to HOAs, so they understood that this was beneficial for them, allowing them to think more freely about how housing should be developed in their areas.

Mr. Murray said that to improve the q8uality of some of these places, he proposed two potential solutions. He said that first, they needed a mechanism in place to allow for the donation of funds to an optional fund, which could then be used to support larger green space opportunities when on-site requirements could not be met or were impractical. He said that this would help prevent the creation of isolated, underutilized green spaces.

Mr. Murray said that he believed they should consider the concept of footprint in sensitive areas, such as along streams and riparian areas, particularly along the Rivanna River. He said that this would involve limiting the footprint of buildings and increasing the height of structures to encourage more efficient use of land. He said that these measures would aim to increase the quality of life in these areas.

Mr. Murray said that moving on to question two and the rural area, he thought the guiding principle should be "do no harm." He said that as he had mentioned before, this was particularly relevant in the rural area. He said that he believed there were opportunities to allow more affordable housing in these areas. He said that for example, a recent application in Ivy presented a scenario where the only option was building million-dollar homes on 21 acres or more. He said that this broke his heart, given his connection to Ivy. He said that he thought the 21-acre rule needed to be revisited, and they should also reconsider the lack of bonus density in the rural area.

Mr. Murray said that he proposed that they focus on the footprint of the houses that would be built, aiming to minimize or eliminate it. He said that if additional units were allowed, they should consider allowing some bonus density, such as allowing two trailer homes instead of one large mansion. He said that if they were talking about a large number of homes with a significant footprint, exceeding the allowed density, he would not be supportive of that. He said that to ensure they were meeting their goal of protecting the rural area, they needed to assess the impact on the landscape and whether the development was ultimately contributing to or detracting from that goal. He said that if they used this as a guiding principle, he believed they could find ways to provide for more density in the rural area while maintaining its character.

Mr. Murray said that he also thought they should not create arbitrary winners and losers by applying inconsistent policies. He said that they should adopt a consistent policy that applied across the board, without unfairly favoring some individuals over others. He said that a policy allowing two trailer homes for every development right could be a reasonable approach. He said that he was not in favor of arbitrarily granting development rights to individuals. He said that they must also consider water usage, as the infamous Ivy development area was removed due to water shortages. He said that proximity to infrastructure was also crucial, as the rural area had limited resources.

Mr. Bivins said that one thing he was pondering was why they could not find a way to create a cluster housing development that would still be feasible. He said he was familiar with the counties in Northern Virginia, where a minimum of 25 acres was required to build a house. He said that if they were committed to building a development, with one house per 25 acres, versus the six houses across the way, in a smaller footprint, that would have created a unique and expensive way of living. He said that was a key point to consider.

Mr. Bivins said that when he looked around the County, he wondered what affordable houses would look like outside of the development area. He said that they had already explored the development area, with projects like Emerson Commons in Crozet, which featured co-housing. He said that he would like to know how they could facilitate co-housing, particularly multi-generational co-housing. He said that he was also intrigued by the idea of off-site manufacturing, which would reduce the footprint on the land. He said that they had mentioned floating platforms, which did not require digging into the ground. He said that they used technology to support a structure, resulting in a soft footprint on the ground.

Mr. Bivins said that he would like to explore these kinds of innovative solutions further. He said that he had been looking at some of his favorite examples, such as Quality Road, which were built to support the quarry that once existed there. He said that this community featured a collection of houses that were closely tied to each other and located near Secretary Road. He said that, considering the possibility of preserving this type of community, he would like to draw on the past. He said that before 1980, many places in the County were centered around specific hubs.

Mr. Bivins said that it was after 1980 when they began prioritizing preservation, that they started moving away from a history of small, self-sufficient communities built around one another. He said that on the other end of Secretary Road in Scottsville, there were numerous individual and modestly sized houses that were close to one another, with neighbors that could be walked to if needed. He said that he was curious about why they had become so focused on the post-1980 history and were forgetting about the history of small communities gathering together in the County, building modest housing, and how they could return to that approach.

