Albemarle County Planning Commission
Draft Minutes Work Session
August 26, 2025

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a public meeting on Tuesday, August 26, 2025. at 6:00 p.m.

Members attending were Fred Missel, Chair; Luis Carrazana, Vice-Chair; Corey Clayborne (arrived at 6:04 p.m.) Karen Firehock; Lonnie Murray.

Members absent: Mr. Bivins; Mr. Moore.

Other officials present were Michael Barnes, Director of Planning; Ben Holt, Senior Planner II, Tonya Swartzendruber, Planning Manager; Jennifer Tevendale, County Attorney; and Carolyn Shaffer, Clerk to the Planning Commissions.

Call to Order and Establish Quorum

Ms. Shaffer called the roll.

Mr. Missel established a quorum.

Public Comment on matters pending before the Commission, but not listed on this agenda

There were none.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Firehock motioned that the Planning Commission approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Carrazana seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (4-0).(Mr. Clayborne, Mr. Moore, and Mr. Bivins were absent)

Work Session

CCP202100002 AC44 Comp Plan – Final Draft Document

Ben Holt, Senior Planner II, said that he would be presenting on their draft document that evening. He said that to give them a brief overview of what they would be covering tonight, he would start by reviewing the previous phases that led to this point. He said that they would discuss what this new Phase 4 entails, review the upcoming schedule, examine the draft document and notable updates, and then have a discussion on tracking and reporting, followed by questions for their feedback. He said that to kick off their discussion, he would like to preview some of the questions they would be addressing.

Mr. Holt said that the focus topics they would be discussing would be what they got right in this draft plan document and the Commission's feedback on what may be missing or need addition or update. He said that to put this into context, they would look at the previous project phases. He said that Phase 1, which began in 2021, included their framework and established guiding principles to define the type of community they would like to be over the next 20 years.

Mr. Holt said that these guiding principles provided direction for the plan as a whole and ultimately for implementation actions and objectives. He said that Phase 1 also examined their growth management policy, including the 2022 buildout analysis to establish a baseline for growth capacity within their existing development areas and provide guidance for future decisions. He said that additionally, they identified land use topics that needed further consideration or guidance, such as rural interstate interchanges, crossroads communities, and rural area uses.

Mr. Holt said that Phase 2 drafted the goals and objectives for each topic chapter, and they focused on their planning toolkits to coordinate land use and transportation planning, resulting in their activity centers. He said that Phase 3 drafted actions to support the goals and objectives within each topic chapter, created implementation strategies, and developed Big Moves to prioritize plan recommendations and guide resource allocation. He said that this brought them to their current Phase 4, with a focus on finalizing the plan document. He said that he would provide more details about this phase in later slides.

Mr. Holt said that to help set the stage, he would like to briefly discuss Phase 3 and what preceded this draft document. He said that in Phase 3, they drafted actions to support the goals and objectives within the topic chapters. He said that each topic chapter was previewed at work sessions with the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors, taking place from late 2024 through June of this year. He said that in July, they drafted the Implementation Chapter and the Big Moves within that chapter. He said that they also presented all the topic chapters at open house events or virtual meetings to engage with the public.

Mr. Holt said that this brought them to Phase 4. He said that they had now published a complete draft document of the Comprehensive Plan, which could be reviewed by the public, the Planning Commission, and the Board for input. He said that the input would be used to update and finalize the plan document, followed by plan adoption. He said that regarding engagement to date for this phase, they had published the draft plan document on the AC44 website; at the last check, they had had over 400 visits to the phase four webpage, and approximately 100 or more downloads for parts one, two, and three of the plan.

Mr. Holt said that this new webpage included a feedback tool to gauge participants' comfort level with the plan, as well as a comment tool for sharing input and suggestions. He said that this feedback tool would remain open from September 5, 2025. He said that in terms of engagement for this phase, they had held their final public open house event last Thursday, where they shared the draft plan document with the public. He said that approximately 30 attendees participated, including both in-person and online participants.

Mr. Holt said that at the meeting, they presented the plan content and had staff available to answer questions about the various chapters. He said that they also previewed the feedback tool on the website and distributed flyers with QR codes that connect to the website, allowing people to access the planned document. He said that they received a range of comments, including topics such as transit, development areas expansion, transitional density housing, public schools, and childcare. He said that looking at their Phase 4 schedule, public input would be received online through September 5, 2025, on the website.

Mr. Holt said that following this, they would have work sessions to review the draft content of the plan today with the Planning Commission and on September 10, 2025, with the Board of Supervisors. He said that in between now and then, staff would be meeting with the Board on

September 3, 2025, to present their updated buildout analysis, which would be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. He said that after these work sessions, they would present the updated and final version of the plan at public hearings with the Commission on September 23, 2025, and with the Board on October 15, 2025, which was their projected adoption date.

Mr. Holt said that notable edits or additions to the plan document included a seventh Big Move focusing on social connection and building a sense of community, updated content in the Growth Management Chapter, and new content in the Rural Areas Chapter regarding supporting agriculture and forestry uses. He said that the Thriving Economy Chapter had been updated to align with the updated Economic Development Strategic Plan, and the Community Facilities Chapter had been consolidated and shortened. He said that the Cultural Resources Chapter had been updated to include incentives, potential funding, and identification of potential resources.

Mr. Holt said that the Transportation Chapter included additional content related to recreation on rural roads. He said that they would also be incorporating metrics with a priority placed on monitoring trends and patterns associated with the Big Moves, including population growth, affordable housing units, and cost-burdened households. He said that these metrics would be included in scorecards that would be part of staff reviews for individual applications and their regularly scheduled reporting, which would likely be conducted on an annual basis. He said that this brought them to their discussion topics. He said that staff was asking the Commission to discuss what they had gotten right and to provide additional feedback on what might be missing or needed updating.

Mr. Missel said that to kick off tonight's work session, he wanted to reiterate that they had already thoroughly reviewed the details, objectives, and goals, and had been part of public hearings and conversations related to this topic. He said that given that this was a work session, his intention was to facilitate their progress through this substantial material and also explore ways to identify strengths, gaps, and priorities. He said that this aligned with what staff was seeking here.

Mr. Missel said that if he may suggest, they could take a closer look at any grammatical errors or typos offline, in order to be more constructive with their time today.

Ms. Firehock said that she had a quick logistical question for staff. She said that she attempted to share the edits she had made to the document, but it appeared that staff could not open links. She said that the document was too large to be displayed fully, and it only showed up as a link. She said that she was unsure if the County had implemented new security procedures in response to their recent cybersecurity issues, but she had issues with trying to send the PDF via email.

Michael Barnes, Director of Planning, said that he had been having issues sending the PDF as well. He said that, however, staff had received a copy from Ms. Firehock.

Ms. Firehock said that as long as someone had received it, that was fine. She said that she had wanted to avoid having to discuss single-word typos and other small details.

Mr. Barnes said that with regard to editing the document, staff was currently editing the completed plan to ensure all edits were incorporated. He said that they recognized there were still some grammatical errors, which they were cleaning up.

Mr. Carrazana said that there had been a suggestion to bring in an external editor or someone from the outside to help with the process. He said that at UVA, they did this occasionally, bringing

in someone from outside the staff to review and edit documents. He said that sometimes there may be a staff member with a keen eye for detail who could do this, but it was also about the language and tone, as there were many voices involved in the document. He said that as he reviewed the draft, he noticed that the language could be cleaned up to ensure consistency and clarity. He said that he thought bringing in someone from the outside could be beneficial, and he would second that recommendation.

Ms. Firehock said that the County had recently hired a planner who previously worked as an editor, but she was unsure of their workload.

Mr. Barnes said that staff had been tasked with writing this document, which oftentimes was the work of a consultant. He said that it was a difficult project to complete when considering the other duties, they were still responsible for. He said that staff was working to make edits to the completed document.

Mr. Missel asked if the Commissioners had any other comments related to the general editing of the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Firehock said that in her edits, she highlighted instances where she expressed confusion about the objective being stated. She said that what the County was actually saying it was doing was unclear to her. She said that given her familiarity with the subject matter and her attempt to put herself in the shoes of a member of the public, she would like staff to take a moment to reflect on whether they could tell whether the objective was actually achieved.

Ms. Firehock said that she was not trying to be dismissive, but she did notice that it reminded her of Mad Libs, where the text may be using sustainability and equity as buzzwords, rather than conveying a clear message. She said that it was difficult to write these things, even if someone was a professional writer or editor. She said that she would just like to request staff and the Commissioners to perform a test by asking themselves if they understood what a sentence was saying and whether they could really assess whether someone could determine if the stated objective had been achieved not. She said that if they could not tell, they needed to ask for clarification from staff. She said that this did not mean that the content was unimportant; it was just difficult to understand what the text was trying to convey.

Mr. Missel said that, as someone who was part of the original Comprehensive Plan and worked through rezonings and neighborhood developments, one thing that stood out to him was that this plan was more clearly laid out and structured than previous plans. He said that he was in agreement with the point that, as planners, they often got too close to the issue and needed to step back and consider the perspective of those outside the planning process. He said that having a fresh set of eyes and a broader view could be incredibly helpful.

Mr. Clayborne said that in terms of the layout, he thought it worked graphically. He said that he would offer a couple of suggestions, and staff could take them as they saw fit. He said that for the pictures, he thought it would be helpful to include a clear identification of what each image represented. He said that sometimes, it was explicitly stated, such as "Darden Towe Park," but other times, it was just a picture of structures without context. He said that adding a small asterisk or notation at the bottom of the page, indicating the location of each image, would be beneficial. He said that this would provide clarity and help viewers understand the relationship between the images and the community.

Mr. Clayborne said additionally, as an architect, he appreciated the importance of visual consistency. He said that he noticed that the color scheme was used inconsistently throughout the plan, with different colors used for captions, headings, and text sizes. He said that to maintain a professional appearance, he would recommend using color consistently and meaningfully, such as reserving a specific color for a particular section or chapter. He said that this would enhance the overall visual appeal of the presentation without altering the content.

Ms. Firehock said that she wanted to add to that thought. She said that along those lines, she would like to discuss the standard colors used for various elements on maps. She said that for instance, they had a map of scenic roads, but the roads were colored blue, which was typically used to represent rivers. She said that this led to confusion in the paragraph, as it mentioned both scenic roads and rivers. She said that a more accurate color choice would have clarified the distinction. She said that she believed it was essential to have a clear and consistent map key, such as a road designation, to provide a clear point of reference for the viewer's brain. She said that revisiting the color choices and map keys could help improve the overall clarity of the maps and the plan.

Mr. Murray said that one thing that stood out to him was the use of tentative language in some of the newer editions, particularly phrases like "maybe" and "perhaps." He said that he believed they should strive for more definitive language in their plan. He said that if they could not be definitive, he thought they should question the inclusion of such statements altogether. He said that he preferred to use phrases like "evidence suggests" or "as reported by" to provide more clarity and credibility. He said that for example, referencing a report from a specific date or citing a reliable source would be more effective. He said that by using more definitive language, he believed that they could avoid giving the impression that they were uncertain or lacking in conviction.

Mr. Missel said that some aspirational goals were meant to suggest potential avenues, which he did not see as needing to be removed completely due to lack of evidence.

Mr. Murray said that aspiration was acceptable. He said that he believed there was some forecasting of potential issues, and he would address specific language later when he quoted relevant sections, that required improvement. He said that at this general level, he thought there was some ambiguity in the language of the plan.

Ms. Firehock said that she would like to provide an example. She said that in the Historic Preservation Chapter, it discussed communities that were certified for historic preservation and listed all of them. She said that it started out with a strong case of this being something the County should pursue; however, when it came to the objective, it seemed to suggest that they should consider investigating further, rather than making a clear directive.

Ms. Firehock said that she was wondering why the objective did not clearly state that they should pursue this. She said that instead of saying "they might consider," why could they not simply state that they wanted to make one of their goals to become certified? She said that by doing so, they could make a clear commitment to this, rather than leaving room for ambiguity. She said that they were not writing it into law.

Ms. Swartzendruber said that in that particular instance, staff was responding to Board direction.

Mr. Missel said that on that general subject, perhaps every one of those instances was due to Board direction, but there were some instances where they were not specific enough, such as

providing metrics. He said that regarding part one of the plan, he had a general question for staff to help them get started. He said that he wanted to know how they envisioned the constituents, general public, and other stakeholders using part one of the Comprehensive Plan. He said that he wanted to know what the primary benefit of part one was in their minds.

Mr. Holt asked if he was referring to the structure of the plan document and how it informed the reader.

Mr. Missel said that he was referring to the plan policy, which was outlined in the Comprehensive Plan overview. He said that the process involved navigating the connection to other County plans and the County Strategic Plan.