Mr. Bivins said that this, in his view, was the key to thinking about housing in a more holistic way. He said that specifically, he would like to address the issue of exclusionary zoning, which was evident in the requirement that individuals have 25 acres of land in the rural part of the County to build housing. He said that if they could step back from that approach, they could see areas that demonstrated people were actually included in these spaces, rather than what he believed some of their current zoning regulations may be excluding. He said that this was his main point. He said that to move forward, he thought they needed to find a balance that honored their desire to be green, while also acknowledged the positive aspects of their past, rather than simply excluding them.

Mr. Carrazana said that they often lost sight of history and focused solely on current knowledge, forgetting about successful models that were in place. He said that those homes not only provided affordable housing but also fostered community. He said that to further explore this, he recommended that staff conduct a study on several of these still-vibrant communities. He said that these homes, typically 1,500 square feet, were often situated on two-acre lots in rural areas, allowing for farming and a more sustainable lifestyle. He said that it would be an intriguing study to examine what factors contributed to their affordability in the past and whether they remained affordable today, particularly in certain parts of the County. He said that he believed that there would be great opportunities to learn from the communities they had visited.

Mr. Barnes asked if they were talking about existing structures in the rural areas or building new, small structures.

Mr. Carrazana said that they were discussing existing structures and communities that could be characterized by their size and scale. He said that for example, while there would likely be some larger lots, many of these communities featured smaller lots, often close to each other, and serviced by VDOT roads. He said that these homes typically had short driveways, and were situated off the main roads, with smaller driveways leading to the house. He said that there were numerous examples of these types of communities that they could learn from.

Mr. Barnes said that to clarify, they were discussing the importance of learning from existing communities and attempting to replicate the small lots that were often found off public roads.

Mr. Carrazana said that they should look for the takeaways. He said that if they thoroughly studied it and intentionally looked for lessons to be learned from these communities, they may discover valuable insights. He said that there may be aspects that were not applicable today, but he believed that there were numerous things that could be applied to their current situation.

Mr. Bivins said that there were often small post offices or community stores within easy walking distance. He said that when they discussed crossroad communities, it was easy to get carried away, but they were often located near hubs that provided a central gathering place for these types of establishments.

Mr. Murray said that staff had previously proposed a plan. He said that in the rural area, they had two types of land division: development rights and the 21-acre rule, which allowed for multiple 21-acre parcels. He said that the proposal brought forward by staff focused on development rights, which he believed was a step in the right direction. He said that it still left the 21-acre parcels, and the rural area was plagued by what he called McMansion farm estates. He said that these were detrimental to the environment, as they often lacked legitimate agriculture or stream buffers. He said that they also failed to provide affordable housing, failing to achieve their goals in any meaningful way.

Mr. Murray thought it was essential to reevaluate the 21-acre rule and development rights to prevent excessive development in the rural area, particularly in terms of the footprint of development. He said that to encourage more sustainable growth, they should consider ways to promote clustering and offer incentives, such as bonus density, to encourage smaller parcels. He said they could give smaller properties a chance at being affordable, whereas 21-acre parcels were unlikely to be affordable.

Mr. Clayborne said that he was very supportive of the views expressed by his colleagues. He said that he wholeheartedly agreed with the 21-acre rule, which he believed was a crucial consideration. He said that he grew up in one of the historical neighborhoods they had described. He said that they did not disrupt the character of the surrounding community. He said that when considering factors such as scale of development, he had noted that this included the quantity of homes in a development, as well as the amount of site disturbance. He said that he had also highlighted the importance of location, with being near public safety facilities potentially being an incentive. He said that being near a rescue squad or fire station may signal that the area was suitable for more development.

Mr. Clayborne said that one thing he would like to emphasize was that he was not a fan of concentrating a single type of home in a particular area. He said that to him, this could be seen as stigmatizing, as it may be associated with lower socioeconomic status. He said that he believed it was better to have a mix of housing types, such as duplexes and single-family homes. He said that this approach could help ensure that all individuals, regardless of their economic status, had access to suitable housing. He said that by welcoming diversity in these developments, he believed they could create more inclusive and equitable communities.

Mr. Bivins said that he would not use the term mobile home because he preferred off-site manufacturing. He said that off-site manufacturing aligned with what they were discussing. He said that they could have a 900-foot off-site manufactured dwelling or an even larger dwelling. He said that he had been researching some options. He said that they often saw them in Scandinavian countries, where they had beautifully natural wood structures. He said that they were off-site productions, where materials were brought in and assembled. He said that he thought that was one of the things they needed to watch their language about.

Mr. Bivins said that instead of using words that were perceived as negative, they could focus on the positive aspects. He said that if they looked at modern construction methods, dwellings could be designed with minimal footprints. He said that he was not sure they could replicate funneled concrete, but he had been studying the funneled concrete houses being built in Texas and Arizona. He said that they were stunning. He said that he would move into one in a second. He said that it was a quick and safe way to build a house, and it was environmentally sound.

Mr. Murray said that in his neighborhood, he observed a mix of different housing types, including manufactured homes, large and expensive homes, and middle-class homes. He said that this natural pattern was common in rural areas currently. He said that he was not sure how they could return to this mix, but he was most concerned about preserving it. He said that he strongly believed that supporting programs like AHIP was crucial in preserving the existing affordable housing stock and maintaining the diversity that made their rural area unique and special.

Mr. Moore said that he had learned a great deal over the years. He said that before 1980, they had built affordable homes in rural areas, such as Quality Road, Porters, White Hall, and an unnamed cluster of homes on Scottsville Road. He said that these villages had grown organically, driven by the need for people to live and work in the area. He said that since they, they decided to preserve the existing stock and prevent any further development. He said that this had resulted in a situation where only expensive developments were allowed in the rural area, as the money and influence often dictated the outcome.

Mr. Moore said that he had encountered many stakeholders who were opposed to achieving more affordable homes in the rural area, often citing environmental concerns. He said that he believed this was a form of weaponized environmentalism that disproportionately affected certain groups of people. He said that when reviewing proposals for affordable housing outside of the development area, he believed the most critical factors to consider were access to sufficient water and septic systems.

Mr. Bivins said that was an interesting observation, particularly when considering the watershed question. He said that looking at the area east of Route 20, he was not certain if the topography there drained into the Rivanna. He said that he was wondering how they could achieve that without impacting other factors. He said that his piece was focused on not limiting it to one variable. He said that in the western parts, they did not want to impinge upon the water supply. He said that the bigger point was how they could be good stewards of the environment and do things that enhanced livability in a particular location, rather than perpetuating damage. He said that this could involve a smaller footprint, varying levels of density, and more.

Mr. Bivins said that this was the piece that he struggled with. He said that when they saw cookie-cutter developments that lacked variety, he was concerned that they were not offering the diversity that replicated their community. He said that they were not replicating their history. He said that to address the missing middle, he would say that in places like Jack Jouett, the missing middle was already present before it became a trend. He said that there were many houses of varying sizes that demonstrated this. He said that what they were discussing was whether they could go

back to what they were, or move forward in a way that was more inclusive for the people who would live there.

Mr. Murray said that he thought they should consider impaired watersheds and stream quality when making decisions, rather than just focusing on water supply areas.

Mr. Carrazana said that he would like to ask for an update on their current policies and incentives. He asked if Dr. Pethia could provide them with information on where they stood, how they were performing, and if there had been any interested parties in their incentive programs. He said that they had multiple applicants express interest in the past, but they had not seen any follow-through. He said that he had also heard that there may be a few potential applicants in the pipeline.