Mr. Holt said that their intention was to provide a historical context and understanding for those familiar with comprehensive plans, as well as those new to the concept, explaining why it was necessary and what it aimed to achieve. He said that then, they presented their plan, outlining its structure and application. He said that they hoped that this would make it easier to navigate. He said that as a side note, staff intended to include a PDF version of the document, featuring a table of contents with active links to sections, making it more user-friendly. He said that once the document was finalized, they would incorporate those features.

Mr. Missel said that reading through it, he thought it was very interesting to read through the history of Albemarle County's planning, which began in the 1980s. He said that the three-party agreement effectively connected it to the University and the City. He said that he thought the chapter was well-written and helpful. He said that one thing that caught his attention, while he was reading, was that the chapter seemed to end abruptly with guiding principles, which seemed a bit odd.

Mr. Carrazana said that he agreed; the ending did not appear to be directly related to what was above it.

Ms. Firehock said that she thought it was trying to tee up for the rest of the content that followed the introduction.

Mr. Missel said that it might be, but he wondered if it was right to include that in this chapter.

Mr. Missel said that perhaps it could include a conclusion, an overview, or a summary to provide a clearer ending. He said that the current document felt like it ended abruptly and awkwardly.

Mr. Carrazana said that it was on page 33, and it was fine if they wanted to end with the guiding principles. He said that, however, at the very least, they should introduce the reader to the guiding principles that were the foundation of this document. He said that they should establish that these principles were the lens through which they were approaching this document, from the outset.

Mr. Clayborne said that he had flagged the table of contents and its order. He said that the overview should be the first section, followed by guiding principles, equity, and the climate lens. He said that while one could argue about the order, he believed that setting the stage and then working through the document in a logical progression was the most effective approach.

Mr. Clayborne said that guiding principles were crucial, as they served as a foundation for the entire document. He said that he found it puzzling that guiding principles were not included in the

overview, which set the stage for the rest of the document, including the climate equity lens that was woven throughout the nine chapters. He said that in his original reading, everything else seemed secondary to this.

Mr. Barnes asked if there was something that was missing from the first section.

Mr. Clayborne said that he thought all the necessary puzzle pieces were in place, but the question was, were they in the correct order? He said that that was what he was trying to determine.

Mr. Barnes said that he wanted to make sure all the necessary information was there. He said that staff would work on making sure things were in the right order.

Ms. Firehock said that she was familiar with the history, but even for herself, the information presented helped her recall certain aspects that she had forgotten. She said that she thought it was a good summary layout for someone who was not familiar with Albemarle County's planning process.

Mr. Missel said that he agreed that the puzzle pieces were all in place, as Mr. Clayborne had put it. He said that regarding whether anything was missing, he would propose a concluding section or summary. He said that for instance, they could summarize the key points from part one and then move forward. He said that he believed that items like community engagement were crucial to this document, and he still heard people today expressing concerns that there was not enough community input and opportunities for public participation.

Mr. Missel said that staff just mentioned that 30 people out of 120,000 attended the most recent event, and he would not criticize their constituents for not attending; however, the opportunities for engagement were indeed available. He said that he would consider stating this upfront. He said that he recalled that when staff developed this document, they were striving for excellence and benchmarked other communities to determine how to be leaders in this area. He said that by highlighting these aspects, they could clearly state in this document how their County stood out and differentiated their community from others, not in a boastful manner, but rather as a matter of fact.

Mr. Carrazana said that regarding the history of Albemarle, one of the things that made Albemarle distinctive was partially due to its history. He said that the things discussed in that section, although brief, did not really highlight what was unique about Albemarle. He said that in fact, the two points mentioned that were not positive were also true of a lot of other communities. He said that the policies and practices mentioned were not unique to their area. He said that however, this was what the focus of that section was.

Mr. Carrazana said he believed there was an opportunity to discuss what made their decisions unique, driven by their history and location. He said staff may want to review that section, as personally, he did not think it provided a clear understanding of Albemarle's history. He said that instead, it highlighted the history of inequitable land use practices and policies that were made, which were not unique to Albemarle.

Mr. Murray said that one aspect that distinguished them from Charlottesville, for instance, or other local communities, was the 1980 rezoning, which was not based on racial lines or other factors, but rather on water. He said that the significant role water played in shaping this massive rezoning,

which in turn defined the layout of their current infrastructure, truly set them apart from other communities.

Ms. Firehock said that when she traveled to other Counties, she often found that people held Albemarle in high regard due to their reputation for planning for growth in a way that protected their rural areas. She said that unlike some other Counties, they had worked diligently to avoid the pitfalls of suburban sprawl and instead focused on preserving their rural landscape.

Ms. Firehock said that it was not perfect, and they faced challenges such as legacy zoning and other issues that they were working to address. She said that however, they had made significant strides in balancing growth with preservation. She said that for example, their policy changes had led to reduced development in rural areas and increased growth in urban areas, with a positive impact on the rural areas as well.

Ms. Firehock said that their strong land policies were a key factor in their ability to maintain this beautiful countryside, which they could continue to protect. She said that she believed that highlighting their reputation in Virginia upfront in the introduction of the Comprehensive Plan would be a strong case for why they should continue to prioritize this legacy and trajectory.

Mr. Barnes said that staff had included some mention of the 1980 rezoning and the community water supply plan on page 22, so he wanted to note that. He said that he appreciated the comment that racist land use practices were not unique to Albemarle County, as well. He asked the Commission if staff would meet the intent by emphasizing some of the aspects that made Albemarle stand apart from other localities.

Mr. Missel said that if one reads the beginning of this, navigating the plan, AC44 was a policy guide for County staff and officials, and a resource for community members. He said that the plan outlined their community's vision for the future and the steps needed to implement it. He said that this contrasted with the statement that there were many attributes highlighted Albemarle's unique character and helped maintain its desirability as a place to live, work, and play. He said that their nationally recognized historic landmarks, university, scenic beauty, natural environments, and local character were key differentiators that set them apart.

Mr. Missel said that by starting with the statement about Albemarle's unique aspects, they could effectively communicate their community's value. Then, they could move into navigating the plan, and subsequently, the Comprehensive Plan process. He said that perhaps it was as simple as reordering the approach, similar to what they had discussed earlier.

Mr. Clayborne said that adding a section on "who we are" could be effective. He said that it would allow them to highlight the unique aspects of their community, making it more attention-grabbing. He said that by doing so, they could delve into topics such as demographics, which were not currently addressed in the document. He said that for instance, they could discuss their County's composition, economic drivers, and the aging demographic, which would help justify the decisions made in developing the document.

Mr. Carrazana said that as Mr. Missel had stated, they could start with a bolder statement, which tied to the guiding principle, considering their current situation and goals. He said that by laying out the guiding principles, it would help to explain what they were trying to achieve here. He said that they could still include the graphic on page 33 to reinforce the points. He said that he did think that their history should reflect some of these guiding principles as well; currently, it did not.

Mr. Carrazana said that it was important to mention the items that they brought up, but when he read that section, he felt like it only scratched the surface. He said that he was glad that they did not have those policies again, but Albemarle was not the only one, so it was not a unique differentiator. He said that unfortunately, it was a part of their history, and while they could learn from it, it did not provide a comprehensive understanding of the specific history of Albemarle.

Mr. Murray said that he believed that some of these policies played out differently in Albemarle County as well. He said that many places experienced white flight, in which white people left urban areas and moved to newly developed suburbs, which had a myriad of effects on development. He said that in Albemarle County, however, there was no urban area to flee, and instead, they may have been the recipients of white flight.

Mr. Murray said that the Comprehensive Plan failed to acknowledge the historical significance of the rural areas that became important African American communities because they were the places where enslaved people initially settled. He said that these rural Black communities, some of which were displaced by white flight, remained a defining characteristic of Albemarle's rural landscape. He said that this dynamic was significantly different from what occurred in many urban areas. He said that however, that was not accounted for nor described whatsoever in this document.

Mr. Barnes said that the Commission had certainly given staff a lot to consider, and they would try to rewrite this chapter to reflect these considerations.

Mr. Missel said that while acknowledging there were improvements to be made, this chapter was his favorite because it explained why Albemarle was in fact a great place to live.

Mr. Carrazana said that they had spent a lot of time reviewing the content in all of the other chapters, and staff had been very responsive to the changes suggested by the Commission and Board of Supervisors. He said that however, this was the first time they had really seen the introduction chapter, which was important because it was a segue into the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Clayborne said that he also wanted to emphasize that the work done by staff was very good. He said that there was also a long list of people, and he wanted to ensure no one was left off the list. He said that he wanted to make sure that the Commission's Clerk, Ms. Shaffer, was included. He said that he was also wondering if other community organizations needed to be included. He said that also on page 12, there was mention of six area plans, but there were only five bullet points. He asked if that was correct.

Ms. Swartzendruber said that to clarify, the Rio-19 Small Area Plan was considered part of the Places 29 Plan.

Mr. Carrazana said that on page 23, he found this information to be particularly helpful. He said that the comments section provided by others was a valuable resource in outlining the comprehensive plans. He said that to enhance the graphic, he suggested adding a heading or title. He said that the description below seemed more like a disclaimer than a substantive explanation. He said that adding a heading would be beneficial.

Mr. Carrazana said that furthermore, he wondered if there were any key takeaways that could be added. He said that one of the things they were trying to do was increase density in their development area, as the density had never been very high. He said that he would like to know if

there were any takeaways that could be applied to AC44, building on the guiding principles. He said that this served as a tangible response to those principles, linking them back to past plans. He said that overall, he found this information to be very interesting, and it highlighted the need to move the needle on these issues.

Mr. Missel said that it could be a good springboard into the next section, which was about recent trends. He asked if Mr. Carrazana was suggesting there be a transitional statement there to link the two ideas together.

Mr. Carrazana said that he was unsure whether it was appropriate. He said that he did not know if staff had quantified this in terms of what they were anticipating with AC44, but it would be great if they did. He said that if they did not, key takeaways or differentiators for AC44 would be good to note.

Mr. Missel said that a part of this was a timeline question. He said that in 1996, it stated that residential areas with approximately one to two units per acre were at zero percent. He said that he was unsure of what this indicated. He asked if this was where a title was needed.

Mr. Carrazana said that he believed that was where the heading went. He said that based on his reading, it appeared that this was related to land use allocations, as outlined in past plans. He said that specifically, it seemed to be about how the plans were allocating land use and zoning. He said that he was unsure if he had accurately interpreted it, but it seemed to be addressing land use zoning.

Ms. Firehock said that she did not fully grasp that concept. She said that she assumed it was based on the plan's original intent or timeframe.

Mr. Barnes said that this referred to how the future land use map (FLUM) distributed it into the following categories.

Ms. Firehock said that it would be interesting to know what came next. She said that it was a future map, so the map did not portray what actually existed.

Mr. Carrazana said that the way he read it was that this was the intended land use, but how it ended up was a different story. He said that they knew in 2015 that they had not achieved some of the densities they had planned for. He said that this was where they should point out what this plan was aiming towards. He said that this led to what they had discussed for three years now, which was how to create measurables for these goals. He said that it was important to have measurables so they could course correctly if they were not meeting their targets. He said that he believed this was a crucial aspect that could be a powerful and important component of their overall strategy.

Mr. Barnes said that to clarify, this table was intended to analyze the land use distribution in future land use maps for each of those plans. He said that, however, it did not accurately reflect the actual physical properties at the time, which could have been vacant or undeveloped. He said that this table could provide some insight, but it did not offer a clear trend line regarding the direction of parcels in their community within these categories. He said that unfortunately, recreating that information from the past would be challenging.

Mr. Carrazana said that if they laid this information out, it begged the question: what were they doing differently?

Ms. Firehock said that, for example, mixed-use commercial development was emphasized in this plan, but she was unable to see how much they currently had or how much they were planning for in the future. She said that it would be useful to know that information.

Ms. Swartzendruber said that the future land use map remained largely unchanged between 2015 and the current version, with the primary change being the consolidation of land use categories.

Ms. Firehock said that she assumed that the strategies they had discussed to achieve their desired density had also changed, as that was what they had been talking about. She said that it appeared that they had not yet reached their target density.

Mr. Barnes said that a clear heading would help clarify this information. He said that he believed that it would be challenging for them to establish trend lines over time to explain what the map was showing.

Mr. Carrazana said that he could see the logic of the map remaining unchanged; however, the problem was that they only achieved 50% of the desired density. He said that they needed to address what they were doing to correct that known issue. He said that he understood that they had discussed infill and other strategies, which were important.

Mr. Carrazana said that they wanted to exceed the densities they had set, and if they did not, they risked not achieving the capacities they had. He said that while the maps may not be changing, they needed to consider this and strive for a higher density. He said that ideally, they wanted to see more than 10% of higher-density housing, but if they did not, they would fall short of their expectations.

Mr. Barnes said that he thought what they were referencing was from the 2015 plan, which stated that residential areas with 2 to 6 units per acre had a density of 30%, and areas with 6 to 34 units per acre had a density of 10%. He said that he wondered if they were aligning with this plan, and if so, if they were reducing the density from 30 to 15 for the orange-coded areas, and from 10 to 25 for the higher-density residential areas. He asked if this was what the Commission was intimating.

Mr. Missel said that to him, it seemed like there were two distinct concepts. He said that one of them appeared to be the numbers, which represented areas within the map. He said that the maps for 2015 and 2044 did not change; they were combined. He said that one thing to note was that they could simplify the information. He said that the overall residential uses remained at approximately 50% throughout.

Mr. Missel said that this had been the case since 2015 and was expected to continue through 2025. He said that they had only achieved 58% of the development that was anticipated in those years. He said that this did not necessarily mean that the percentages had increased; rather, it indicated that they were doing a better job of maximizing density within the existing percentages.

Mr. Carrazana said that he thought there should be a conversation about whether they should be increasing the size of higher-end density areas.

Ms. Firehock asked what category they would be able to achieve that in.

Mr. Barnes said that as they had been discussing the plan and their conversations with the Board of Supervisors, he would like to reiterate that according to the Weldon Cooper Center, they needed to accommodate 31,000 people in the future. He said that the intent was to concentrate most of those individuals in activity centers, rather than spreading them out in lower-density areas depicted on their Comprehensive Plan. He said that significantly increasing the density in some of those neighborhoods, which had been debated, was not the direction they were given on the plan.

Mr. Carrazana said that the active word there was "significant." He said that he was questioning the 10% threshold, as it may not be the optimal amount. He said that they needed to achieve higher density, and it seemed that they had been asking similar questions when reviewing applicant requests for specific densities. He said that he had considered the possibility of increasing the threshold. He said that he wondered how they could incentivize applicants to aim for higher densities. He said that he believed this was a key aspect of the plan, and if they did not address it, they may end up falling short of their allocated density goals.

Ms. Firehock said that a developer had returned several weeks ago, inquiring about increasing residential units above commercial spaces, as they had overheard the Commission's discussions on the topic. She said that however, there were limitations in the plan and strategies that discussed incentives and density increases, particularly for affordable housing. She said that while it was possible to achieve more density through certain measures, it was a piecemeal approach, focusing on special situations rather than making a bold move that would significantly impact their goals.

Ms. Firehock said that she had previously suggested that they select specific areas and rezone them, as the development community had informed them that the process was a major deterrent, causing them to opt for the current zoning, even though their Comprehensive Plan and future land use map suggested the potential for increased density. She said that in contrast, Charlottesville had successfully rezoned and increased density in certain neighborhoods 20 years ago, allowing for more streamlined development. She said that she believed that they must adopt a bolder approach to achieve their goals.

Mr. Barnes said that he believed the intent was to explore and define the boundaries of these activity centers as they moved forward. He said that he thought it was essential to consider ways to incentivize and most importantly to lay the groundwork for significant increases in density in those areas. He said that what he was hearing from Mr. Carrazana was that the points at the lower end of the graph should either be smaller in area or have higher density.

Mr. Carrazana said that he believed this was a big opportunity for them to stress the importance of densifying the development area since the boundaries would not be growing. He said that therefore, they needed to identify and prioritize this aspect of the plan. He said that while they were implementing various initiatives in rural areas, it was in the development areas where this concept was most relevant. He said that this was a justification for their approach, and they must ensure they met this mark. He said that unfortunately, they had fallen short in their previous efforts, and he feared they may have missed the mark in AC44 if they did not learn from their mistakes.

Mr. Carrazana said that this was an opportunity, and it was prominently featured in their plan. He said that by utilizing this graph and highlighting the key takeaways, they could demonstrate why they had not met these marks in the past. He said that their guiding principles, including their opportunity zones for development and efforts to increase density in development areas, were all interconnected. He said that if they did not adopt a denser development strategy, they risked failing.

Mr. Barnes said that he appreciated the idea of using this table to tell the story and believed it was a valuable concept. He said that when examining the future land use map, specifically the ALO areas, which tended to be three to six dwelling unit areas and often single-family neighborhoods, they should consider whether they should make these areas smaller or enable them to be rezoned to higher density.

Mr. Barnes said that this would involve rethinking some of the single-family neighborhoods. He said that although the plan did not explicitly address this, it did suggest that higher-density development might not be a priority in some activity centers. He said that broadly speaking, that was not the direction they had received.

Mr. Missel said that they had discussed the missing middle concept in depth and reviewed the categories involved. He said that he believed that they had felt confident that this aspect of the plan was well-covered in the revised document.

Mr. Barnes said that he believed there were opportunities to explore the concept of the "missing middle" and some of the issues related to the Zoning Ordinance. He said that they would begin discussing how regulations could be adjusted to bring the project closer to the desired range of three to six units. He said that he thought there were potential benefits to this approach. He said that there were instances where they had brought up these conversations, particularly with the Board, where there was some trepidation.

Mr. Carrazana said that the need to emphasize how they achieve density was also a key argument for not changing the map. He said that if they had a clear path to achieve density, then they could confidently say that they were not changing the map because they had a way to incentivize more density and actually achieve it. He said that this approach would not leave the remaining 42% of density on the table.

Mr. Carrazana said that otherwise, they were open to criticism about why they were not changing the map if they were not achieving the desired density. He said they had some "missing middle" in Crozet, but not many other places. He said that he believed they needed to really bring this point home, particularly referencing their growth management policies and future plans. He said that as they moved forward, he thought it was essential to highlight the importance of this strategy as a critical component of the AC44.

Mr. Missel said that they had been discussing the FLUM extensively while reviewing this graphic. He said that he had mentioned having links in the table of contents, allowing users to navigate to other sections of the plan. He said that it might be useful to include a link that took users directly from here to the FLUM. He said that this would provide a clear connection between their current location and the previous and future stages of the plan. He said that if interested, users could click on the link and be taken to the relevant document.

Mr. Missel said that then, they would find a section in part three, page 26, that discussed future land use interpretation policy, including density. He said that this section explained how proposed densities above the recommended range could be deemed suitable, and it offered guidance on how to achieve this. He said that this tied everything together nicely.

Mr. Carrazana said that this should be included in their introductory section. He said that as they strived to achieve this goal, it was one of the key takeaways from their previous plan, which failed to achieve density. He said that this was indeed outlined in their plan, and they had the policy and opportunities laid out; it just needed to be more clearly explained and connected to the bigger picture.

Mr. Missel said that he believed they had discussed part one enough for now, so he would ask the Commission to provide their feedback on part two.

Mr. Murray said that regarding page 9, the 2022 land use build-out analysis excluded a significant acreage of properties for redevelopment based on criteria that precluded potential redevelopment grants and incentives. He said that he believed they should include here something specific regarding evaluation of underperforming properties with excessive parking or other issues that had been mentioned. He said that he thought the analysis was not adequate in terms of what they could achieve.

Mr. Murray said that he agreed with Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) that the future development area boundaries section should be moved to a standalone planning document and not be part of the Comprehensive Plan at this time. He said that it felt like a work in progress, and it had never been thoroughly reviewed by the Planning Commission, unlike other sections, which still left it feeling like a work in progress. He said that nonetheless, if it was to remain, they should take a more balanced approach. He said that the development areas utilization review was flawed because it did not include this property submission. He said that the boundary expansion was a separate issue.

Ms. Firehock said that the language stated that when considering potential future changes to the development area boundaries, it was essential to note that there was no policy requiring the boundaries to remain unchanged. She said that in fact, the text suggested that they were open to revising the boundaries, as it explicitly stated that there was no policy mandating their preservation.

Mr. Barnes said that it was worth noting that Comprehensive Plans had altered boundaries at some point in the past.

Ms. Firehock said that this type of statement can be alarming to people. She said that they seemed to be implying that they were prepared to alter their boundaries because they did not have a policy that explicitly prohibited it, so they must be. She said that she was trying to unpack the logic of this statement.

Mr. Barnes said that he believed the statement was essentially true. He said that he could think of examples of many plans they had where it had been reduced, slightly tweaked, or added to the boundary in various conference plans. He said that the fact that the boundary itself was malleable, he thought, was part of the policy. He said that the intent was not to significantly increase it.

Mr. Carrazana said that it would require a Comprehensive Plan to change the boundaries.

Mr. Barnes said yes.

Ms. Firehock said that there was no policy against changing the boundary, but the Planning Commission had been clear that they wanted to stay within their boundaries to avoid expanding it. She said that she was not saying they would never expand it, but the point was that they had discussed this extensively, and instead of developers assuming that the County would expand it, they should be focusing on infill projects and density within their boundaries. She said that by doing so, they sent a clear message that they were committed to staying within the defined boundaries.

Ms. Firehock said that in contrast, if they appeared wishy-washy, it may send the opposite signal, suggesting that they were open to expansion. She said that a more factual approach would be to state that the County had not currently made a proposal to expand the development boundary, which was a statement of fact.

Mr. Carrazana said that AC44 was reenforcing those boundaries.

Ms. Firehock said that she agreed; that was what she thought. She said that despite this, the sentence states they had no policy, but in reality, they had established this boundary so that they could encourage people to work with them.

Mr. Murray said that this was another example of the wishy-washy language he had mentioned earlier. He said that they should set the expectations for what they wanted to see. He said that, of course, the development area boundary could be changed. He said that the Board of Supervisors or others could decide to make changes to it. He said that the main point was to have goals, which was what they were aiming for.

Mr. Barnes said that the purpose of this section was to build upon the previous section of the development areas utilization review, which they had a lengthy conversation with the Board about. He said that this section served as guidelines to ensure they understood how they were utilizing the development area and assessed its effectiveness.

Mr. Barnes said that moving forward, the future development area boundaries required a set of criteria to determine if changes or reductions were necessary. He said that at this time, he noted that the direction was to maintain the current development areas. He said that in 2015, they had added to the development area in a few instances, and this had happened in earlier plans as well.

Ms. Firehock said that they had added 35 acres as opposed to the originally proposed 135 acres.

Mr. Barnes said that he appreciated that. He said that he believed there was an intent in this section to establish some of the rules that would apply to the development area, as well as provide them with guidelines. He said that this would help them understand what to expect if they were to expand the area in the future.

Ms. Firehock said that she suggested they could simply state that, at this time, there was no plan to expand the development areas, and if such expansion was considered in the future, certain criteria should be taken into account. She said that this approach was direct and factually accurate as opposed to the current sentence.

Mr. Missel asked if they could just take out the first paragraph and start with the second paragraph. He said that the first paragraph created confusion.

Mr. Carrazana said that it was also counter to what they had just discussed.

Mr. Murray said that there was a sense to the language that he liked, but he believed it needed to be revised. He said that where it stated that premature boundary revisions could undermine the growth management policy, he thought it was too ambiguous. He said that instead of saying "could" the statement should be "would."

Mr. Missel said that it elaborated on that point in the second part.

Mr. Carrazana said that he believed that statement could be a sufficient conclusion to that paragraph. He said that a premature boundary revision would undermine the integrity of the process.

Ms. Firehock said that she had mentioned months ago that the criteria used for the growth boundary in the Portland metro region was quite strict and rarely changed. She said that the process was well-defined and hierarchical, with clear guidelines for evaluating the need for growth area boundary adjustments. She said that while it was not uncommon for them to make tweaks, the overall framework was well-established and widely understood.

Mr. Barnes said that he appreciated the feedback. He said that on page six, they discussed the growth management policy, specifically the paragraph at the bottom of the left-hand column, which stated that development area boundaries remained unchanged. He said that staff had attempted to clarify in that section that this particular Comprehensive Plan did not change the boundary. He said that the other two sections were intended to provide guidance on how to proceed within the development area and to offer a framework for considering factors that would be relevant if expansion were to occur. He said that these three sections were designed to work together to achieve that goal.

Ms. Firehock said that she was supportive of Mr. Missel's proposal to take out the first paragraph completely. She said that the remaining text communicated the message effectively without it.

Mr. Carrazana said that he would still recommend that the paragraph end with the statement that premature boundary revisions would undermine the growth management policy. He said that they needed to maintain consistency throughout all parts of the document.

Mr. Murray said that if they moved forward, he would like to address the criteria for removing underperforming areas from the development areas. He said that he would strike the first bullet point, as it appeared to suggest that if an area was not walkable and mixed-use, it should be removed from the development areas. He said that he disagreed with this approach, as it was precisely the type of area that required investment and improvement.

Mr. Murray said that for example, in Charlottesville, there were numerous examples of areas that were not walkable and not mixed-use in the past, but now they were. He said that he believed this criterion should be removed. He said that furthermore, he found the second bullet point to be problematic, as the sentence was unclear and used convoluted language. He said that he was having trouble understanding what it meant.