Dr. Pethia said that there had been conversations with a few developers regarding the incentive program. She said that one of the projects was likely to be 100% affordable housing, located along Route 29, which meant they would require additional funding. She said that this program allowed the County to invest in the project without needing a single upfront payment. She said that they were currently in discussions with a couple of other developers, working out the details and exploring how the program would work. She said that they would keep the Commission informed as the process moved forward.

Mr. Carrazana asked if there was a reason they were seeing developers take advantage of these incentives now.

Dr. Pethia said that the housing policy was not fully in effect until March 1, 2024, so it had only been a year that the 20% affordable housing had been active. She said that as a result, it had taken some time for developers to figure out how to implement it, and conversations about its use were beginning.

**Recess**

The Commission recessed at 5:26 p.m. and reconvened at 6:00 p.m.

**Establish Quorum**

Mr. Carrazana established a quorum.

**Public Comment on matters pending before the Commission but not listed for a Public Hearing on this agenda**

There were none.

**Consent Agenda**

There was none.

**Public Hearing**

**SP202400024 400 Rio Road W – Outdoor Storage and Display**

Khris Taggart, Senior Planner, said that he was joined by Margaret Maliszewski, Planning Manager, who assisted with the review. He said that he would be presenting staff's presentation for the Special Use Permit application. He said that the subject property, located at 400 Rio Road West, was zoned Light Industrial and situated in an area mostly residential with an adjacent light industrial parcel to the west. He said that as a reminder, Rio Road was an entrance corridor (EC).

Mr. Taggart said that the site consisted of two parcels, mostly paved, with chain-link fencing surrounding most of the paved area. He said that at the front of the property was a brick-faced office building, and at the rear was a large metal shed. He said that the special permit request was for outdoor storage, display, and sales of plumbing, materials, and equipment in the EC Overlay District; he would refer to this as outdoor storage. He said that the proposal included a storage area to the north and west of the existing brick-faced building, highlighted in orange on the concept plan. He said that there was also an existing storage area at the rear of the site, indicated in blue.

Mr. Taggart said that to minimize visual impact, a berm would be used to replace the chain-link fencing along the Rio side of the storage area. He said that additional landscaping was proposed along the employee parking lot, east of the main building, and in the southwest corner of the site to limit visibility of the storage area. He said that furthermore, landscaping would be used between the main building and the street to screen existing equipment and coordinate the landscaping along the storage area.

Mr. Taggart said that the proposed use was by right in the zoning district, but outdoor storage was a special use in the EC. He said that the special permits for outdoor storage were reviewed under §30.6, which limits the factors to be considered to determining whether the outdoor storage was consistent with the EC design guidelines. He said that the Architectural Review Board (ARB) and Site Review Committee reviewed this proposal in January and requested revisions focused on screening of the proposed and existing storage areas in the view of the EC.

Mr. Taggart said that on March 3, the ARB reviewed an updated plan that included revisions to demonstrate that existing vegetation along the eastern and western perimeter of the site would remain and added screen shrubs along a portion of the western perimeter, directly east of the building, and also along the frontage east of the entrance to the employee parking lot.

Mr. Taggart said that the ARB considered the revised plan and unanimously voted to recommend approval with conditions. He said that the conditions were listed here, and they could bring them back up if needed. He said that on February 10, the required community meeting was held at the Places 29 Hydraulic Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting. He said that there were questions regarding the development of the site, but no comments on the special use permit.

Mr. Taggart said that staff did not identify any unfavorable factors, and the favorable factor for this request was that outdoor storage use would be consistent with the EC design guidelines if the ARB's recommended conditions were upheld. He said that for this reason, staff recommended approval of the special permit for outdoor storage. He said that he was happy to answer any questions and could bring up the motions and conditions of approval when the Commission was ready.

Mr. Carrazana asked if the applicant had a presentation.

Valerie Long said that she was with the law firm of Williams Mullen and represented the applicant, now the landowner of this property. She said that she would like to introduce the applicant team, who were joining her virtually tonight. She said that they also had representatives from Ferguson Enterprises present, who could provide operational insights. She said that she would like to thank staff for their presentation, which covered most of the key issues. She said that she would briefly review some further points.

Ms. Long said that many of them were fairly familiar with this location, which had been owned by the phone company since the 1970s. She said that it was zoned light industrial. She said that as Mr. Taggart mentioned, the applicant's proposed use for Ferguson as a wholesale waterworks

distributor was a by-right use. She said that the reason they were here tonight was that, under the light industrial zoning district, any materials stored outside in an entrance corridor, including those for sale or display, required a special use permit to determine if the proposed screening would bring the site into compliance with the ARB guidelines.

Ms. Long said that aerial photographs from UVA's database showed that the site had remained largely unchanged since the early 1970s. She said that the photographs demonstrated that the site was used by the phone company in the past, with trucks stored on the property and minimal screening. She said that the existing conditions were not ideal from a visual perspective. She said that the chain link fencing made it easy to see materials and equipment stored on site, and there were few plantings. She said that there were a handful of trees, but they did not show up well. She said that the area was cluttered with various items, which were clearly visible from Google Street View.

Ms. Long said that to provide context, she had included representative photographs of the types of materials Ferguson would use at the site, such as piping for wholesale waterworks, fire hydrants, and other materials, which were part of the facilities. She said that the provided images served as a reference for what they were discussing. She said that next was the existing conditions plan, which Mr. Taggart had walked through.

Ms. Long said that Ferguson would use the existing paved parking area for storing their materials. She said that the area in the back, which was currently shown in a purple shade, had a history of material storage that predated regulations against it. She said that although it was currently non-conforming, they were incorporating it into the special use permit application, making it conforming with the rest of the site.

Ms. Long said that they proposed replacing the chain link fence, which could be seen with the handful of trees and the gate. She said that there was also mechanical equipment in the front of the building without screening, which they planned to screen. She said that this was the conceptual plan that would be informative or binding on the site plan amendment.

Ms. Long said that they planned to replace the chain link fence with a new aluminum picket fence and implement a new landscape plan, featuring a berm along the front. She said that Timmons Group, the civil engineers, and their landscape architect were designing this plan. She said that it would be a robust screening plan, with new plantings and screens added at the request of the Architectural Review Board.

Ms. Long said that they had also agreed to a condition that required anything taller than the eight-foot fence to be located beyond a 50-foot line from the entrance corridor. She said that the site's terrain sloped downward as one moved away from Rio Road, but the fence was eight feet tall. She said that most of the existing features, including the employee parking lot, would remain unchanged, with additional screening added in specific areas. She said that there was an old driveway that would no longer be in use. She said that as a result, it would be closed off and additional landscaping would be added to help screen the back of the site. She said that the displayed enlargement was a representation of the same area.

Ms. Long said that provided were photos of the new landscaping they were proposing along the front of the building. She said that while it was not required to screen the materials being stored, they thought it was a good idea to extend the plantings to the front of the building as well, and most importantly, to screen the outdoor equipment. She said that next was a cross-section view of how the landscape plan would function with the berm, which would provide some density and variety of plantings and elevation to help screen.

Ms. Long said that the renderings, conceptual in nature, showed how the pipe storage would be screened and how the new planting plan would look over time. She said that the Architectural Review Board had determined that there was a need for additional screening to help screen the view. She said that the mechanical equipment would be screened, and the renderings demonstrated how the planting plan would develop and substantially improve the views, both from the entrance corridor and the outdoor materials being stored. She said that she was happy to answer any questions or provide further clarification on these plans.

Mr. Clayborne said that he was wondering if the inert materials, such as those not classified as chemicals, were the products that they had showcased in the slides.

Ms. Long said that was correct.