Mr. Murray said that additionally, he had a concern about the land-swap process in general. He said that for a swap to be effective, something needed to change about the property being swapped. He said that in the case of a riparian buffer, for instance, it could not be developed now, and it still could not be developed after the swap. He said that however, if they added another property to the development area based on that swap, it was merely an expansion, rather than a true swap.

Ms. Firehock asked if Mr. Murray was saying that by giving undevelopable land to the rural area and swapping it for developable area, it was really expanding the development area as opposed to being a swap of similar pieces of land.

Mr. Murray said that he was saying the opposite. He said that when they took a place in the development area that lacked practical development rights and converted it to a rural area, they were essentially changing the color on the map without actually changing the underlying land use. He said that similarly, if they took a place that already had infrastructure like water and sewer and designated it as a rural area, they were creating a nonconforming use in the rural area.

Mr. Murray said that this resulted in a kind of suburban development with utilities in what was previously considered a rural area. He said that they had not actually swapped anything. He said that however, if they were to take an area that was completely undeveloped and had development rights, and transferred those rights to a rural area for an equivalent number of rights, that would be a legitimate swap.

Ms. Firehock said that she was having trouble understanding the purpose of this sentence. She said that she could not explain why they would be converting a development area into a rural area. She said that she wondered when they would ever make this change.

Mr. Murray said that he believed there were valid reasons to consider relocating land to a rural area or expanding development areas, but these were two separate and independent decisions.

Mr. Missel asked staff to clarify the meaning behind that italicized sentence.

Mr. Barnes said that the Board had discussed Rivanna Village at length. He said that some Board members had expressed concerns about its walkability and suggested removing or replacing it with developable area. He said that they had examined a few sites that had been purchased for parkland, including around Ragged Mountain and Stillhouse Mountain, which were heavily encumbered with environmental features such as mountaintop protection.

Mr. Barnes said that the thought was that if they were to remove these types of areas from the development area and designate them as part of the rural area, they could maintain some of that. He said that they should seek out other places comparable in area to make up for what was taken out of the development area.

Mr. Missel said that they would relocate the development like Rivanna Village from the development area to the rural area, then identify another equal-sized portion of land, located around the perimeter of the existing development area, to bump out into.

Mr. Barnes said that yes, that was the general idea. He said that there was no direct analysis performed, but as they discussed it with the Supervisors, they had a lot to say about Rivanna Village.

Mr. Carrazana said that he was not sure that that was what the average reader would take away from this language.

Mr. Missel said that at the Comprehensive Plan level, they were not specifically discussing a particular location. He said that they were simply acknowledging that there was a possibility that this concept could work somewhere. He said that he had been asked by others what he thought about expanding the development area or adjusting it and swapping locations. He said that his response had always been that he did not know, and that he needed to see it in action. He said that there may be a reasonable location that fit the criteria, and he was open to considering that.

Mr. Murray said that he believed there could be reasonable locations, but he thought that part of the criteria should be that they were not just changing the color on the map. He said that this meant that if there was a property currently in the development area with significant natural resource concerns, they needed to consider the practical limitations of that property. He said that for example, how many development rights did it have, and how many units could be built there?

Mr. Murray said that he thought that would be a reasonable criteria for determining whether to expand into that area and what that expansion would look like. He said that if, for instance, the development area property was so mountainous and had numerous streams that it could only accommodate two homes, then were they really achieving anything by changing the color on the map and declaring it as rural area?

Mr. Carrazana said that if there was an area within the development area, and from a practical standpoint no development could be achieved, that was a good example of when a swap may be beneficial.

Ms. Firehock said that some areas featured geologic formations that required blasting rock to develop, and it was extremely costly. She said that such projects were often avoided due to their high expense. She said that they had some spots in the growth area that were simply not suitable for development.

Mr. Murray said that he believed that in any case, the swapping topic required significant discussion, and he wondered if the Comprehensive Plan was the appropriate place to include it.

Ms. Firehock said that the criteria needed to be fully developed before it could be implemented, but it could be done, nonetheless. She said that the consideration could be included in the Comprehensive Plan without having all the details.

Mr. Missel said that the criteria for removing underperforming areas from development areas still needed to be defined. He said that it was possible that the SELC had suggested this as a separate document.

Mr. Murray said that they were suggesting creating a separate document. He said that he believed that some of the points made here also highlighted the issue that, as he had mentioned earlier, there was a risk that this could simply be an expansion of the development area by another name. He said that if they acknowledged that certain areas were not developable, and then labeled them as rural areas, they were essentially expanding the development area under a different guise. He said that this would essentially be an expansion.

Ms. Firehock said that this Plan talked about using gross density instead of net density, which was more focused on how many units could fit on a parcel. She said that net density would result in less units because it would omit the undevelopable land; this Plan said that gross density should be used.

Mr. Carrazana said that he was not opposed to using gross density because it could allow for achieving higher density. He said that, however, he understood Mr. Murray's point. He said that if one criterion was that the growth area acreage remained the same, then the areas must remain relatively unchanged or close to it. He said that additionally, he believed another key factor would be a significant gain in density.

Mr. Carrazana said that it was possible to develop an area that achieved significantly more density than could have been achieved in a more encumbered parcel. He said that he thought there should be specific criteria that they could establish to build a case for when to pursue this approach, but it would not be something that would be done easily or frequently. He said that it would require meeting certain specific criteria to justify creating this swap opportunity.

Mr. Murray said that he believed there must be a tangible conservation benefit to relocating that property from the development area to the rural area, providing both sides. He said that he would be very concerned about a project like Rivanna Village being considered rural. He said that in practical terms, it was unlikely that they would be able to cut off their water and sewer services, and those services were the main indicator that the development was part of the development area.

Mr. Murray said that in reality, designating that development as a rural area added little benefit, if any. He said that he thought there needed to be a tangible conservation benefit before a process like this occurred, and that it would be equivalent to the density gained.

Mr. Missel said that to clarify, if they considered the larger context, the question was whether there would be a reasonable timeline for expanding the development area. He asked if the Commission thought there would be a reasonable opportunity to do that.

Ms. Firehock said that it would expand the development ability, but the literal acreage would be the same.

Mr. Missel said that yes, that was what he was referring to. He said that it would be a swap. He said that if they agreed with the first part of the swapping piece, then there was the criteria. He said that as they had been discussing, the criteria had been expanded upon in this document. He said that several factors were outlined on pages 13, 14, and 15.

Mr. Murray said that he thought the criteria outlined on page 12 was sparse.

Mr. Missel said that it was expanded upon in terms of factors and impacts and standards on the next few pages. He said that some of the factors he thought had already been covered included water supply, watershed, form of development, and natural boundaries.

Mr. Murray said that was in terms of the receiving; he was referring to the sending. He said that in terms of their taking, for instance, they had a significant amount of land in the development area which was required to be set aside as a stream buffer. He said that also, there was a substantial area of land that was already part of the Biscuit Run State Park. He asked if they

should simply assume that they could swap that land and create a development area? He said that the issue was that it would not change the fact that the land could not be developed, regardless of whether it was considered development area or rural area.

She said that they were attempting to increase density. She said that if a property had limitations due to stream buffers, it may only be possible to develop 10 units on it. She said that another property with a flat topography and no stream buffers could accommodate 30 units, making it a more worthwhile development, mostly because they were aiming to achieve a higher density per acre than what they currently had.

Mr. Murray said that his concern was what happened to the place that was swapped from the development area to the rural area. He asked what the swap created in terms of a conservation benefit for this now-rural property. He asked how it became more conserved.

Ms. Firehock said that it was not necessarily more conserved. She said that if it was a rock formation, it would remain a rock formation. She said that she believed Mr. Murray was suggesting that by placing it in the rural area, they had increased its protection, whereas if it were in the development area, it would not have been developed anyway. She said that she did not have that concern; she did not believe it required special ecological protection to be located in the rural area.

Mr. Murray said that he was not suggesting that. He said that his point was that there had to be a tangible ecological benefit from doing that.

Ms. Firehock said that the benefit was the additional density, as opposed to having what she would refer to as "faux development land" - land within the boundary that, for practical purposes, could not be developed. She said that the County had many areas like that.

Mr. Murray asked how that was different from expanding the development area, considering that such a swap would be allowing for more development on a parcel that previously could not be developed in that manner.

She said that they would be increasing the number of units they could get versus the acreage.

Mr. Murray said that they could do that anyway. He said that they could take an area, designate it as development area, and make it high density, ignoring the fact that they were taking undevelopable land out of the development area and making it rural area. He said that it had the same effect.

Mr. Barnes said that the Board acknowledged that there were areas within the development area that they did not want to develop. He said that these areas could be developed, but they preferred not to. He said that Rivanna Village was one of the examples mentioned. He said that alternatively, it may be challenging to develop due to environmental constraints or because of its proximity to the reservoir. He said that the City had acquired a significant tract of land, which was incorporated into the Ragged Mountain Park. He said that as a result, some acreage was lost.

Mr. Barnes said that he believed the Board's intention was to recognize that they still needed land to meet affordability requirements and other needs. He said that if the land was removed from the development area and the goal was to maintain a 5% development area, it may be necessary to select alternative areas that were less constrained by environmental or political factors. He said

that he agreed with the point that if the land was removed and it remained within the jurisdictional area, the jurisdictional designation may also need to be removed from that property.

Mr. Murray said that he believed that there should be a tangible reduction in the development potential of that land by relocating it to a different spot. He said that in other words, there should be some change that occurred. He said that if not, it would simply be an expansion, rather than a swap.

Mr. Missel asked if Mr. Murray was suggesting the land would need to be downzoned.

Mr. Murray said yes; it would need to be downzoned as well as removal of some building potential.

Mr. Barnes said that he believed that the best way to view this was as a tool for identifying areas that may not be suitable for development. He said that it may also suggest that they remove certain parcels to make way for others. He said that he believed that this was more of a means to facilitate the removal of something rather than an opportunity to expand upon it.

Mr. Murray said that this brought him back to his previous point, which was that he believed these were two distinct issues. He said that he thought it was legitimate to take land out of the development area when it was not suitable for development. He said that there also may be cases where expansion could be feasible. He said that however, it became confusing when they tried to say that one was related or equivalent to the other. He said that it became greenwashing at that point.

Mr. Missel said that the situation was complicated because there were also properties, one that came to mind, which spanned 500 acres. He said that of those 500 acres, 200 were not developable. He said that it was not possible to remove those 200 acres and relocate them to the rural area, as they were nested within the development area. He said that they were essentially discussing the boundaries of the development area, rather than infill pieces.

Mr. Barnes said that perhaps they should include language in this section that specified they were discussing pieces of land around the boundary area.

Mr. Carrazana said that he did not think they would solve this issue within this draft, but he did think the language of what they were trying to convey with the swap could be clarified.

Mr. Barnes said that he agreed and appreciated the suggestion.

Mr. Missel said that they were identifying strengths, gaps, and priority issues. He said that he thought this was a priority issue that had gaps.

Mr. Murray said that going back to page 11, he would like to address a statement that seems ambiguous. He said that the sentence noted that current development areas may be unable to accommodate housing and employment needs, an issue already reflected in rising land costs and declining housing affordability. He said that this contradicted earlier statements that they had sufficient supply for 10 to 20 years.

Mr. Murray said that furthermore, it was not a proven fact that prematurely expanding development areas would necessarily lead to housing affordability. He said that he would strike out this language, as it was unclear and lacked concrete evidence. He said that as SELC pointed

out, at the time of the analysis 14,881 residential units were in the development pipeline, exceeding the high-end 20-year forecast of 13,500 units.

Mr. Murray said that additionally, if they were looking at criteria for expansion of the development area, he would point out that they had talked about transfer of development rights (TDR), and he thought it would be beneficial to include a commitment that if an expansion occurred, they would use transfer of development rights to accomplish it. He said that this would remove the incentive for individuals to buy up land and inflate its value, as they would have to purchase development rights themselves.

Mr. Murray said that by doing so, they would not be creating a windfall for landowners who would otherwise benefit from the creation of density without participating in the process. He said that if they were to include language stating that expansion would occur and that they would commit to using transfer of development rights, it would reduce the potential for speculation.

Mr. Missel asked what staff's consideration was regarding transfers of development rights.

Mr. Barnes said that staff had previously discussed TDRs at length with the Board.

Ms. Firehock said that she had a quick question regarding the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program. She said that in the past, Virginia Counties had participated in this program, but currently, there was no funding available. She said that as a result, some governments had purchased development rights from areas they did not want to develop, often located in remote or rural locations. She said that Mr. Murray had just discussed a developer purchasing development rights. She said that she was wondering if an individual could simply purchase development rights from another landowner and claim ownership.

Ms. Firehock said that she knew that someone could transfer development rights, but a developer could not purchase development rights from somewhere and then claim ownership of them. She said that for example, a developer could not buy 40 development rights and then request the County to expand this development area to accommodate 40 units on the edge or similar.