Mr. Murray said that this property predated their stormwater ordinance. He asked if there was any consideration for removing some of the impervious surface and converting it into a permeable area to absorb stormwater on site, particularly in the storage area.

Ms. Long said that she knew they were currently addressing some of the issues. She said that a site plan amendment would be required at a later stage. She said that their client and Ferguson were hesitant to invest in preparing a site plan until they had confirmation of the special use permit's approval. She said that however, they were working through these issues with Timmons Group.

Mr. Murray said that the existing parking lot would qualify for some County incentive programs for impervious surface removal, if the client was interested. He said that it was worth noting that this was an option that could be explored if the applicant wished to pursue it.

Ms. Long said that she would look into that with their clients, and she was sure Timmons Group was aware of it, but she appreciated Mr. Murray’s suggestion because she had been unaware.

Mr. Carrazana asked if the non-conforming area of the parcel was paved as well.

Ms. Long said that some areas of it was paved, but not all of it. She said that it was likely that most of the pavement had deteriorated. She said that in some areas, the pavement had been worn away slightly, and in other areas, grass had begun to grow where the pavement was broken.

Mr. Bivins said that he thought it would be helpful for the Commission and the community to understand this concept. He said that there were actually two properties involved, one of which would not be developed. He said that this might help people appreciate the scope of the project, which had been presented in more detail at the CAC meeting.

Ms. Long said that Mr. Bivins was correct. She said that there were two tax map parcels. She said that the first parcel was a rectangular shape along the frontage, while the second parcel encompassed the remaining area inside the circle, as well as the back section. She said that the four-acre area in the center was owned by the state, which had acquired it from the phone company as part of the western bypass project. She said that unlike many landowners, the phone company had chosen not to repurchase this land, possibly due to its limited utility. She said that the remaining site, although large, was largely unused by the applicant, leaving approximately six acres undisturbed.

Mr. Bivins said that he appreciated the opportunity to address the question about water management that Mr. Murray had brought up. He said that in addition to the berm, he was wondering about any other measures being considered to address this issue.

Ms. Long said that there were none in connection with the special use permit, but as part of the site plan application, there may be stormwater management regulations that will apply, as well as other requirements. She said that they had not yet reached that point in the process.

Mr. Bivins said that given the presence of a single-family residence at 4525 A.

Ms. Long said that it was a business. She said that this parcel was also zoned light industrial, and she believed the adjacent parcel may also be zoned in the same category.

Mr. Bivins said that he drove past this parcel in his daily commute, and he noticed the blinking lights over there. He asked how that would be addressed.

Ms. Long said that she had worked with the client who was now the property owner, and they had worked with electricians. She said that the lights had been either disconnected or removed, so they were no longer in operation.

Mr. Bivins said that he assumed they would reinstall some form of lighting in the storage area, considering the amount of inventory.

Ms. Long said that it was likely that there would be site lighting for the reasons Mr. Bivins mentioned. She said that any new light fixtures would be subject to the site plan regulations and the Architecture Review Board guidelines, including the requirement that light fixtures be full cutoff and did not spill over. She said that the hours of operation for this facility were in the range of 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Carrazana asked if there were any members of the public who wished to address this item. Seeing none, he closed the public hearing and the matter rested with the Commission.

Mr. Bivins said that he attended the CAC meeting for this application and supported the applicant's proposal. He said that it was intriguing because he did not realize that the telephone company had vacated the premises for a while, and the presence of random trucks scattered across the parking lot seemed to be a result of this. He said that there was a flickering light that had been disturbing the housing development nearby, but he could attest that it had been removed and was no longer a nuisance. He said that as someone who regularly drove this route, it was interesting that the ARB guidelines necessitated that pipes could not be seen and must be obscured behind an eight-foot fence, but trucks on parking lots did not require any screening.

Mr. Murray said that it seemed like an improvement.

Mr. Bivins said that he agreed; it would be a great improvement for the area.

Mr. Carrazana said that he agreed that there was an improvement from the current state.

Mr. Moore motioned that the Planning Commission recommend approval of SP202400024 Rio Road W – Outdoor Storage and Display. Mr. Bivins seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (5-0). (Mr. Missel and Ms. Firehock were absent; Mr. Murray was remote)

**Committee Reports**

Mr. Bivins said that many people were likely preparing for budget meetings, so he would encourage those who had not attended a budget meeting to do so. He said that by attending a budget meeting, they would likely gain a better understanding of how Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs) worked and other related topics. He said that he believed the presentations would be informative.

### Review of Board of Supervisors Meeting: April 2, 2025

Mr. Barnes said that the Board considered two items at the April 2, 2025, meeting, which the Commission had reviewed. He said that the second tranche of AFDs was resolved quickly, with the Board approving the staff recommendation after removing some parcels with zero lot potential. He said that the second item was data centers, which was also considered.

Mr. Barnes said that they had conducted a phase one analysis, and interim Senate regulations allowed for some zoning regulations for data centers. He said that staff was currently working on a more in-depth, nuanced zoning text amendment, which was expected to be brought to the Commission within the next year. He said that the two major items were approved by the Board.

### New Business

There was none.

### Old Business

Mr. Bivins said that everyone was aware of his frustration with the Rio Route 29 overpass plantings. He said that over the years, he had referred to them as "zombie plants." He said that he would like to commend everyone involved. He said that the current plantings were lovely, with fresh plantings and well-maintained upkeep. He said that it was a welcome sight to see something so pleasant at that location, especially considering how scary it was in the past. He said that if anyone in the room was responsible for this improvement, he would like to extend his sincerest gratitude.

Mr. Barnes said that Facilities and Environmental Services Department was responsible for those improvements.

Mr. Murray said that he received a report regarding the Montclair rezoning, which involved a stream of significant controversy. He said that the developer had now applied for an Army Corps of Engineers permit to remove the stream, raising numerous questions that he was still seeking answers to. He said that Supervisor Mallek was also seeking answers to these questions.

Mr. Murray said that if the stream was removed, it would likely invalidate the site plan, as one of their conditions typically required that the stream be in accordance with the site plan. He said that this would also require determining the mitigation requirements for the buffer that would no longer be present. He said that he was unsure if staff had any details at this time, and he was wondering if this would lead to a return to the Commission with this significant change.

Mr. Herrick said that his knowledge on this matter was limited to what he received by email, which stated that there had been approval of the permit handled by someone other than the County. He said that he was unable to address the site development plan, as it was administratively handled and not something that came before the Planning Commission. He said that was the extent of his knowledge.

Mr. Barnes said that they were currently undergoing a site plan review, involving the Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as the permitting agencies.

Mr. Murray said that one of the conditions for approving rezoning was that the approved rezoning must be in general accordance with the site plan. He said that this was stated in the general text of the rezoning approval.

Mr. Barnes said that it would have been in the application plan rather than the site plan, but he understood Mr. Murray's point. He said that it was currently in progress, and he was hesitant to provide the exact answers he was seeking at this time. He said that while he had a general understanding of the situation, he did not have the specific details he was looking for.

Mr. Murray said that a very heated issue in Crozet had been a topic of discussion for quite some time, and as a result, the public was eager to know what was happening.

Mr. Bivins said that he was certain that Supervisor Mallek would quickly seek out answers to that question.

Mr. Barnes said that he was aware that members of their permitting team, as well as the Zoning team, had been discussing this topic. He said that he was not, however, following the minute details or specifics of the conversation.

**Items for Follow-Up**

There were none.

**Adjournment**

At 6:32 p.m., the Commission adjourned to Tuesday, April 22, 2025, Albemarle County Planning Commission meeting, Lane Auditorium.

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Michael Barnes, Director of Planning

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

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| Approved by Planning Commission |
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