Mr. Murray said that to clarify, there were multiple requirements that would be part of that. He said that the County would have to designate a sending and receiving area. He said that there was another part of the rural areas section that went into more detail about it, as well as some suggested sending and receiving areas. He said that he thought the receiving area piece was problematic.

Ms. Firehock asked if Mr. Murray was talking about a developer acquiring rights to a sending area.

Mr. Murray said that yes, he was referring to someone purchasing rights from a sending area. He said that the County would have to designate that expansion of the development area as a receiving area.

Ms. Firehock said that the County had taken this on about 15 or 16 years ago and did not succeed with it.

Mr. Clayborne said that he thought there might be value in an image that depicted the development areas and boundaries. He said that he had seen it before in their documents, but he thought it would be especially useful in this section. He said that as he listened to this

conversation, he believed this section could benefit from a more streamlined approach, where less information was presented and more emphasis was placed on the most important aspects. He said that this might be a section where less was more.

Mr. Barnes said that staff had expanded this section based on the conversations they had with the Board.

Ms. Firehock said that they could utilize their editor to say less with better words.

Mr. Barnes said that he agreed there may be better ways to express the information more succinctly, but the reason for the content being there was because of their conversations with the Board.

Recess

The Commission recessed at 7:47 p.m. and reconvened at 7:55 p.m.

Work Session (continued)

CCP202100002 AC44 Comp Plan – Final Draft Document

Mr. Missel said that they would now discuss part three of the Comprehensive Plan document. He asked if Commissioners had any feedback they would like to share.

Mr. Clayborne said that as an overarching comment, he agreed with Ms. Firehock's sentiment around what they were calling goals versus objectives versus action items.

Mr. Murray said that he wanted to elaborate on a point he had made earlier, specifically regarding page 26. He said that the statement on that page suggested that if portions of a property were partially designated as recreation and open space or green systems land use category, the principal land use designation should be applied to the full acreage of the property for calculating suitable density. He said that in principle, he agreed with this, as they had discussed the need for additional density in development areas.

Mr. Murray said that however, he worried about the unintended consequence that this could lead to less land being dedicated to green space, as the increased value of the land may reduce the incentive to offer it back as green space. He said that without a mechanism like an urban transfer of development rights policy or, as stated later, the ability of proffering to a fund for green space, he feared that property value would become too high, making it less of an incentive to offer it as green space.

Mr. Murray said that pages 36-37 discussed increasing access to nature, and he wanted to highlight a unique aspect of Crozet, which was that they had a policy required a 50- to 100-foot buffer on intermittent streams, resulting in more green space for community trails, and despite having a significant amount of density, Crozet still managed to balance growth with green space. He said that he believed they should consider adopting resource management areas and possibly an urban transfer of development rights program to protect water and provide more green space.

Mr. Murray said that contrary to the idea that providing more protection for streams would result in less density, Crozet demonstrated that it was possible to create density while maintaining green

space. He said that they needed to think about how to achieve this balance in a responsible manner. He said that urban transfer development rights programs had been successful in places like Arlington, and particularly in urban areas. He said that these programs allowed property owners to transfer development rights from one parcel to another, enabling them to develop one piece while maintaining the other as green space. He said that he believed a simple policy like this could greatly benefit them in terms of creating parks and urban areas.

Mr. Missel said that starting at the beginning on page two, they had objectives, context, major findings, and trends. He said that he found the major findings and trends to be particularly helpful, as they addressed topics such as reusing existing parking lots and other relevant issues. He asked if there was anything the Commission wanted to discuss regarding the future land use map, categories, and designations.

Ms. Firehock said that she knew that there would be links to view the information, but it would be really helpful to be able to see some of the FLUM data in a clearer format. She said that she wondered if this could be presented in a more visual way, perhaps broken down into smaller pieces and displayed in a way that was easier to understand. She said that at this point, it was challenging to discern much detail from it; it just looked like a bunch of colors.

Mr. Barnes said that staff had struggled with that as well, but they would try to improve it.

Mr. Missel asked if there was any feedback on the land use categories or the specific uses as listed in the plan.

Ms. Firehock said that when discussing office and commercial spaces, she could not help but feel that it was reminiscent of the old office parks, such as Peter Jefferson Place. She said that one would go there and find that you could not get a sandwich or run errands, as one would have to drive to get anything done. She said that similarly, Fontaine Research Park came to mind, where it would take a significant amount of time just to get to the end of the driveway. She said that reading it felt like they were still operating under a model where workers were segregated from conveniences, with each taking a separate step.

Mr. Missel asked if she was referring to the Office Flex Research and Development Light Industrial section, located on page 19. He said that he was pleased to see that it included both residential and non-residential uses, such as commercial retail, institutional, and industrial. He said that this aligned with what they had been discussing. He said that one key distinction was that industrial uses typically did not have a secondary use of residential.

Ms. Firehock said that she did not think so, but she believed that commercial did.

Mr. Carrazana said that he appreciated this section for incorporating mixed-use development throughout many categories, excluding the industrial, which was appropriate. He said that they effectively communicated the benefits and made a good case for it. He said that however, the question remained whether they would see tangible results. He said that the challenges they were currently facing, such as incorporating office space or commercial areas into residential or mixed-use neighborhoods, were a concern.

Mr. Carrazana said that currently, many of their neighborhood plans were reverting to almost pure residential settings. He said that a lot of this was market-driven, making it difficult to predict. He

said that nevertheless, they should consider how to mitigate this trend and explore potential incentives that could help correct the curve.

Ms. Firehock said that when she read about adaptive reuse or converting something into a ground-floor commercial and upper residential space, it mentioned the issues of incorporating a firewall and other necessary features. She said that since no one built the building with those safety requirements, it became a cost-prohibitive endeavor to bring it up to code. She said that if the County truly wanted to see this type of project move forward, she wondered if there was a small business grant or fund available that could support the installation of a fireproof separation between floors and other necessary improvements. She said that without such support, it was unlikely to happen. She said that the text seemed to suggest that as long as the necessary requirements were in place, the project could proceed, but that was not the case given the original construction of many old buildings in the County.

Mr. Carrazana said that he thought this plan complemented much of what they had done here. He said that however, it brought up a crucial point about measurables and being able to measure and react to the results. He said that it was essential that they were not only tracking their progress but also being able to adjust their approach if they were not achieving their desired outcomes.

Mr. Barnes said that he believed the basic criticism or observation he was hearing from Mr. Carrazana was regarding the FLUM.

Mr. Carrazana said that he was not intending to be critical. He said that this was an observation based on real-world experience. He said that when they designed their projects to achieve specific outcomes, such as mixed-use development, low-income housing, or other goals, they must also consider how to measure their success. He said that it was essential to think about how they could measure these outcomes effectively. He said that it was equally important to have a plan in place to address any issues that may arise if the desired outcome was not achieved, particularly with regards to higher density and other related goals.

Mr. Missel was trying to recall a comment made by the Board of Supervisors regarding a study that concluded there was sufficient capacity in the development area to accommodate 15 to 20 years of growth, provided that development was efficient and of high density. He said that the question was whether the current framework sufficient to provide this level of density, which was essentially what they had been discussing.

Mr. Barnes said that the build-out analysis was based on the plan and designations presented. He said that they had confirmed that the current plan could accommodate 20 years of growth. He said that Mr. Carrazana was pushing for a more detailed explanation of how this would work, particularly in areas where the goal was to create walkable, dense, and mixed-use environments. He said that he appreciated the challenge to ensure that they were utilizing the necessary tools to make this vision a reality.

Mr. Carrazana said that he believed it was essential for everyone as they structured the plan, as they executed the plan, and continually monitored their progress to avoid squandering density, as they had with the 2015 plan.

Mr. Missel had a parallel question related to this topic. He said that while it may not be directly addressed in the document, he would like to know how schools were identified, reviewed, and

discussed within each of these land use categories. He said that he was curious about the connection between schools and these categories.

Mr. Holt said that AC44 did not provide specific guidance on where to locate schools. He said that the County had identified potential sites over the years, often as part of larger rezoning projects. He said that one example that came to mind was North Point, where a school site had been identified and preserved. He said that however, he did not believe that site was being actively considered. He said that recently, this question had arisen during internal discussions with other staff members regarding schools guidance. He said that several factors heavily influenced school locations, including the development pipeline - the projects that were reviewed and approved, as well as those that were not yet built or being reviewed.

Mr. Holt said that this was because the increase in units could be calculated and converted to projected student enrollment. He said that as a result, their schools were constantly monitored in terms of these numbers to ensure they were aware of what was coming. He said that staff had also had conversations with the school division about build-out analysis, dating back to phases two and three, and the implications for the school systems. He said that if they achieved higher density within development areas, it would further boost the student population.

Mr. Missel said that this brought up a larger point that he had been considering, and that was how proactive they were. He said that whether it was maximizing density in development or building more, they needed to consider the transportation, school, infrastructure, water, and sewer aspects. He said that he wondered if they were keeping pace with these needs. He said that he also questioned if their strategic plans were aligned with this Comprehensive Plan. He said that he was curious about how these plans came together, and whether it was necessary to discuss this further.

Mr. Barnes said that he recalled a previous Comprehensive Plan that included standards for various aspects, such as the number of swings on a school playground and fire response times. He said that in contrast, the model presented here did not incorporate these standards. He said that instead, different departments developed their own plans, including police and rescue response times.

Mr. Barnes said that these standards were often referenced in the Community Facilities section. He said that the land use plan served as a basis for generating population projections, which in turn helped determine the demand for services such as schools and water supply. He said that however, the provision of these services was typically the responsibility of the service provider, such as Parks and Recreation or the school division.

Mr. Missel said that all of that made sense. He said that he thought that having the integration of those plans together was crucial. He said that he did not know if it was for tonight, but they should examine how those plans were integrated and connected, so that when they were discussing something with RWSA for example, they were not proposing an activity center in an area that they would not serve for 25 years or more. He said that there needed to be some kind of consideration for how these plans aligned and served the community effectively.

Mr. Barnes said that there was some thought alone those lines. He said that the Communities Facilities chapter addressed many of those topics. He said that there were references from that chapter to those plans, which hopefully were included in an exhaustive list in the appendix of this Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Carrazana said that they had the transportation challenges section on page 8. He said that he believed this addressed some of the points they were discussing in terms of coordinating a line and with various entities involved. He said that this one focused on VDOT, but there was an opportunity to discuss how they coordinated and how these plans could inform one another.

Mr. Carrazana said that perhaps some of the language related to coordination and integration was missing in key areas such as part one of the plan. He said that they could include how transportation plans, school plans, and growth and development plans were interconnected. He said that if they planned to create these vibrant centers, they would need to ensure that transportation infrastructure was in place, which would require it to be tied into capital improvement plans and other initiatives.

Mr. Missel said that the hot links in the document would be important to include so that a developer or anyone else reviewing the plan could see the relationship between centers and transportation on page 29, showing the VDOT six-year plan or whatever else was relevant, so they provided a useful tool to help link those concepts together.

Mr. Barnes said that, particularly for internal County documents, it was easier to maintain live links. He said that external documents were much more challenging to keep up to date. He said that Mr. Carrazana had pointed out that when they first began writing this document, they had attempted to keep these issues discrete to allow for easier transportation and land use planning.

Mr. Barnes said that the roads served as the backbone of the land use plan, making integration a significant challenge. He said that he would note that some of these issues were more service-oriented, such as public services, schools, fire departments, and others, which were addressed in the Community Facilities chapter.

Mr. Murray said that he would suggest they include a letter before the number so the sections could be easily referenced and navigated.

Mr. Holt said that he agreed that would make it easier to navigate. He said that staff would amend the page numbers.

Mr. Missel asked if anyone had any feedback on pages 35 and 36, which referred to increasing access to nature in the development areas.

Mr. Murray said that this was what he had been speaking to before. He said that it was fine to acknowledge their intention to protect and increase access to nature, but he was concerned about how they would go about that. He said that they needed to develop and implement effective methodologies to achieve this goal, which should be distinct from their current approach because what they were doing now was not sufficient. He said that he had previously mentioned some tools that could be useful regarding Parks and Recreation. He said that he believed there were some new proposals that could be very beneficial, but they needed to be researched and planned for.

Mr. Clayborne said that on page 39, he had a recommendation to add language specific to increasing the number of living wage jobs for that descriptor. He said that additionally, he wanted to suggest adding language about equitably investing, as opposed to just investing in multimodal transportation. He said that he was questioning how they could expect people to use multimodal transportation when the infrastructure was currently lacking, and the language was not

recognizing the need for improvement. He asked if they thought the situation would change substantially in the next 20 years.

Mr. Barnes said that the Charlottesville Albemarle Regional Transit Authority (CARTA) effort at the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was a step in the right direction and would find ways to fund the infrastructure. He said that this topic was blended the most between chapters in the Plan, mostly because they could not have these activity centers without the supporting transportation infrastructure. He said that the relevant details for how to achieve that should be found in the Transportation Chapter, which was the next one they would discuss.

Mr. Clayborne said that it was important to consider including metrics to solidify that this would be an actual process rather than a vague idea. He said that he recalled reading that one potential goal was to eliminate parking requirements for certain developments. He said that however, this was not a feasible goal at present. He said that therefore, they should consider what incremental steps they could take to define success in this way.

Mr. Clayborne said that he thought it was essential to do so with the multimodal transportation hub, as it seemed like a distant goal. He said that if they did not make progress towards this, it may become irrelevant. He said that he proposed breaking down the goal into smaller, achievable milestones, such as specific targets for the next five years or ten years.

Mr. Barnes said that the metrics discussion had come up multiple times tonight, and he wanted to note that when they moved on to the Implementation section and the Big Moves, their strategy for tracking progress was to focus on trends and indicators of these Big Moves. He said that the Big Moves were intended to reflect the comprehensive collection of multiple actions and objectives, rather than tracking each objective separately.

Mr. Barnes said that upon reviewing the document, they would see that there were numerous objectives, and having measurable expectations for each would be ideal. He said that, however, that would require significant staff time, which he did not have available. He said that he did not have an analyst on his staff who could solely track metrics, and it would be more than the time he had allotted for his staff right now.

Mr. Barnes said that to address this, they tried to capture the essence of the Big Moves, representing them broadly over a 20-year period. He said that they would revisit these aspects when they rewrote the Comprehensive Plan or sooner if needed, essentially saying they were moving in the right direction. He said that another key aspect of this plan was tying the Big Moves and objectives to the strategic plan, which included more detailed metrics.

Mr. Barnes said that when the Board set goals, those objectives would be tied to the Strategic Plan, which had been the approach so far with the Strategic Plan and the Strategic Plan Execution Analysis and Reporting (SPEAR) associated with it. He said that by focusing on the Strategic Plan, they could track progress on specific actions and initiatives. He said that the strategy was to use the Strategic Plan as a framework, where the Board's investment in specific actions would be tied to measurable outcomes.

Mr. Barnes said that for the Comprehensive Plan itself, they focused on the Big Moves and a combination of metrics, including vehicle miles traveled, to gauge whether they were achieving their goals of reducing reliance on cars and increasing use of transit and bike facilities.

Mr. Murray said that upon reviewing this item, he believed it would be extremely useful to identify and map "multimodal dead zones" - areas that could not be accessed by multimodal transit. He said that this may be more suitable for the Transportation Chapter, but there were certain areas that were difficult to travel to and from and knowing the locations and tracking their changes over time would be highly beneficial. He said that hopefully, the size of these dead zones would decrease as time progressed.

Mr. Missel said that in terms of metrics, from a staffing feasibility standpoint, the metrics being measured in the context of the Comprehensive Plan or the seven Big Moves the County was considering would become increasingly detailed in the 2024-2029 five-year Strategic Plan. He said that the measurement tool, which was partly the SPEAR Report, would likely provide a more in-depth analysis. He said that the SPEAR Report for this year was released this past week.

Mr. Barnes said that was correct. He said that staff had been working very hard to make the Comprehensive Plan work in tandem with the five-year Strategic Plan. He said that considering the past Comprehensive Plan was 900 pages and difficult to work from, staff wanted to make this Comprehensive Plan more actionable.

Mr. Missel said that while considering the Big Moves, he also wanted to make sure they did not lose track of other things they wanted to measure. He said that although they may not have the capacity to track everything, they should have a list and could prioritize those items. He said that some of these may already be included in the Strategic Plan, and they could consider them addressed. He said that however, there may be others that emerged that were worth considering, even if they were not currently tracking them, and they should at least be noted so everyone knew they existed.

Mr. Barnes said that they had a list; each Big Move was comprised of multiple items. He said that they just recently added the seventh Big Move, and they would continuously be ensuring their objectives and actions within the plan were accounted for.

Mr. Missel said that perhaps on a different note, but something he wanted to mention was how appreciative he was for the local work done on the Dark Skies Initiative. He said that, however, he was unaware if the County had metrics to measure that initiative. He said that that was definitely something he thought should be measured in terms of their progress over time.

Mr. Holt said that Dark Skies was mentioned in multiple places in the plan, one in particular being the Cultural Resources Chapter. He said that one image was a representation of the Bortle scale, which depicted the brightness of the nighttime sky.

Ms. Firehock said that tree canopy was another aspect that could be measured, and she thought that was relevant to keeping the development areas attractive and enjoyable for residents. She said that they could map the tree cover and measure the area over time to see if they were gaining or losing tree canopy.

Mr. Barnes said that that was included in the plan. He said that he completely agreed that metrics were essential to accurately measure whether they were achieving the plan.

Mr. Carrazana said that he appreciated that staff had worked so hard to incorporate these long-standing conversations into the plan. He said that he understood that it could be overwhelming, with so many factors to consider, including staff resources and other responsibilities. He said that

however, there were community partners who could help them measure this data to help the County in meeting these goals. He said that the University was working on Dark Skies right now, for example. He said that many of the topics in the Comprehensive Plan would be great projects for community partners to help them with, including students.

Mr. Missel said that next, he would like the Commission to review the Rural Area Land Use Chapter, including objectives, major findings, and trends.

Mr. Murray said that he was in agreement with the objectives and the content in this chapter. He said that there was a map of forest cover, and he believed it needed to be replaced with a map that depicted the forest blocks in the County. He said that this was because much of the forest in question was fragmented and may consist mainly of Bradford pear, pine plantations, or invasive species. He said that just swapping the current map for the forest block map would be very helpful.

Ms. Firehock said that while the information may not be crucial, she would like to bring up some statistics on rural agricultural lands that she had recently looked up in the latest reports. She said that she was not sure if this data was current, but she wanted to share it with staff. She said that this plan had been in the works for a long time, so she thought she would provide them with a link to the updated agricultural data. She said that the County had been saying that everything had remained relatively stable, but the data showed a decline, and she had included a link to the agricultural statistical report for their reference.

Mr. Missel asked if there were any comments about the rural interchanges.

Mr. Murray said that he believed one of the issues with this section was that it was vague and lacked sufficient guardrails. He said that he thought they should clearly state that they would only consider uses that aligned with the goals of the rural area. He said that "target industries" was too broad, as some of those uses would not be suitable and would essentially expand the development area, which they had previously decided not to do.

Mr. Murray said that considering Yancey as an example, he thought there was value in industrial uses, but "industrial" was too broad a category for the rural area. He said that he thought they needed to reclassify some of these to develop more specific land use categories that were appropriate for the rural area designation.

Ms. Firehock said that perhaps it could be called a rural processing center or something else related specifically to the rural area land use.

Mr. Murray said that was correct. He said that when they revisited the development area, they had a map with various colors representing different uses, such as industrial, office spaces, and so forth. He said that at some point, there was a need for a rural area plan. He said that he wanted to achieve a point where they had those colors for the rural area as well, allowing them to discuss specific uses, like agricultural support industrial, or other options.

Ms. Firehock said that it would indicate the reason why the use was there.

Mr. Barnes said that he would like to draw their attention to the last sentence of this section. He said that he believed it addressed the issue they were trying to discuss. He said that this did not alter the FLUM for this area. He said that they had land zoned in that area, and there was ongoing development. He said that if they did nothing, they could not effectively manage it. He said that

this was an attempt to manage it, and if they went through an intensive process that determined it was fine the way it currently was, that was an acceptable outcome.

Mr. Barnes said that alternatively, the outcome could be to further restrict it in some way. He said that the underlying intent was to address the planning issues in the two interchanges, which had a mix of old zoning. He said that from a planning perspective, they recognized it as a problem. He said that they had commercial uses that were hooked up to water for fire purposes but not for other uses, and some were not connected to sewer services. He said that again, it was possible that the null option may be considered if they examined the area and found it unnecessary to make any changes.

Mr. Murray said that there was particular concern in Crozet about Yancey. He said that there was some feeling that if they just ignored it, it would be better off; however, he did not agree with that. He said that he believed they needed to proactively plan for what they wanted to see happen there. He said that there needed to be guardrails, not to create fear in the community, but to responsibly protect the community and support appropriate development in that area.

Mr. Missel said that he believed that was included in the text.

Mr. Murray said that the language left it too ambiguous, in his opinion.

Mr. Missel said that Rural Area Land Use page 12, Objective 7.3, called for updating, reviewing, and updating existing commercial and industrial zoning for properties within rural areas. He said that this process should prioritize land use and zoning opportunities that supported agriculture and related silvicultural activities.

Mr. Carrazana said that he agreed there was some ambiguity in that sentence, which should be split into two sentences, the second beginning at "it is possible…."

Mr. Clayborne asked staff how far along the Data Center Ordinance was in terms of development and adoption. He said that he was asking this question because the section on development areas was silent on the matter. He said that he recalled reading that the development area could have data centers as a by right use in industrial areas, but there was no mention of it. He said that all one had to do was read Virginia Business Magazine to learn that data centers were being developed in southern and southwest Virginia all the time, so he did not think Albemarle would be immune to that. He said that they must decide whether to be proactive or reactive in this Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Murray said that he had one additional point to bring up. He said that on page 10, he believed there was a section discussing transfer of development rights, specifically objective 2.5. He said that he was comfortable with the sending areas, but he thought they should consider adding green systems, such as parks, to the areas they would like to preserve. He said that he recommended removing any discussion of receiving areas. He said that he believed this item required more discussion, as Ms. Firehock had already mentioned. He said that his suggestion was to send this to the National Heritage Committee as their first point of contact.

Mr. Murray said that perhaps Ms. Firehock could join them for that meeting to gather more input and discussion. He said that it would be beneficial to flesh this out further before proceeding. He said that he thought it should be left vague in nature, as it needed more work. He said that

additionally, he proposed that they reconsider limiting transfer development rights to only rural programs, as some of the most successful implementations in Virginia had been urban programs.

Ms. Firehock said that she would like for staff to elaborate on page 9, specifically section Rural Area Land Use 2.1. She said that they wanted to reduce the acreage used for residential lots. She said that she would like to hear more about this intention, particularly in the context of a recent development where the goal was to reconfigure rural lots. She said that they had a lengthy discussion about the potential for clearing the land and determining the footprint, but she would appreciate it if staff could clarify their original intent behind this objective and whether it was successfully achieved.

Mr. Barnes said that the key point was that, with their development rights on those parcels, they could have up to five parcels in total. He said that of those five parcels, they could occupy up to 31 acres. He said that staff's point was to reduce the 31-acre maximum to make it more manageable. He said that instead of having five parcels of 31 acres each, they would have five parcels of 3-4 acres each. He said that the goal was to create more space that could be reserved for larger developments.

Ms. Firehock said that she was having difficulty understanding the point as it was currently written, so she was wondering if another paragraph to elaborate on it may be more helpful.

Mr. Murray said that his issue with that objective was that it did not go far enough. He said that currently, the zoning in the rural area encouraged these large slot subdivisions, and he thought that was what this objective was trying to address. He said that it was giving the possibility of more, smaller lots that had the potential to be more affordable than 21-acre lots.

Ms. Firehock said that with a large number of 21-acre lots, as the Piedmont Environmental Council had mentioned many years ago, they were all too small to farm and too big to mow. She said that as a result, people often ended up with this land and did not use it for farming. She said that she came from a family that had a 22-acre farm, so she could attest that it could be farmed, but it tended not to be. She said that considering this, she wondered if it would be better to have even smaller lots than what was currently proposed. She said that this would allow for more open space or forest habitat.

Mr. Murray said that he agreed with it in a technical sense, but he was wondering if it was too specific. He said that he believed they needed to explore alternative strategies, moving beyond what they had done in the past. He said that they often discussed the lack of authorization for a clustering ordinance, but what they did have was the potential to offer incentives to developers. He said that for instance, he proposed that individuals had the option to create 5-acre lots instead of 21-acre lots, while still having the same level of development as the larger parcel. He said that this would result in a significant amount of residual land, which they currently did not have a mechanism to utilize.

Ms. Firehock said that the last development that they struggled with was a significant challenge in working with staff to minimize the amount of road acreage. She said that when multiple lots were involved, a long driveway was often necessary to access them, which could have a negative impact, and as a result, habitat fragmentation became a more significant concern. She said that they did not have a way for someone to come in and propose an alternative, such as having the same amount of land, but with five-acre lots and the remaining area designated as conservation land.

Mr. Murray said that they needed a mechanism in place for that. He said that what he was referring to was similar to what Bundoran had implemented, but perhaps with some improvements.

Ms. Firehock said that it seemed that the intention behind large lots was to discourage development. She said that nevertheless, in an area where people were eager to reside in Albemarle County and a significant amount of money flowed into the County, this approach did not appear to be effective. She said that there were still many individuals who could afford to purchase large properties and build big houses on them. She said that the acreage minimums had not discouraged development in that manner.

Mr. Murray said that the most concerning aspect of the 21-acre rule was that they could maximize development on land that was once a farm. He said that this meant that, despite the potential for increased development, the site still qualified for land use valuation. He said that in a perfect world, if all development rights were maximized, the acreage would be too small to qualify for land use valuation.

Ms. Firehock said that was a really good point. She said that she had been critical of the policy that essentially allowed them to grow hay and sell it to each other. She said that they had successfully grown a crop and had a sale that they could register. She said that they had now ended up with a surplus of hay that neither of them needed, and it was simply rotting away in the backfield. She said that this could create a false agricultural economy, with a lot of hay cutting and sales, even if few people were using it.

Mr. Murray said that it was possible they could address some of these issues when they got to the rural area plan, which he hoped would happen. He said that he hoped they could do better than this little item in here did.

Ms. Firehock said that Mr. Murray had mentioned earlier that currently, they had RA zoning for rural areas. She said that if one looked at James City County, they had a similar designation for rural areas, but they also had a separate designation for special conservation areas. She said that the land was both rural and of high conservation value, which would warrant additional protections.

Ms. Firehock said that she did not think that Albemarle needed to develop a comprehensive rural area plan before they considered adding an additional designation to the RA zoning to recognize the unique conservation value of some properties. She said that this could also apply to properties that were not currently designated as conservation areas. She said that a significant groundwater recharge area or facility that provides additional environmental services could also be considered.

Mr. Murray said that he recommended that they adopt both a conservation designation and an agricultural designation, as many localities had done. He said that he had previously forwarded an article to the Commission and staff about a property owner in Chesapeake who successfully petitioned to rezone their residential property to agricultural, citing concerns about potential development. He said that he believed this could be a valuable option for them in Albemarle County, even if it was voluntary, as it would provide more flexibility than a conservation easement while still offering some protection. He said that while they could table this discussion for now, he thought it was essential that they consider these designations as part of their overall planning strategy.

Ms. Firehock said that there could be a Rural Area (RA) and a Rural Conservation (RC), or other similar designations. She said that she believed that other localities had already implemented this approach.

Mr. Holt said that he was aware that Fauquier County had that designation.

Ms. Firehock asked if they could consider adding an action item to consider an additional conservation zoning or create a new class for some areas in the rural area in the future. She said that then, they could consider it when they developed the rural area plan. She said that for now, at least, they could acknowledge that there were other types of rural zoning beyond just RA.

Mr. Missel said that he would like to move onto the Transportation Chapter. He asked if there was discussion about urban street standards in this section.

Ms. Firehock said that there were some matters related to their work with VDOT that were included.

Ms. Swartzendruber said that there was more information on page 17 on that topic.

Mr. Murray said that he was on page 10, where a sentence stated that biking and walking on rural roads did occur often for recreation or exercise rather than to access jobs and other resources. He said that these uses of roadways were valid; however, pedestrian safety could be an issue due to limited road widths. He said that he thought the sentence should be rephrased to avoid sounding apologetic. He said that instead, he proposed changing it to "Biking, running, and walking does occur on rural roads for many reasons, often for recreation, exercise, to visit neighbors, or to access resources in crossroads communities. Pedestrian safety on narrow roads can be an issue, particularly when roads are improved without considering these existing uses. Planning for transportation needs to consider these valid existing uses." He said that this encompasses the same idea while being considerate of the various ways people used their roads.

Mr. Barnes asked Mr. Murray to send that specific language change suggestion to staff.

Mr. Murray said that he would.

Mr. Missel asked if there were any other comments on the objectives.

Ms. Firehock said that she had a minor comment on page 21. She said that Objective 5 said "to improve transit access to the airport," but she would recommend this be changed to "provide or add transit access to the airport," because there currently was no transit access to the airport.

Mr. Missel said that if there were no further comments on Transportation, they could move onto the Thriving Economy Chapter.

Ms. Firehock said that she believed Objective 6 was really pithy. She said that she thought perhaps some more descriptive words could be used to elaborate on this objective.

Mr. Missel said that even on page 12, the description was fairly short. He said that he thought childcare was something that should be emphasized, so perhaps it could be included in the first objective. He said that it could be included in the first page, perhaps expanding Objective 7.

Ms. Swartzendruber said that she wanted to point out that Objective 7 in this particular chapter was not included in the link provided previously. She said that what was currently displayed on the screen was the current version of this chapter.

Mr. Murray said that this was somewhat addressed in the Parks and Recreation chapter, but he believed it would be beneficial to have an objective or greater acknowledgment of the economic value of the recreation economy. He said that as a County, they had a broader economic base beyond just agriculture. He said that he had mentioned this before, but other places like Roanoke had successfully implemented this model. He said that he believed they could do better as a County by acknowledging and supporting their recreation economy more effectively.

Mr. Missel said that under Objective 4 in Thriving Economy, they had a link to the Albemarle County and Economic Development Strategic Plan, as well as the Charlottesville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CACVB) Strategic Plan. He said that he believed staff had reviewed this with Ms. Kilroy and others to ensure that the links were properly tied together. He said that the CACVB should also be involved if they had not already been.

Ms. Swartzendruber said that she would like to draw attention to page 5. She said that specifically, the last bold sentence highlighted the variety of outdoor recreation activities, historic resources, and other assets that could be used to attract tourists to their area.

Mr. Murray said that he believed that assumption may not be accurate, as it implied that all activities under consideration fell solely under the category of tourism. He said that he believed there were numerous opportunities for outdoor recreation that did not necessarily fit within the tourism umbrella. He said that for instance, evaluating and establishing appropriate recreational uses for rural areas was crucial, as many of these activities required special use permits.

Mr. Murray said that perhaps they could develop performance-based standards for these activities, allowing them to proceed if they met specific criteria. He said that in his opinion, there were many sustainable, low-impact recreation options that they could encourage without falling under the strict definition of tourism.

Ms. Firehock said that while it may not be considered low impact, but they could establish standards for campgrounds in rural areas. She said that there were some excellent locations that worked well, and the neighbors were generally supportive due to the circumstances. She said that this was something that could be codified. She said that they could apply similar performance standards to campgrounds, just as they did for homestays, farm stands, or other similar activities. She said that she believed they could do a better job in that regard.

Mr. Murray said that even though he was not certain if this was still the case, he recalled his time in Blacksburg, where the New River Trail had designated areas for renting bicycles, conveniently located near the trail. He said that if the Three Notch'd Trail was ever built, it was likely that someone would need to obtain a special use permit to do that.

Mr. Barnes said that this point was well taken. He said that staff would consider where that idea could be placed in the Comprehensive Plan, and they would discuss it with the Board as well.

Mr. Missel said that they would next discuss the Housing Chapter. He asked if the Affordable Housing Fund was mentioned as part of the objectives in this chapter.

Ms. Firehock said that she did not recall reading that.

Mr. Missel said that he was surprised there was nothing in the Plan that mentioned investing, especially since the County was already looking into doing that.

Ms. Firehock said that it did seem to be the policy since they were increasing funding.

Mr. Missel said that it could potentially be mentioned in Objective 5.

Mr. Carrazana said that perhaps Objective 7 could start by saying they would invest and incentivize to increase affordable housing options in the community.

Mr. Missel said that that would work, too.

Ms. Firehock said that she wanted to propose one new action for the end. She said that she had given a speech about aging in place, and the issue of affordability. She said that unfortunately, unless one was very wealthy, it was difficult to find an assisted living unit in Albemarle County. She said that under Objective 7, increasing affordable and accessible housing options in the community, given that they only had one action under it, it was worth adding to.

Ms. Firehock said that she wanted to suggest that they could emphasize the importance of adapting homes to allow for aging in place, providing assistance for modifications such as ramps, railings, or chairlifts. She said that this could be a fund that supported these types of renovations, which would be a relatively inexpensive investment compared to the cost of moving into an assisted living unit, which could be upwards of $8,000 per month. She asked if staff would consider including some language to that effect.

Mr. Clayborne said that he had a question regarding page 9, where the paragraph in the bottom left corner discussed the dollar value equivalent for 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). He said that he recalled Dr. Pethia mentioning that the current AMI was either $121,000 or $126,000. He said that to verify, he would like to confirm that they were using the latest numbers provided by Dr. Pethia, as this would impact the 80% AMI calculation, which would be approximately $100,000.

Ms. Swartzendruber said that Dr. Pethia had reviewed this chapter, but staff would double-check with her to confirm that number was correct.

Mr. Murray said that he recently had a conversation with a neighbor whose family had lived in Sugar Hollow for generations. He said that she was a medical professional in Crozet and expressed concern that her father intended to give her the property, but she feared she would not be able to afford the property taxes and would have to sell.

Mr. Murray said that this situation resonated with him, as he believed it highlighted a pressing concern: the displacement of rural residents, particularly minority populations. He said that he thought it was essential that they find a way to prevent this displacement from occurring. He said that while he was not yet clear on the specific strategy or objective, he believed they needed to work towards a solution that benefited their community. He said that displacing individuals who had lived in the area for generations and provided vital services to residents of Crozet would not serve their interests.

Mr. Carrazana said that he had this conversation with some individuals from their church who were multi-generational farmers in rural areas. He said that unfortunately, they were losing their farms due to it becoming unaffordable. He said that one part of the issue was that in Albemarle County, there was a program that allowed for a reduction in taxes, but it was not based on income; it was based on assets. He said that the problem was that land values had increased significantly, and the County's limit for this program had not changed, so many people were excluded from the program.

Mr. Missel said that it was a good point, and he knew it had been discussed a lot recently. He said that this issue was largely due to their reliance on real estate taxes to cover revenue, as approximately 11% of their revenue came from commercial and industrial sources.

Mr. Carrazana said that he believed that this was where the issue of equity should be considered, as they discussed how this disproportionately affected minority and low-income communities. He said that to provide some form of support, they needed to explore alternative solutions. He said that the reality was that these areas often got gentrified because displacement of families was used as a tool for gentrification.

Mr. Clayborne asked if the Comprehensive Plan had included any mention of the potential loss of affordable units that came online due to lack of community awareness. He said that after a certain period of time on the market, units were converted from affordable to market rate, which Dr. Pethia had previously discussed. He said that he wanted to ensure they had some plan to avoid losing affordable units after they had been built.

Mr. Missel said that they would next discuss the Environmental Stewardship Chapter.

Ms. Firehock said that she believed that there may be a mistake in Action 4.8. She said that both possibilities could be valid. She said that the two sentences appeared to be unrelated, as one discussed establishing an educational program to promote dark sky best practices and awareness of lighting in the Zoning Ordinance, while the other mentioned increasing County outreach to existing and new landowners on habitat protection. She said that otherwise, she had provided her other comments to staff for their review.

Mr. Carrazana said that he would suggest they include some photographs of their local salamanders.

Ms. Swartzendruber said that staff would work on that.

Ms. Firehock said that showing the specific example of the tunnels for the salamanders to cross Polo Grounds Road would be effective in proving their commitment to public safety and to wildlife protection.

Mr. Missel said that under Action 2.1, he would like to know how the language related to the Chesapeake Bay Act and other requirements for stormwater management.

Mr. Holt said that it referred to the program of nutrient credits, which allowed developers to purchase credits and avoid implementing stormwater management measures on certain properties, thereby addressing water quality issues in other areas.

Ms. Firehock said that they could offer incentives, such as adding bioswales to treat on-site water quality. She said that in Charlottesville, they provided density bonuses on small lots if they used low-impact development tactics. She said that it had been well-received by developers.

Mr. Murray here was a classification system under the Chesapeake Bay Act, which included two types of buffers. He said that the first was the resource protection area, essentially what they had in place. He said that the second was the resource management area, which had performance-based standards assigned to it. He said that these areas overlapped and typically extended beyond the resource protection areas.

Mr. Murray said that, however, resource management areas could be of any size, designated as sensitive resources, as long as they were connected to water quality. He said that one of the benefits of these areas was that communities could require low-impact development standards within them. He said that in fact, there were examples in neighboring localities that he had shared with others, which he believed demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach. He said that he could send them some specific examples of localities that used this classification system.

Mr. Murray said that they could establish a percentage of impervious surface, for instance. He said that one could set a limit, such as no more than a certain percentage could be impervious, or one could require the preservation of a certain amount of tree cover. He said that he believed it would be very beneficial for them to adopt these standards, particularly in areas where they knew they had impaired streams or areas with high environmental concerns.

Ms. Firehock said that some communities have maximum lot coverage limits that restrict how much of the lot can be paved in a residential development.

Mr. Murray said that another aspect of this was that it would help address a current gap in their riparian buffer ordinance. He said that currently, it was possible to remove a stream entirely, even with the proposed new ordinance. He said that once a stream was removed, it could be replaced with a parking lot. He said that this was a real issue that was already happening in Crozet.

Mr. Murray said that if they had resource management areas in place, with RMAs correlating to the size of the stream buffer, they could at least ensure that performance standards were met. He said that for example, they could say that a parking lot could not be built there. He said that by implementing RMAs, they could impose constraints and potentially prevent such situations from occurring. He said that he believed it was very important for the County to consider adopting resource management areas.

Ms. Firehock said that Action 7.3 was an example of an objective that she thought was too vague. She said that the objective simply stated to support County staff in all departments to facilitate organization-wide and context-appropriate climate action. She said that it did not provide clear guidance on what that entailed.

Ms. Firehock said that what exactly did "support" mean in this context - was it about providing financial resources, allocating time, or something else? She said that she was not sure what that meant. She said that in the interest of clarity, she thought it would be better to rephrase the objective to something more specific, so they could determine whether they had achieved it.

Mr. Barnes said that staff would work to clarify that language.

Mr. Missel said that next they would discuss Parks, Recreation, and Open Space.

Mr. Murray said that he would like to acknowledge that some of the revisions made since their last review were truly excellent. He said that he would like to highlight page 17. He said that he appreciated the addition of a tourism recreation section, which specifically mentioned the regional economy's $1.3 billion annual economic impact and highlighted the Shenandoah National Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway. He said that he believed some of the objectives in this section were particularly effective, especially towards the end.

Mr. Murray said that notably, Actions 7.1 to 7.4 offered some promising options for achieving more green space. He said that one option, in particular, stood out: creating a new policy that allowed developers to make voluntary donations directly to the Albemarle County Parks Foundation to meet green space requirements and also encourage donations to the County Parks Foundation.

Mr. Murray said that he thought they had lacked a mechanism to fund initiatives like greenways, trails, and parks, except in cases where development was occurring. He said that with developments, they may get pieces or bits of green space, but this really started to address the problem. He said that he thought this was a positive development and he really appreciated what was done by Parks staff on this.

Mr. Murray said that the only thing he would like to mention was the importance of private lands that offered low-impact recreational activities. He said that there were numerous places in Albemarle County where individuals were providing such activities, such as Panorama Farm, Tevin Trails, and other locations. He said that while it was possible that some of these had been mentioned, he did not think they needed to be specifically called out.

Mr. Murray said that he believed there were many other places in the County where these recreational activities were taking place, and they were valuable. He said that there were also properties that offered hunting opportunities, which were also worth noting.

Ms. Firehock said that she would like to propose an additional action that could encourage participation in the Division of Wildlife Resources Birding and Wildlife Trails Program. She said that other localities she had visited had implemented similar programs, which involved a voluntary agreement between the landowner and the public, allowing access to private lands for birdwatching and wildlife viewing.

Ms. Firehock said that this model provided a balance between private property rights and public access to natural spaces. She said that for instance, she had noticed that some landowners in the County offered free parking for kayakers as a courtesy, but it also fostered a sense of community. She said that the Eastern Shore had numerous examples of such programs, which could be replicated to benefit the local environment and residents.

Mr. Missel said that the next chapter they would discuss was Cultural Resources.

Ms. Firehock said that she had sent an email to the staff who worked on this, giving them kudos for involving the Historic Preservation Committee in the editing and commenting process. She said that the Committee had provided a significant amount of input, and they had also done an excellent job of writing the rationale for why they needed these elements and what other communities were doing that their County had not done. She said that she was very pleased with the chapter, so she had nothing further to add.

Mr. Murray said that he thought it was well done. He said that he would reiterate what he had previously mentioned. He said that he believed that part of this was to write language generically, to encompass various groups. He said that he thought it would be worth highlighting, particularly their historic Black communities. He said that they were currently facing distinct challenges, specifically declining populations and displacement. He said that he thought they needed to look into ways to reach out to these communities and determine what assistance they would like them to provide or how they could help sustain struggling communities.

Mr. Missel said that he had previously made a similar comment, and he was happy to collaborate with staff on this matter. He said that they were currently working with the descendants of enslaved communities, and they had a descendant council providing valuable guidance. He said that two pictures of Birdwood were included in this renovation, and they were working with the council to ensure that the project was done with their input.

Mr. Missel said that he wholeheartedly agreed with Mr. Murray. He said that if they were going to discuss the history of the location and showcase buildings that were partially constructed by enslaved labor, he believed it was essential that they address that aspect of the site's past.

Mr. Carrazana said that he also thought this was relevant to current communities that were disappearing or had already been lost, such as Freetown.

Mr. Murray said that it appeared ironic that they had an action item focused on protecting African American cemeteries, yet they lacked a similar initiative to address the needs of African Americans living in their rural areas. He said that he believed it was essential that they consider protecting not only the cemeteries and historic structures, but also the living communities that currently existed. He said that acknowledging the existence of these communities and having a map of their locations in the Comprehensive Plan would be a good starting point. He said that he believed they should reach out to these communities and ask for their input on what support and assistance would be most beneficial to them, if any. He said that recognition was a fundamental aspect.

Ms. Firehock said that the Historic Preservation Committee had been putting up new markers to recognize African American and indigenous communities in the County. She said that this cultural work, such as mapping, interpretation, and education, all required funding. She said that they did have County staff with the expertise, but ultimately the Board of Supervisors would need to create a program and provide funding and resources to achieve that. She said that additionally, they did not have a Historic Preservation Ordinance, which this chapter gently referred to.

Mr. Missel said that the next chapter was Community Facilities and Infrastructure. He asked if the School Board had reviewed this chapter yet.

Mr. Barnes said that Schools staff had reviewed it with County staff, but he did not believe the School Board members had reviewed the chapter.

Ms. Firehock said that she wanted to comment on something that she did not believe would be included in the Comprehensive Plan, but she still thought was important to consider as they looked towards the future planning of the County. She said that they had rules regarding the amount of land a school needs surrounding it, and as they continued to infill the urban area, finding ideal parcels with ample land became increasingly difficult.

Ms. Firehock said that they had previously discussed the possibility of an urban school within Southwood, but it did not gain traction. She said that she grew up in a school with playgrounds and large oak trees, but it was only a couple of acres. She said that they managed to thrive despite its size. She said that if they continued with the suburban model, requiring tens of acres for a school, they would struggle to accommodate schools in the dense new urban environment.

Ms. Firehock said that at some point, the School Board needed to consider new school building designs that did not require so much land, both for cost and availability. She said that she feared that if she were to suggest this to the School Board now, it would be met with resistance, and the conversation would likely end there. She said that it seemed that this issue was not being fully acknowledged at this point, so she would not bother proposing any concrete actions.

Mr. Missel said that he would reiterate his previous point about the importance of childcare and early childhood education. He said that it was a critical need that he was unsure about whether it was adequately addressed. He said that perhaps it was too specific of a detail, but he also considering the importance of out-of-school care.

Mr. Murray said that one thing he would like to highlight in the Community Facilities section was the need for more specific goals. He said that while there were some existing goals, he believed that they should be more precise about their objectives related to sustainable design. He said that for instance, they should codify their commitment to low-impact development, as Albemarle County had effectively modeled best practices that they wanted to encourage the development community to adopt. He said that the current Comprehensive Plan included a goal of planting at least 80% native plants in County projects. He said that this goal was simple, yet measurable, and its inclusion in this section would be beneficial.

Mr. Murray said that he was not sure why it had been removed, but it had previously garnered state recognition. He said that he thought it would be valuable to include standards for low-impact development. He said that as he had mentioned earlier, they had successfully implemented sustainable design principles in various projects, such as the Crozet Library and other developments, which demonstrated their capabilities.

Mr. Holt said that it was worth noting that this chapter had received some Resilient Community content, which had been divided between this chapter and the Environmental Stewardship chapter. He said that as a result, some of the content had been expanded, and the number of objectives had increased. He said that however, the narrative text in this Community Facilities chapter had been significantly reduced, making it shorter overall.

Mr. Missel said that regarding the Implementation Chapter, Mr. Moore had sent some general comments this afternoon. He said that additionally, he received a suggestion regarding the wording of Big Move #7, which was to include public schools in the list of investments. He said that he also received a suggestion to make the wording "strengthen social connection and community wellbeing."

Mr. Barnes said that the school-related topics did come up, and he was thinking that adding this infrastructure could lead to a wide range of other projects. He said that he believed the original intent, as Supervisor Gallaway had mentioned, was to focus on social capital. He said that if that was the case, then adding other infrastructure-related projects might be a better approach. He said that the comments he had been hearing were more concerned with the issue of trailers and overcrowding of school facilities.

Mr. Clayborne said that he thought staff had done a great job of tying back to the guiding principles. He said that one thing they may want to consider as they presented this to the Board was that they had more Big Moves in some areas than others, so they may need to justify why that was.

Mr. Murray said that he recommended broadening Big Move #5 to include support for the development of agriculture and forestry uses in the rural area. He said that he also suggested including low-impact recreational uses in that section as well.

Mr. Missel asked if there was any feedback from the Commission regarding the appendix.

Mr. Clayborne asked if the information in the appendix would be linked to other relevant pages.

Mr. Barnes said that they would be linking all available internal documents; however, external documents would not be linked.

Mr. Carrazana said that on page 13, they had a title for the graph that was in part one.

Mr. Missel said that there was also a smaller subplot on page 16, which he found interesting. He said that it compared housing unit types by Comprehensive Plan year. He said that he was looking forward to hearing the next steps for this Comp Plan process. He asked staff to consider how that would be communicated.

Ms. Firehock said that there were some items, such as the Dark Skies initiative, that had been in the past Comprehensive Plan and were now being addressed in this new draft. She asked staff to consider emphasizing to the Board that they needed to address those past priorities and ensure they were actually achieved this time around.

Committee Reports

Mr. Murray said that the MPO Tech Committee meeting took place on August 5, 2025. He said that during their discussion, some key points were raised regarding the transportation demand management study. He said that he was pleased to note that they would be incorporating Strava metro data, which they had access to, as well as street light information. He said that this would provide them with objective data on pedestrian activity, a topic he had been advocating for a considerable amount of time. He said that there would also be a joint meeting with Staunton and Waynesboro to discuss transportation. He said that unfortunately, the Rivanna pedestrian bridge was not funded, which was a disappointing outcome.

Ms. Firehock asked where that pedestrian bridge was supposed to be located.

Mr. Barnes said that it was planned to go from Woolen Mills to the Sentara Hospital area.

Review of Board of Supervisors Meeting: July 16, August 6, August 13, and August 20, 2025

Mr. Barnes said that the Commission's last meeting was on July 8, and on July 16, the Board reviewed and approved the Spring Hill subdivision in Ivy. He said that they also reviewed and adopted the Commercial Solar Ordinance. He said that on August 6, staff presented a proposal

for the Freebridge Lane discontinuance. He said that the Board supported the permanent discontinuance, so staff was moving forward with that process.

Mr. Barnes said that also on August 6, the Board held a work session on data centers part two, which went beyond performance standards. He said that the previous part one was a placeholder and covered less than 40,000 square feet, whereas this proposal was significantly larger and included different tiers of permitted data centers, as well as performance standards for noise, water, and other setbacks. He said that this was accompanied by a zoning map amendment to create an overlay district, focusing on several industrial properties designated in the comprehensive plan or zoned in their community.

Mr. Barnes said that the Commission was scheduled to hold a public hearing on this data center ordinance on October 14, 2025. He said that also on August 6, the Board discussed the Forest School, which sparked a lively conversation. He said that staff expressed concerns about the impact on Dudley Mountain, but the Board ultimately voted in favor of the request. He said that on August 13, the Board and Economic Development Authority held a joint meeting to discuss the Economic Development Strategic Plan, which was an engaging conversation between the two boards.

Mr. Barnes said that on August 20, the Board held a work session on the riparian buffer standards and draft ordinances, which would be brought to a public hearing soon. He said that this was a continuation of the Commission's previous work session, which was held many months ago. He said that they would be presenting this information to the Commission for a public hearing in the near future.

Mr. Missel asked for clarification about the next steps for the data center ordinance. He asked if the Commission would be holding a public hearing for that item.

Mr. Barnes said that that was correct.

Mr. Missel asked if the Commission would not have their own work session on the topic beforehand.

Mr. Barnes said that a decision had been made to expedite the process in order to address the data center issues they faced as a community.

Mr. Missel said that it was a significant increase to go from 40,000 square feet to 500,000 square feet.

Mr. Barnes said that it certainly had generated a lot of discussion in the community.

New Business

There was none.

Old Business

There was none.

Items for follow-up

There were none.

Adjournment

At 10:00 p.m., the Commission adjourned to September 9, 2025, Albemarle County Planning Commission meeting, 6:00 p.m.

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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)

Approved by Planning Commission
Date:
Initials: