Albemarle County Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
Draft Minutes May 26, 2026

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a public meeting on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Members attending were: Luis Carrazana, Chair; Karen Firehock, Vice-Chair; Corey Clayborne; Nathan Moore; Lonnie Murray; Catherine Brown.

Members absent: Mary Katherine King.

Other officials present were: Michael Barnes, Director of Planning; Kevin McDermott, Deputy Director of Planning; Margaret Maliszewski, Planning Manager; Rebecca Ragsdale, Planning Manager; Francis McCall, Deputy Zoning Administrator; Andy Herrick, County Attorney; and Carolyn Shaffer, Clerk to the Planning Commissions.

Call to Order and Establish Quorum

Carolyn Shaffer called the roll.

Mr. Carrazana established a quorum.

Ms. Shaffer asked if Mr. Murray could state his reason for remote participation.

Mr. Murray said that he was located at his home in Albemarle County and was requesting to participate remotely due to transportation issues.

Mr. Moore motioned that the Planning Commission allow Mr. Murray to participate remotely in the meeting. Ms. Firehock seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0). (Ms. King was absent)

Public Comments

There were none.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Clayborne motioned that the Planning Commission approve the consent agenda. Ms. Firehock seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0). (Ms. King was absent)

Public Hearing

TA-2025-00004 Add a New Category of Countywide Certificate of Appropriateness for Rooftop Solar Installations in the Entrance Corridors

Margaret Maliszewski, Planning Manager, said that she would present an entrance corridor-related zoning text amendment (ZTA) this evening. She said that they did not often bring entrance corridor items to the Board, so she would start by providing some background on the entrance corridors to give context for what the Commission would be reviewing today. She said that

entrance corridors were first established in Albemarle in 1990. She said that these are streets that run through or to the historic areas of the County. She said that the Entrance Corridor District was an overlay district, meaning that entrance corridor regulations were in addition to the underlying zoning. She said that entrance corridors were established to ensure that new development maintained a consistent character with the historic character of the County.

Ms. Maliszewski said that this was achieved by establishing an Architectural Review Board (ARB) that applies design guidelines to the review of new development in the corridors. She said that the technical term for ARB approval was a Certificate of Appropriateness. She said that when the entrance corridors were first established and for many years thereafter, every ARB application was presented to the ARB for review in an ARB meeting. She said that this resulted in a large number of applications, many of which were straightforward. She said that over time, the outcomes became predictable. She said that in 2009, the County streamlined the process, and in 2010 a zoning text amendment was approved that established the new class of Countywide Certificate of Appropriateness. She said that this resulted in 11 types of development eligible for staff-level review, which were types of development that were relatively small in scope or had less visual impact.

Ms. Maliszewski said that for each category of Countywide Certificate of Appropriateness, the ARB established design criteria that would be used for the review of subsequent applications. She said that in 2021, a 12th category was added as part of the Rio-29 Form Based Code, and in 2023, a 13th category was added for developments subject to public-private partnership agreements. She said that tonight, the Commission was considering a text amendment to add a 14th category, which would allow for streamlined review of rooftop solar installations in the entrance corridors. She said that the ARB recommended the addition of this category following their review and approval of three solar installation proposals in September of last year. She said that these proposals included rooftop panels at Albemarle High School, the High School Center II, and the Virginia Asphalt business on Avon Street.

Ms. Maliszewski said that the ARB was currently working to establish the design criteria required for this streamlined review. She said that in the staff report, the Commission would find that this proposal had been reviewed for typical factors, but she would highlight two positive factors. She said that first, the amendment would simplify the review process, and second, it was consistent with the goals of the County's climate action plan. She said that what was before the Commission tonight was a request to make a recommendation on the addition of one line of text to the Entrance Corridor Overlay section of the Ordinance to include rooftop solar installations as a new category of Countywide Certificate of Appropriateness.

Mr. Moore said that this amendment was a great idea. He asked about, in the context of a staff review for a proposal like this in the future, what factors would lead to a denial of a rooftop solar proposal.

Ms. Maliszewski said that the criteria had not been finalized yet, so it was hard to say. She said that currently, the ARB was considering factors such as the arrangement of panels on the roof, the configuration of the panels, their relationship to the roof's slope, and their distance from the roof. She said that the ARB would also want to ensure that the related equipment was not visible. She said that once the criteria were established, staff would be evaluating these factors to determine compliance.

Mr. Moore said that made sense. He said that he also noticed that number six on the Countywide Certificates of Appropriateness was the newer replacement rooftop-mounted equipment. He said that he was wondering what the logic was behind separating solar panels from other rooftop equipment.

Ms. Maliszewski said that the criteria for rooftop equipment was that it should not be visible at all. She said that they recognized that there were many potential solar installations that would be visible. She said that as a result, the criteria for these installations were slightly different, with a focus on making them more consistent with the building's roofline.

Mr. Carrazana said that to follow up on that point, he would like to clarify the extent to which the orientation, bracket, mounting, and other aspects of the project fell under the purview of the Architecture Review Board versus the Planning Commission.

Ms. Maliszewski said that establishing the design criteria for each of these categories of Countywide Certificates of Appropriateness fell within the tasks of the ARB.

Mr. Carrazana asked if everything would go to the ARB.

Ms. Maliszewski said that the ARB would set the design criteria and adopt them, and when individual applications were received, staff reviewed those applications against the criteria that the ARB had already established.

Michael Barnes, Director of Planning, said that to clarify, the item before the Commission this evening was an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, which would be presented to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Carrazana asked if the ARB was the agency that would review the details of the items mentioned by Ms. Maliszewski.

Ms. Maliszewski said exactly.

Mr. Carrazana said that in terms of the design criteria, he was wondering how much of the agency's review process was focused on Design for Freedom.

Mr. Barnes said that he was unfamiliar with that term.

Mr. Carrazana said that they should familiarize themselves with it. He said that it was an organization that examined humane practices in manufacturing, particularly with solar panels. He said that there was a significant concern regarding the manufacturing process, as most panels were made using slave labor. He said that this issue had sparked considerable concern around solar panels.

Mr. Carrazana said that to encourage manufacturers to stop using such labor and instead produce panels in other locations, they needed to pay attention to these practices. He said that this was not limited to solar panels, but it was an industry where they were seeing a notable challenge in identifying where the labor was coming from, whether it was free or not. He said that he would send more information on this topic to staff.

Ms. Maliszewski said that would be great. She said that she thought that sounded very important, but she was not sure that they had the ability to address that issue through the entrance corridor overlay.

Ms. Firehock said that Mr. Carrazana may be suggesting that this could be a later policy the county could adopt regarding County buildings. She said that the School Board could adopt a similar policy for their school buildings, as it was mentioned as one of the applicants in the past. She said that they may not be able to include it in zoning requirements, but it could be a County standard for purchasing or other related matters.

Mr. Carrazana said that he thought the ARB could include it in the design criteria.

Ms. Firehock said that she did not know if they could include sourcing of materials in the criteria.

Mr. Carrazana said that they were paying more attention to it at the University of Virginia.

Ms. Firehock said that she understood that because the University was the buyer.

Mr. Carrazana opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing and the matter rested with the Commission.

Ms. Brown motioned that the Planning Commission recommend approval of TA-2025-00004 to add a new category of Countywide Certificate of Appropriateness for Rooftop Solar Installations in the Entrance Corridors. Mr. Clayborne seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0). (Ms. King was absent)

ZMA-2025-00007 and SUB-2025-00238 Windy Knoll

Rebecca Ragsdale, Planning Manager, said that she would provide a brief summary of the proposal, followed by an overview of the parcel characteristics and then a more detailed explanation of the current application plan and proffers before the Commission this evening. She said that these included both a rezoning request and a waiver request for sidewalk and planting strip requirements. She said that Windy Knoll was located in Crozet, off of Route 250, and it was a 3-acre parcel behind Cory Farm. She said that she had provided an aerial view showed the parcel characteristics. She said that the parcel had a single remaining home, and it was surrounded by developed areas, including Liberty Hall with single-family and townhouse development, and Cory Farm with single-family development.

Ms. Ragsdale said that this location was within close proximity to the center area of Clover Lawn and the Blue Ridge Shopping Center, which was directly across the street. She said that the current zoning map of the area showed that the parcels were zoned R-1 Residential and Cory Farm was zoned R-4. She said that to the east, there were recent rezonings with Liberty Hall, which was a Neighborhood Model District (NMD), developed at about six dwelling units per acre. She said that the AC44 Future Land Use Map and Crozet Master Plan designated this area as neighborhood residential density, with a recommended density of three to six dwelling units per acre.

Ms. Ragsdale said that this designation had been in place since the first Crozet Master Plan. She said that the application plan had been revised since the previous public hearing on February 10, 2026. She said that what was new to this plan was that the applicant had increased the potential

for up to 11 units in the south building zone, refined and added pedestrian paths, including a commitment to a public access easement that could potentially connect to Colony Drive and Cory Farm. She said that this addressed some of the concerns and gaps in providing access to nearby walkable areas.

Ms. Ragsdale said that some information included in the concept plan and materials submitted by the applicants showed that the requested waiver was to provide a private street with only a sidewalk and planting strip on one side of the street at the north building zone. She said that referring back to the application plan, they had mentioned before that this was not a typical setup for three separate access points. She said that the north building zone would be served by the private street where the applicants had submitted the waiver request. She said that the south building zone could potentially be served by lower street standards based on the number of units from the existing access points on Colony Drive from Liberty Hall, and Windy Knoll, which was located off of Little Fox Lane in Cory Farm.

Ms. Ragsdale said that the proffers included in the packet made a commitment to the concept plan and used the term "major elements" in terms of what was binding if the application moved on to the site plan or subdivision phase of development. She said that the maximum density was 18 units overall, but this application plan allowed up to 11 units in each of the building zones. She said that staff mentioned the amenity locations and pathways as part of the proffers, and the applicants had updated their proffers since the public hearing in February to ensure that they were in line with the Housing Albemarle policy. She said that based on the maximum number of units of 18, the applicants could potentially provide up to four affordable units.

Ms. Ragsdale said that the proffers, as they typically were, allowed some flexibility in whether those units were for rent or sale, but the area median income (AMI) limits and the periods of affordability were in line with the Housing Albemarle policy recommendations for either rent or sale units. She said that the packet also included an illustrative plan, which was a representative example of how the site might develop under the regulating concept plan, and she also included the prior concept plan for comparison.

Ms. Ragsdale said that staff had recommended approval based on the factors indicated in the staff report, consistency with the Crozet Master Plan recommendations, the Growth Management Policy for adding density in units in the Development Area, consistency with Housing Albemarle, and the added assurances regarding pedestrian and bike potential interconnectivity.

Ms. Brown asked if there was a proffer was a commitment to the percentage, or it was a percentage of the total build out. She said that if they did not build out to 18, the percentage remained 20% of whatever the build-out became.

Ms. Ragsdale said yes.

Mr. Murray asked if they could review the map with the easements. He said that when examining the southern middle part of the property, there was an easement that ran through the middle, to the homeowner who was surrounded by other parcels. He asked if staff could clarify the nature of this easement. He said that he wanted to know whether it was a public easement or a private easement.

Ms. Ragsdale said that the access easement located off of Little Fox Lane for Windy Knoll Lane was a private access easement.

Mr. Carrazana asked if the applicant had a presentation.

Justin Shimp, Shimp Engineering, said that he wanted to bring up an item of procedure regarding the sidewalk waivers. He said that staff had pointed out that it may be premature to consider those requests. He said that they could defer any consideration of those for tonight, as he believed the analysis was based on the prior layout before their revisions. He said that this might lead to some discrepancies. He said that those were items that they could revisit later if needed. He said that the main topic was the zoning, and they could revisit the waivers at a later time if they determined they were necessary based on the actual buildouts.

Mr. Shimp said that he did not want to spend a lot of time on this if they were not certain how it would proceed. He said that he simply wanted to bring this to everyone's attention. He said that this project, which they had discussed in February, was an infill project in Crozet. He said that it was one of the types of projects that they would likely see more of in the future. He said that this one felt particularly challenging. He said that this site had neighborhoods surrounding it, but in terms of land to build on, it was quite suitable.

Mr. Shimp said that it had been developed previously as single-family homes. He said that the overall request remained the same: 18 units on 3.146 acres. He said that they would include 20% affordable housing in this mix. He said that as had been noted, this was an infill site, close to amenities in Crozet, which was excellent. He said that in his opinion, Cory Farm, as it was built out, was missing a mix of housing types. He said that this development introduced that into the neighborhood immediately. He said that the updates they had made addressed concerns about density, revising the layout to ensure a balanced mix of units on either side.

Mr. Shimp said that one of the main concerns was connectivity, which they had addressed by making it a public path, bringing value to the neighborhood. He said that they had also designated an amenity area, which was missing from prior applications, and increased building setbacks off the 330-property line to provide room for landscaping. He said that he would like to address a concern that was raised last time regarding stormwater management. He said that according to the County staff report, the site drained toward Cory Farm, which had an issue with stormwater runoff due to Liberty Hall next door. He said that however, their site would divert water away from the affected area, so there would be no impact on their development.

Mr. Shimp said that he would like to point out that the surrounding neighborhoods consisted of a mix of single-family homes and multifamily units, including Clover Farm. He said that they would notice that Sparrow Hill, which was developed as a by-right R-1 project years ago, had units that were not built to what was recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. He said that he had provided a map that showed the prior land use plan, which did not change what was in AC44. He said that however, around here, they had a mix of single-family homes and multifamily units, so the 119 units did not include their additional units. He said that currently, the site was zoned for 2.26 units per acre, but with their project, it would be 16 more, considering the two houses already built there.

Mr. Shimp said that this area would meet the Comprehensive Plan's recommended density with the full build-out of their project. He said that it was essential to consider this site within the context of the entire area. He said that if they were developing this project from scratch, they would likely advocate for higher density in this location, given the opportunity to achieve a reasonable mix of units. He said that the concept plan, which originated from their February meeting, initially

proposed a different approach. He said that however, during discussions, questions arose about the path's accessibility, particularly for strollers. He said that these questions led them to reevaluate their design and collaborate with County staff on alternative options.

Mr. Shimp said that one potential solution they considered was creating a vehicular connection in the future, contingent on the redevelopment of the 330 parcel. He said that although the grades would permit a connection, they ultimately decided to focus on a different approach. He said that the new concept plan addressed public connectivity by incorporating a shared-use path that ran through the middle of the site. He said that this path would be paved and suitable for both pedestrians and bicycles. He said that he believed this design addressed the site's connectivity issues and provided a more comprehensive solution. He said that the reality was that vehicular connectivity in this area was already relatively good, and their focus was on creating a better pedestrian connection between the two neighborhoods.

Mr. Shimp said that they had incorporated green space around the path and designated a buildable zone, while also locking in the amenity area. He said that there was a reduced number of units in this area and additional amenity space had been added. He said that this design was a response to the questions raised previously. He said that the connectivity map provided a broader view of the situation. He said that essentially, the shared use path connected the existing neighborhood directly to these businesses without the need to walk along the side of Route 250. He said that the future of vehicular connection would come through this neighborhood.

Mr. Shimp said that when discussing this with staff and examining their own situation, they determined this was more beneficial to everyone involved. He said that they had addressed the housing proffer questions and other technical items to ensure everything was complete for this hearing. He said that he was aware that not everyone may be satisfied with this layout, especially considering it was an infill project that involved developing around existing residents. He said that he understood and respected that this may cause inconvenience to them.

Mr. Shimp said that however, when viewed from a broader perspective, they must increase density to achieve more diverse housing types and affordable units. He said that this project was built out as 18 units, including four affordable units priced at approximately $260,000 each. He said that these units were deeply affordable and would not exist without a project like this. He said that given these reasons, he believed they had addressed the principal concerns regarding connectivity. He said that he believed this was an excellent infill project and would like to see it move forward.

Ms. Firehock said that Mr. Shimp had stated they had doubled the setback for the border with property number 330. She asked how much it was originally and what the setback was now.

Mr. Shimp said that it went from 5 feet to 10 feet. He said that the tightest point was on the north side, which was 10 feet.

Ms. Firehock said that the last time Mr. Shimp was here, they had explored the idea of moving some of the density to the southern part of this development. She said that the conceptual design, although not officially proffered, showed townhouses concentrated to the north and lower density to the south. She asked what the reason was for placing the townhouses in the northern part.

Mr. Shimp said that there were a couple of reasons. He said that first, the shared use path would be coming through. He said that he was hopeful that they could secure a reduced street section

with a shoulder, sheet flow, and stormwater components that went beyond just curb and gutter. He said that there was a space constraint in this area, where they had only 35 feet of frontage on the public road. He said that this limited their options for incorporating the shared use path and road in this zone. He said that he thought the current layout worked well for townhomes on the side, but when the path was constructed, they may be able to flip the configuration. He said that while they had not proffered a specific layout, they did envision that a higher-density townhome product would be more suitable on the north side.

Ms. Firehock said that she had a question regarding the trees. She said that they had received numerous comments about the eight-foot public paved path and the existing large maples, as well as other species. She said that some people had expressed concerns about a specific species, such as an invasive pear tree. She said that she was curious whether they had they considered addressing these comments in their design. She said that she was aware that there were design options available, such as curving trails around trees or creating ramps to navigate over roots, which would allow for trails to be built adjacent to trees without necessitating their removal. She said that she was aware that the applicant had reviewed the comments that were submitted regarding this issue.

Mr. Shimp said that some of the trees in question appeared to be outside of the desired building area. He said that he appreciated that one of the nice aspects of this location was its flat terrain, which allowed for minimal grading when building a path. He said that that was part of why he liked the idea of a path in this smaller private street - they would not need to dig up the ground for storm sewer pipes and other infrastructure, which would be beneficial in preserving the trees. He said that the site planning calculations highlighted the importance of preserving trees, and he agreed some of them were very nice while some would need to be removed.

Mr. Shimp said that he believed that this design provided more flexibility to preserve trees compared to building a public street through here, which would require grading and installing curb gutters and sidewalks. He said that that would limit their design options. He said that to answer the question, they had not yet surveyed the trees. He said that if a tree was deemed worthy of preservation and could be kept, they would like to do so. He said that the value of a house was often increased by having nice landscaping, and losing a tree would not only be unnecessary but also result in lost aesthetic appeal and potential credit under their landscaping ordinance.

Ms. Brown said that she was also wondering why there were not more homes in the southwest area of the property, but she understood the issue of lack of access. She asked if there was an opportunity to negotiate use of the private easement to increase density in the lower corner. She said that from the comments received, it sounded like this massing in the north portion was disturbing to neighbors. She said that she was wondering if there may be some form of trade-off to put more of the density toward the southern end of the site.

Mr. Shimp said that any adjustments would require the neighbors' agreement, which they would not be obligated to provide. He said that the road there was only 10 feet wide, and with development on both sides, it was already at its capacity under County Ordinance. He said that even if they had permission to proceed, they would need to widen the road. He said that this was why they were aiming to put a single house on the road, as it had historically been, and then add some construction on the adjacent property. He said that this approach did reduce density, resulting in a single house sitting on the road.

Mr. Shimp said that, however, there was no viable alternative to accessing the property without crossing the road, which could lead to people entering the driveway they should not be on. He said that originally, their layout had more units in this area, but the issue arose if the driveway crossed the road, which would have resulted in people entering the road, and the road was not suitable for that.

Mr. Brown said that her second question was regarding the trees. She said that the Tree Stewards had provided detailed information about the mature trees on site. She said that she believed that over time, these old trees played a significant role in the fabric of a community. She said that there were cedars that served as a hedgerow, and maples on the south portion that measured between 40 to 48 inches in diameter. She said that there was considerable ecological and economic value in preserving these trees. She said that in her opinion, they were also an integral part of the land's fabric. She said that although it may not be feasible to commit to preserving them at this stage, it was an important consideration when moving forward with the development.

Mr. Murray said that he did have questions regarding the private easement that ran through the middle and the pedestrian path. He asked if he could confirm whether they had secured the necessary rights to take the pedestrian path across the private easement in the middle.

Mr. Shimp said that his client had affirmed that they had the right to do so, but he could not speak with any authority to the legal aspects. He said that the land was owned by the same person, so they essentially had two easements crossing each other. He said that the proffer was written so that if the path were struck down in some way, they would be unable to build anything. He said that if it became such an issue, they would have to resubmit an application through the County process again to work out a solution. He said that they were not going through anyone else's property.

Mr. Murray said that he appreciated the clarification. He said that another point he would like to bring up was the stormwater pipe, which would capture some of the stormwater from the northern end of the property and transport it to the stormwater pond. He said that upon reviewing the map, he noticed a ravine and stormwater coming from both sides, including from the subject property and the existing side, which already had stormwater issues. He said that he wondered whether the stormwater pipe would primarily collect stormwater from his side, or whether it would also help alleviate some of the existing issues on the other side.

Mr. Shimp said that it would probably be to their side, and the reason for this was that they needed to generally honor the existing watersheds. He said that currently, the water flowed in that direction. He said that they had proposed taking a portion of it and relocating it to the other side. He said that he was not certain of the exact numbers, but some water would still flow in the original direction. He said that he believed they could not take all the water from the neighboring property and relocate it to the Cory Farm side, as this would create problems in that area. He said that by taking the water off their side, they would mitigate the issue. He said that they would not be taking water from the existing neighborhood, as that would be a problem for them to address. He said that the County had a department that handled stormwater issues, and it would be something they would not be able to address easily or perhaps should not at all.

Mr. Murray said that that was just one aspect because of the ravine present there and he was unsure about how the pipe and capture system would be laid out. He said that he understood the work that had been done with staff on that matter.

Mr. Moore said that he would like to offer a few comments regarding this proposal, which he had the opportunity to review after seeing it in February, along with his fellow Commissioners. He said that he did see some improvements in this proposal. He said that he appreciated the development of parcels within the Development Area, including challenging sites such as this one with its unique shape and terrain. He said that this approach aligned with the concerns of various groups, including the Piedmont Environmental Council, Livable Cville, and the Free Enterprise Forum, who had consistently advocated for concentrating new homes within the development area.

Mr. Moore said that he appreciated that this proposal was in conformance with the Albemarle Housing Policy, and also the improved connectivity with paths and the preliminary layout, which suggested a more thoughtful approach. He said that overall, he thought this was a step in the right direction. He said that this was a general question, but he was wondering why builders often cut down existing trees during the construction of housing projects like this, only to plant new ones afterwards.

Mr. Shimp said that a common reason was that it was challenging to save large trees. He said that to avoid harming them, one had to stay far away, but even then, there was a risk that the tree may still die and fall on someone's house. He said that this risk was a significant deterrent for developers. He said that many developments in the area required more extensive grading, which was costly and time-consuming. He said that by the time all the necessary permits were obtained and the site met Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) standards, it was often necessary to work the land extensively. He said that one of the things he had always appreciated about this site, particularly the south side, was that it allowed for a relatively straightforward road construction process.

Mr. Shimp said that he could build a road on top of the existing dirt without having to dig up 10 feet or disturb the trees. He said that this was unusual in Albemarle County, where many sites had been developed to the point where it was no longer feasible. He said that as a result, the remaining sites in the Development Area had not been developed for a reason. He said that to meet the regulations, fire codes, and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) standards, developers often had to find ways to work around the existing landscape, which could be difficult. He said that even with careful planning, it was often impossible to avoid harming trees entirely. He said that he preferred to save large trees whenever possible, but it was not always possible to find sites with a light footprint. He said that the south side of this site was one of the few areas where this approach could be successfully implemented.

Mr. Moore said that he was wondering generally how his team evaluated whether a site plan could preserve certain trees when assessing existing conditions and mapping out site plans.

Mr. Shimp said that at any site they considered, they needed to tie into the existing road, and the grade of the site often dictated how they proceeded. He said that then, they had the client's specific requirements, such as the desired size of the unit. He said that they fit that into the context of the zoning map. He said that as a result, they looked for opportunities to preserve open space, such as a 25% area that needed to be kept intact. He said that they sought out the best trees to surround that space as part of the development.

Mr. Shimp said that, however, it was often a consideration that the constraints he had to work with were significant. He said that they aimed to get as close as possible to the allowed density, while

being creative about where they could save space. He said that unfortunately, most projects they worked on were challenging to build on, which was why it was not often done.

Mr. Clayborne said that he certainly thought this application was an improvement from what was presented in February. He asked for confirmation that the applicant found it unfeasible to move some of the density from the northern to the southern portion.

Mr. Shimp said that density was typically a result of the size of units they had. He said that they could put a collection of townhomes in that area, but keeping a lighter footprint on the south side of the property seemed like it would yield a better footprint overall. He said that when they finalized the dimensions of everything, they may be able to shift some things around. He said that as a rule, they would have no more than 11 units on this side. He said that he felt the best development would have the townhomes on the northern side.

Mr. Clayborne said that that was a fair response. He said that they were butting up against the existing neighborhood, which was situated about 10 feet higher. He asked if they had considered shifting that section farther away so there would be a larger buffer between the neighborhoods.

Mr. Shimp said that yes, buffers and other elements could be increased to achieve a balance. He said that they were striving to find a reasonable compromise. He said that currently, the by-right setback was five feet. He said that it would be atypical to have a big offset in a residential zone. He said that they aimed to increase the setback enough to allow for a meaningful landscape strip between the units. He said that if the setbacks were pushed out too far, it could make developing those units more difficult. He said that this could result in losing a townhome unit, which meant less people could live here. He said that they had considered doubling the setback as a reasonable approach, as it provided enough room for landscaping while also being mindful of the trade-offs involved.

Mr. Clayborne said that this situation meant that the design of the rear of the units would be important because those back porches would be facing other homes.

Mr. Shimp said that he believed there would always be this type of conflict with infill developments. He said that this was a standard setback for all residential zoning districts, which the neighboring development was built with as well.

Mr. Clayborne said that he saw this as an opportunity for the applicant to creatively design the back of the buildings here in order to respect the existing units at the top of the hill.

Mr. Shimp said that it was a fair point.

Mr. Clayborne asked if there would be any lighting along the paths on the site.

Mr. Shimp said that they were not planning on it, no.

Ms. Brown asked if this development would be considered part of Cory Farm. She asked if it would be part of the same homeowner's association (HOA).

Mr. Shimp said no, it was a separate development. He said that it had no connection to the HOA.

Mr. Carrazana said that he also wanted to address some of the comments the Commission had brought up previously. He said that he was not saying that all concerns had been alleviated, but he appreciated the way Mr. Shimp had addressed them. He said that he would like to ask a few more questions, particularly regarding stormwater management. He said that one aspect that was missing from the previous application was the stormwater management plan. He asked if Mr. Shimp could elaborate on the limitations and whether they could make some improvement to the system. He said that currently, all of the runoff was going to that drainage area on the adjacent property.

Mr. Shimp said that based on the current regulations, they must leave the condition better off than where they started from. He said that neighborhoods suffered from erosion problems due to the pre-2014 stormwater regulations of the County. He said that if they were to increase development, they might need to decrease the base storm, a one-year frequency storm, by a factor of five. He said that this would result in a flow rate decrease by a factor of five. He said that although the total volume of water might increase, it would be released over a long period, reducing velocities in the channels. He said that this allowed vegetation to reestablish.

Mr. Shimp said that in their specific circumstances, the townhomes would result in too much to discharge here. He said that they would not be allowed to take that water and direct it this way. He said that instead, they would need to collect it, pipe it over here, and create a larger requirement on this side. He said that diverting the water from one watershed to the other would cause the math to work against him, requiring further reductions in flow rate and larger ponds. He said that at some point, the numbers became difficult to match. He said that these were not zoning rules; they were stormwater regulations. He said that the water could not be discharged directly into the neighbors' direction. He said that the plan would never be approved without a collection point here or extensive stormwater management here. He said that given the tight space, they would need to discharge the water over there.

Mr. Carrazana said that his limitations, essentially, were determined by the size of the pond in the area. He said that there appeared to be some capacity available, as indicated.

Mr. Shimp said that yes, and the area that formerly drained in this direction would be diverted from their site. He said that he could not commit to solving the runoff that occurred off-site. He said that it would be difficult to do and could potentially create other problems. He said that the regulations were written to ensure the stormwater management would be better than before the development occurred.

Mr. Carrazana said that he observed an improvement in this plan, which was that they had created some additional opportunities. He said that they had avoided pre-describing the specifics, which he appreciated. He said that for example, they had identified 14 potential locations on the north side, which, when combined with the four on the south side, brought the total to 18. He said that he had moved some of them to the southern end for a total of 11 in that section. He said that he believed there were still some opportunities, particularly as they had noted the potential for mature trees to be incorporated into the development.

Mr. Carrazana said that it was important to consider how to design the path on the north side of the south parcel. He said that while the current maximum of 11 seemed high, he encouraged them to engage in further dialogue with the neighbors to better understand the opportunities and challenges presented by the trees. He also suggested exploring ways to maximize the benefits of

these mature trees. He said that through the site plan process, he hoped there would be further opportunities for refinement and improvement. He also encouraged continued dialogue with the neighbors to ensure that everyone's concerns were addressed.

Mr. Murray said that regarding the north-south shared use path and the public area there, he would like to know how the property line would be clearly delineated so people did not trespass from the public path onto private property. He said that he would like to know if there would be any visible indicators or markings to show where the public area ended and the private property began.

Mr. Shimp said that trees marked the fence line, which should clearly indicate the boundary. He said that however, they could consider fencing or a hedgerow along that property line.

Mr. Carrazana opened the public hearing. He read the rules of procedure for public comment.

Nadia Anderson, White Hall District, said that as a resident of Liberty Hall, one of their most serious concerns remained stormwater management, particularly with regard to the part of the site that sat directly above their neighborhood. She said that the applicant was proposing to place buildings on a slope that already drained towards their neighborhood. She said that the grading plan indicated that runoff would continue to move downhill toward Liberty Hall, as shown on the map. She said that the applicant had provided limited downstream analysis, modeling, and demonstration that peak flows and volumes would not increase at their property line.

Ms. Anderson said that they had discussed this earlier today, but it was essential to remember that water did not discriminate. She said that when they placed dense, attached units and paved surfaces directly above an existing neighborhood on a slope without adequate engineering to provide safety, they were essentially asking that neighborhood to absorb the risk. She said that she reiterated what she had said at the last meeting. She said that this design failed to meet the Crozet Master Plan's requirement that infill be compatible in scale and design with existing neighborhood fabric. She said that Liberty Hall was a mix of single-family and townhome structures, but the applicant was still proposing 11 attached units in the northern block, pushed right up against their backyards with no meaningful buffer, except for a 10-foot strip.

Ms. Anderson said that there was no step down, no transition, and no attempt to soften the edge. She said that this was the opposite of compatibility. She said that what she wanted to bring up today that the Commissioners had directed the applicant to go back to the drawing board and request a real redesign. She said that what she saw were administrative edits, not a revised plan. She said that the density, building zones, and adjacency issues remained unchanged. She said that the stormwater risks were still unchanged. She said that from her perspective, the applicant had not responded to the Commissioners' direction to reduce the intensity or improve compatibility.

Ms. Anderson said that she supported infill and housing, but they could not support a plan that placed dense buildings directly above an existing neighborhood on a slope, provided no engineering to ensure downstream safety, ignored the Master Plan's compatibility standards, and disregarded the commission's clear requests for meaningful redesign. She said that she respectfully asked that the Commissioners require a true revision, one that reduced density, provided real buffers, and protected the community from stormwater and adjacency impacts.

Paul Sheeran, White Hall District, said that he was a resident of Liberty Hall and director of R&D at a local medical technology company, and he had two children who attended Brownsville Elementary in the area. He said that one of the factors that drew them to the area was the quality of the neighborhoods and the quality of the neighbors. He said that this had held true over the three years they had lived there. He said that he resided at 335 Patriot, one of the houses directly behind this row of townhomes that they had discussed previously. He said that when they moved in, they did not expect the wooded lot behind them to remain unchanged forever; they anticipated that they would eventually have great neighbors across the fence at some point. He said that his children were looking forward to that.

Mr. Sheeran said that in general, they supported the idea of building in this area, increasing the housing stock, and making it affordable. He said that the primary issue he would like to discuss was the design. He said that although it was a conceptual design, he believed that this layout was problematic, and he hoped that it would be revised. He said that this was what he would like to discuss today. He said that in particular, because this land was not easy to build on, and there was a stormwater management pond approximately three-quarters of an acre in size, it forced the density into one section. He said that the developer wanted to preserve this density to maximize profit, which was understandable.

Mr. Sheeran said that the current layout posed challenges, particularly because it directed foot traffic in unanticipated ways. He said that if one imagined themselves in this conceptual chart, standing in front of this row of houses, having just moved in, and wanting to access the footpath, it appeared very appealing, and one would likely follow the contour across someone's lawn to reach it. He said that the proposal before the Commission had some great amendments in terms of addressing reductions. He said that on paper, it was an 8% reduction of one unit, they moved things around, but the flow was still problematic.

Mr. Sheeran said that some houses did not block foot traffic south, and instead, they encouraged it to flow across neighborhood lawns. He said that forcing people to go around another building to reach the desired path was not a functional design. He said that on paper, there were meaningful changes, but they were not functional changes. He said that they met the requirement, but it was not a functional change. He said that he supported growing this area, putting houses in, and allowing for some great neighbors, but there should be meaningful, functional changes that would result in a design that was both thoughtfully planned and functional for foot traffic, rather than just meeting the requirements on paper.

Amanda Young, White Hall District, said that she was a longtime resident of Cory Farm. She said that as a neighbor who knew the area well, including the streets and pedestrian patterns, she would like to elaborate on that subject as well as several property owners who would be directly impacted. She said that the layout of the proposed development was the main issue, and she believed this was a concern for many of them. She said that the site did not function naturally as a cohesive neighborhood, with the awkward arrangement of townhomes at the top and single-family homes at the bottom. She said that this layout would likely cause awkward foot traffic, as Mr. Sheeran mentioned.

Ms. Young said that at the last meeting, the Commission asked for revisions to address this issue, but the public path was only partially improved, and no meaningful changes were made to ensure safe crossing. She said that she appreciated the questions posed by the Commission and the public, particularly regarding how people will distinguish between private and public property. She

said that she believed this was a critical design consideration. She said that in a nearby area, a previous property owner removed trespassing signs and installed physical barriers, yet people still found ways to cut across to reach the sidewalk on Route 250. She said that this lack of deterrence suggested that even with obstacles, people would find ways to navigate the area. She said that this was a design signal that the Commission should take seriously.

Ms. Young said that the proposed path may be present, but it was unlikely to be used frequently, and she worried about the impact on residents living in the townhomes. She said that she wondered if the residents in the townhomes would take the long, windy path to reach the sidewalk. She said that she thought the claim of six units per acre was great, but she questioned the feasibility, given the significant portion of the property dedicated to the stormwater drain and the proposed path. She said that she was concerned about the mature trees, and she appreciated the depth of discussion on that topic. She said that she would like to emphasize the importance of preserving the character of the area and ensuring that as many of these trees are preserved as possible. She said that she would request that the Commission consider including proffers to maintain these trees and other mature landscaping. She said that this was pivotal for this type of development.

Mark Esplin, White Hall District, said that he lived in Cory Farm. He said that he had submitted a counterproposal to the Commission, proposing an R-3 zoning. He said that he had submitted this counterproposal because, as neighbors, they believed it would be more suitable and blend in with the existing R-1 and R-6 zoning around Liberty Hall and Cory Farm. He said that the sketch he had attached was created by a layperson, as he was a chemical engineer with expertise in vaccine purification and protein separation, not a professional urban planner. He said that he understood that adjustments would be necessary, but the layout they had proposed had a lot of benefits noted when talking with the neighborhood. He said that they were all supportive of creation of more housing and more affordable housing in the area.

Mr. Esplin said that some of the key advantages included the preservation of mature trees on the south side, private driveways instead of private roads and the associated requirements. He said that this proposal would provide opportunities for setback and buffering with existing neighbors, more green space for residents and children, reduced light and noise disruption to the neighbors, and reduced traffic. He said that the proposal also included a single unit facing Patriot Way, rather than six, and it would decrease the likelihood of foot traffic across the existing property on 330. He said that he wanted to reiterate that this was created by a layperson, but it represented a potential solution that could facilitate a smoother transition from the Cory Farm to the new neighborhood and address some of the difficulties present in the current design. He said that as a neighborhood, they were open to infill development and welcomed new neighbors when they arrived.

Steve Walsworth, White Hall District, said that he had lived in the Cory Farm neighborhood for 23 years. He said that he had a great mentor who was an Air Force general. He said that he was a dynamic and go-getter, and he had learned from him that one could only achieve the standards that one set for oneself. He said that he had tried to live by those words, and they had done him well. He said that however, he did not see the same level of excellence in this plan. He said that the infill property was highly valuable, and it deserved to be treated with an excellent standard. He said that unfortunately, he did not see that standard being met. He said that they still had the same concerns that they had at the February 10 meeting. He said that despite some tweaking, he did not think the fundamental problems had been addressed.

Mr. Walsworth said that the diagram showed 11 units on the north side, which was equivalent to an R-12 zoning arrangement. He said that on the bottom, it was R-6, but that was the only positive aspect. He said that neighbors were not opposed to the development of the infill, but it needed to be done with quality standards. He said that there was no context or flow. He said that Sparrow Hill, Cory Farm, and the 330 house all flowed well together with Liberty Hall, but this high-density area on the north side would not. He said that they still had issues with parking, overflow parking on the north side, which would lead to cars parking on Cory Farm Road or in the Cory Farm neighborhood, not fair to those residents.

Mr. Walsworth said that the HOA would also be responsible for repairing and replacing private roads, driveways, and the trail, which would add to their costs. He said that the stormwater system was another concern, and he was not sure how viable it was. He said that he thought they still had the same problems they had before, just on a different day.

Julianne Price, White Hall District, said that she lived at 330 Windy Knoll Lane with her family. She said that to clarify, their property was not for sale, so to the extent that the plan considered roads through their parcel, it should be irrelevant to the current rezoning. She said that as a bedside nurse at University of Virginia (UVA) Hospital, where they valued protocols, guidelines, and master plans, she knew that sometimes an unusual case would require individualized needs. She said that doctors, those making high-level decisions, relied on their staff to assess conditions and implement protocols. She said that in this situation, she felt the community members were similar to bedside nurses. She said that their assessment was that this was one of those rare situations where the guidelines cannot meet the community's and the land's needs.

Ms. Price said that they must deviate from routine care to provide the right care. She said that it had been over a year since the original zoning map amendment (ZMA) was submitted, and there had been at least five official versions, with several other unofficial ones. She said that the latest proffer still referenced an outdated concept plan from April 22, rather than the revised plan from May 13. She said that despite the applicant's attempts to reconfigure the plan, it remained problematic for the reasons that have been heard tonight. She said that the issue persisted because it was not suitable for these three parcels. She said that the applicant lacked the legal authority to build a proposed pedestrian and bike path across their private easement.

Ms. Price said that the applicant's plan was an impermissible expansion of a private right of ingress and egress. She said that their understanding was that a crossing of the easement by a public recreational path with connectivity to existing public streets and a future major road would be an unreasonable interference that overburdens the easement, conflicting with Virginia Code 55.1-305. She said that furthermore, it was outside the scope of the original intent of the 1960 easement, its subsequent deeds, and recorded agreements. She said that she thought it was prudent for the Commission to consider this proposal both with and without the guarantee of a connecting path from Colony Drive to Cory Farm Road. She said that as someone who had lived on this land and knew these four formerly family acres, one or two dwelling units per acre was the most suitable for this unusual parcel, given its many constraints.

Ms. Price said that she was unsure how to create a cohesive neighborhood from a sloping C-shaped parcel with someone else's property in the middle, or how a tiny HOA could maintain three private entrances and exits, a public path, a stormwater pond that would overflow onto Eastern Avenue, and a stone path in a meadow where nature had the upper hand. She said that she understood the importance of the importance of the Master Plan, a limited growth area, and

desirable walking amenities. She said that the neighbors could support a well-designed proposal with three dwelling units per acre, one that adequately addressed these problems in a thoughtful, respectful, and meaningful way.

Taryn Price, White Hall District, 330 Windy Knoll Lane, said that they had not discussed affordable housing yet, so she would like to bring it up. She said that several speakers before her had emphasized that this property was unusual, and it was extremely difficult to fit 18 units onto it. She said that they should stop trying to make it 18 units. She said that affordable housing was a great goal, but this did not make a significant difference in the grand scheme. She said that reducing the number of units could still provide some affordable housing; they would only lose one or two units. She said that pushing to get those extra two affordable units did not seem worthwhile when considering all the other constraints and issues it caused.

Ms. Price said that today, she went on a walk with a coworker who had lived in Avinity, and she shared her frustration with the lack of space for parking and green areas, which led to constant parking issues. She said that they eventually moved to a new place due to that frustration. She said she recalled visiting her and sitting in a cul-de-sac on lawn chairs, as there was no other space to go. She said that if they were to build 18 units in this area, it would be a significant issue for current neighbors, but it would also not provide the best living experience for future residents of the development. She said that they had repeatedly mentioned this was a concept plan, and there could be 11 units on the south side. She said that she did not see how that would be feasible, given their limitations on widening Windy Knoll and the road to Colony Drive. She said that the only way was to add units on the north side, which did not seem feasible.

Ms. Price said that she would also like to address the parking concerns. She said that the thought of a road running through her property was wildly uncomfortable. She was not sure if this was a normal scenario, but she asked the Commissioners to think about how it felt to attend a Planning Commission meeting and watch someone draw a road through their home. She said that they did not plan on selling their property anytime soon, and she hoped to live out the rest of her life in that house.

Lori Schweller, White Hall District, said that her property was on lot 7 of Cory Farm, adjacent to the property to the south. She said that her neighbors and she were not here to oppose the development, but they could not support this plan. She said that she understood the County's need for housing and supported that goal. She said that the applicant proposed 18 homes on approximately two usable acres, with the third acre steep slopes, stormwater management, and the existing home. She said that this resulted in nine units per acre, packed tightly between existing single-family homes with no buffers, sidewalks, or street connections that formed a coherent neighborhood. She said that the applicant requested waivers of the sidewalk and planting strip requirements due to the lack of space.

Ms. Schweller said that the stated justification that eliminating sidewalks allowed for more green space was difficult to reconcile with the near absence of usable green space within the project. She asked that this be considered. She said that the applicant's own site constraints, rather than any exercise of planning judgment, were the primary check on density here. She said that access problems from all three directions were the sole reason this project was not more crowded. She said that this was not planning; it was a developer maximizing units until the site physically stopped them. She said that Windy Knoll could provide access for only three homes: the existing

home west of Windy Knoll, 330 Windy Knoll, and one home east of Windy Knoll in the south building zone.

Ms. Schweller said that there was no room for a public street, nor a private street. She said that furthermore, a private street developed to County standards could not be supported by a few homes. She said that a rezoning to R-4 at three dwelling units per acre, nine homes, would be more suitable. She said that her neighbors had expressed acceptance of this level of density. She said that to conclude, she would like to speak in defense of the trees. She said that two old-growth maple trees stood on the southern boundary of the subject property, having shaded the Herring family homes for generations. She said that the applicant had offered no proffer to preserve them, citing that preserving them would constrain density.

Ms. Schweller said that these trees were non-renewable and could not be replaced in theirs or their children's lifetimes. She said that they provided shade, comfort, and a sense of calm to the neighborhood. She said that the cost of saving them was small, but their loss was permanent. She asked that the Commission recommend denial of the application and guide the applicant toward a proposal that this community could welcome.

Feng Guo, White Hall District, said that she lived in Liberty Hall. She said that after reviewing the revised concept plan for the May 26, 2026, she had several serious concerns about this proposed new housing development. She said that her first concern was that many residents in Liberty Hall or Cory Farm already faced a stormwater issue. She said that her second concern was that the proposed south side zone and the overall density, even with the revised layout. She said that she was also concerned about the parking space in the northern townhome area. She said that she did not think the applicant had thoroughly considered the future parking issues at that northern section. She said that regarding the trees, she truly believed that either the developer or the builder needed to plant more trees as a buffer between the properties, which would also benefit the buyers of the townhomes.

Kate O'Neill, White Hall District, said that she was a resident of Cory Farm and an alumnus of Western Albemarle High School. She said that from her backyard, she could see Cory Farm Road. She said that it was worth noting that this road was intentionally designated as a safe area for children to ride their bikes, as it was the safest road. She said that currently, there were approximately three homes with cars coming and going. She said that she found it difficult to imagine the impact on the traffic system that would result from 18 residences coming and going on Cory Farm Road. She said that many children in the area are unaware of the development's progress or discussions surrounding it. She said that as parents, they would naturally watch out for them and teach them how to navigate the situation. She said that however, describing the proposed development as consistent with what currently exists was wildly inaccurate. She requested the Commission to reconsider the development and underscore the points made by the neighbors who spoke today.

Jason Krumah, White Hall District, said that Commissioner Brown asked a question about the southwest area, which was adjacent to his back yard. He said that that property already had a developed home, and some of the giant red maples were located on the side of that home. He said that he would greatly appreciate it if someone could live in that house, particularly to maintain those trees. He said that he missed having a neighbor in that area. He said that he was not opposed to having new neighbors and developing the area. He said that he was also present at

the February meeting, and he would like to reiterate two concerns that the Commission raised, which he had not seen adequately addressed in the concept plan.

Mr. Krumah said that firstly, the proposed R-6 designation only technically met the requirements, but the actual densities in the area, particularly in the top section, did not meet the R-6 standard. He said that this was a matter of semantics, rather than substance. He said that secondly, he was concerned about the access points for pedestrians walking across neighboring properties, particularly at 330 Windy Knoll. He said that the updated concept plan did not provide a clear solution to prevent this, and even shifting the houses to block access through their yards was not considered. He said that he believed this would be a neighborly and acceptable solution. He said that the old concept of putting a road through the area had opened his eyes to the possibility that the applicant may be expecting to acquire that property in the future. He said that however, he believed it was possible to redesign the concept to respect the neighbors in this regard.

Michael Crenshaw, White Hall District, said that he was a resident of Crozet. Housing is a fundamental human right, and Albemarle County had failed to guarantee that right. He said that 61% of the people who worked in Albemarle County commute from elsewhere, and those who worked here cannot afford to live here. He said that he often joked that he could gauge the affordability of Crozet by whether he got to know a barista's name before they moved to Waynesboro. He said that one of those workers who relocated now commuted into Crozet, and his partner commuted into the City to teach. He said that between them, that was an additional 260 hours spent a year commuting, not to mention the cost of gas and the wear and tear on their vehicles. He said that he previously spoke in favor of additional manufactured homes at Beaver Hill, which was rejected due to concerns about impacting the water supply.

Mr. Crenshaw said that the Water Authority claimed that they had sufficient water; what workers lacked was affordable housing. He said that if they were to prevent the construction of affordable homes adjacent to the development area, the least they could do was allow infill construction within the development area. He said that even with these new units, the general area's density would remain below the minimum called for by the Crozet Master Plan. He said that this proposal represented a significant opportunity for the county to provide more people access to one of Crozet's three main activity centers. He said that the new homes would be within a few hundred feet of five restaurants, a grocery store, and numerous other businesses. He said that he commuted by car to the seafood store and would have loved to take a bike path there instead.

Mr. Crenshaw said that he was especially excited that the revised proposal included a public easement. He said that when the Eastern Avenue connection was completed, that path would provide a safe bike and pedestrian access to the commercial center for thousands of residents. He said that currently, many residents could only access the area by car or were unable to access it due to age or mobility issues. He said that he believed that this proposal may represent the last likely opportunity to provide a safe bike route that did not force bikers onto 250. He said that given the recent closures of private paths in Crozet, it was essential that this path be public. He said that he was very excited that it had been proposed.

Mr. Crenshaw said that this Albemarle County could and should be a place where people could work, live, and make their home, but for many, this County was just a place to drive into, work, and leave. He said that infill housing within the Development Area was one way they could start to fulfill their obligation to the workers of Albemarle County. He said that as he spoke, many of their community members were wrapping up their workday and heading home to the surrounding

counties. He said that he urged the Commission to vote for this proposal so that a few more of their County's workers might also one day be their neighbors.

Constance Wenger, White Hall District, said that she lived in Cory Farm. She said that her concern lay with the C-part of this plan. She said that they had the northern and southern sections, and it appeared that the northern section featured a retention pond, which currently had a damp spot. She said that the pond's existence would eliminate several trees. She said that another concern was where the water from the retention pond would flow. She said that she was concerned that the Eastern extension, when completed, would feature a significantly wider road than what was currently shown on the maps.

Rashmi Ghei, White Hall District, said that she had some questions and concerns about the proposed Windy Knoll development. She said that her first question was how this development would impact the stormwater management and capacity for the Eastern Avenue connector. She said that given the site's topography, she was also concerned that the dirt path would become flooded during rainfall. She said that she had lived in a townhome community, and she found that guest parking was severely limited. She said that this often led to tension among neighbors and made it difficult and stressful to host guests, particularly for households with more than two cars. She believed that there must be ample parking available. She said that she was also interested in how much the houses would cost if one did not qualify for affordable housing. She said that furthermore, many people in Crozet commuted to Cville, which was not unique to the state or the country.

Ms. Ghei said that finally, Crozet was mostly left with infill development to approve, and the County needed to account for the cumulative effect those developments would have on school capacity when reviewing applications for upzoning properties. She said that more families were purchasing townhomes and multifamily housing units, so the school calculation needed to be accurate. She said that Western Albemarle High School would be adding eight more trailers next year, and even one or two more students would create an outsized impact on the school system. She said that even with the opening of Center II, which was mentioned in the application, they would be over capacity at Western.

Mary Esplin, White Hall District, said that when they first moved into this neighborhood, she was pregnant and their backyard was great, as it was spacious and surrounded by trees. She said that soon after their son was born, they realized that they needed a fence due to the ease of access from Route 250 to their street, as well as to protect their son from the road. She said that when they built their fence, they discovered that behind the trees, there were numerous bottles there from people loitering and littering. She said that she raised this issue because she wanted to know how they would stop people from trespassing onto 330 Windy Knoll without a physical barrier. She said that she thought a fence on this property was necessary, but it may be expensive.

Mr. Carrazana asked if the applicant had a response to the comments from the public.

Mr. Shimp said that a concern was raised multiple times regarding trespassing across Windy Knoll to get to Route 250. He said that, however, this proposal would fix that issue because they would put a public path from Cory Farm to the public road. He said that while he was not dismissing the issue, it was more dependent on neighbors' behavior, and they should avoid trespassing and

obey property laws. He said that providing a legal path would provide an option that would hopefully alleviate that issue.

Mr. Shimp said that regarding the clustering and density of the property, they were building on two acres. He said that in a cluster provision, if they had three acres and were building on two, that was 33% open space, whereas the minimum was 25% open space. He said that it was normal to have that number of units in a development, and they did that almost all the time. He said that by leaving that large area as open space, they preserved a majority of the view of the yard of 330 Windy Knoll. He said that the open space they had retained was meaningful for the neighbors. He said that he understood they wanted more buffer, but if they dropped to R-3, it would be less in line with the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations for density with infill developments. He said that if they reduced the number to nine units, they could not support the infrastructure.

Mr. Shimp said that 18 was also the minimum that could make the affordable units work. He said that the by-right development would likely be three single-family homes with a price of over $1 million each. He said that this proposal was offering more housing opportunities as well as more affordability that would be absent otherwise. He said that if there were fewer units, they would build larger houses. He said that the numbers here allowed them to produce a higher number of affordable units in a way that was consistent with infill development.

Mr. Shimp said that regarding the concerns about drawing the road through the neighbor's property, he thought that it was not unusual to think about the future connection, and that was what they worked through with County staff. He said that the end result did not propose that connection; rather, they chose the public access shared use path. He said that the Planning Commission had identified that as a critical need, and the applicant agreed. He said that no one would find this layout perfect, but he thought this proposal offered a lot of unique positive aspects that should be highlighted, rather than focusing on the drawbacks. He said that another proposal for this particular property may offer less, due to the constraints of the topography. He said that he completely appreciated the concerns people had, but in order to develop a housing stock that supported a variety of incomes in the community, it had to be done this way.

Mr. Carrazana asked if Mr. Shimp could address the concerns regarding the parking on the north parcel needed to be addressed specifically. He said that the parcel was particularly tight, and if they were to reach the maximum 11 units, it was excessive.

Mr. Shimp said that those units would have two parking spaces on-site, meaning in a garage or dedicated spaces, and the County required one guest space per four parking spaces. He said that for the 11 units, there would be three guest spaces. He said that he would acknowledge that it made it tight. He said that however, they did not want to create excess parking, so balance was essential.

Mr. Clayborne asked how many conversations the applicant had with the community since the February 10 meeting.

Mr. Shimp said that he had participated in none, but he was unsure who his client had communicated with since then.

Mr. Carrazana closed the public hearing and the matter rested with the Commission.

Mr. Moore said that he wanted to provide some context for those who may not regularly attend Planning Commission meetings. He said that specifically, he would like to clarify a point that some individuals had suggested: that the proposed density of six homes per acre may not be accurate, as some of the homes were concentrated in just two sections. He said that to explain, the County had a long-standing practice of calculating the per-acre density based on the gross acreage. He said that even if a section was not easily buildable or was impossible to build on, it still counted as a full acre. He said that therefore, the proposed density of six homes per acre was based on the gross acreage, which included the entire three acres. He said that this was simply a matter of how the County calculated the density, and people could agree or disagree with it.

Mr. Clayborne said that he would like to start by acknowledging the positive aspects of the proposal, which he believed were an improvement over the previous version from February. He said that he would like to thank the applicant for their efforts in this regard. He said that he agreed that it was reasonable to develop the infill parcel and increase density beyond R-1. He said that he would not say whether R-6 was the right density or not, it should be developed with the understanding that the three parcels together should operate as a cohesive unit. He said that after listening to the community and re-examining the plans, he was still not convinced that the infill design solution and affordable housing requirements could be achieved without compromising the quality of life for neighboring residents.

Mr. Clayborne said that he would have preferred to see the density of units more concentrated on the southern side, as he had mentioned earlier. He said that the current layout still had units located in the north, and he had concerns about whether the design would respect its neighbors. He said that he was concerned about the potential for unattractive views, which could potentially consist of vinyl siding, trash cans, and HVAC units, which would be visible from neighboring backyards. He said that he was not confident that the current layout would be executed well, and he feared that it may not meet the standards he expected.

Mr. Clayborne said that this was not a criticism of the applicant, but rather a reflection of his experience with similar proposals. He said that he often saw designs that were overly simplistic and lacked attention to detail. He said that he would pause his comments here, but in sum, although the proposal was better, he still had concerns and was not yet convinced that it was the best option.

Ms. Firehock said that she completely agreed with Mr. Clayborne's comments. She said that in her opinion, the four-foot private stone dust path was not suitable for pedestrian and bicycle travel; it was more appropriate for a stroll or recreational walk. She said that she would like to see some of the development shift to the south. She said that the way the northern part was arranged, with tight townhouses right up against people's backyards, did not have to be the same density as the yards. She said that she understood that they had different mixes of townhouses and single-family homes, and they wanted to see that.

Ms. Firehock said that however, she believed this site would be better balanced or shifted more to the south. She said that it was a complex issue, and typically they did not get site design at this stage. She said that the developer would learn whether the density could be allowed and then do the site design. She said that she was satisfied that the stormwater could be handled through engineering to grade the land and drainage to the stormwater pond. She said that those currently suffering from the stormwater problems in the neighborhood likely would see some improvement

after this parcel was developed. She said that however, she was not convinced that they had received a substantively better design.

Ms. Firehock said that she appreciated the access they had proposed, and she thought the public pathway coming off Colony Drive was a good design. She said that she believed they could save a lot of the trees and potentially increase the likelihood of selling those properties. She said that however, the site was unbalanced in terms of what she would like to see in harmony with adjacent neighbors. She said that she appreciated the private access easement and private street off Colony Drive, but she was not convinced that more could not be done to increase density on the south and create more harmony with the adjacent neighbors.

Ms. Brown said that she agreed with many of the concerns and positive aspects that had already been shared. She said that looking at this area, which was somewhat tightly contained and lacked easy access, it was tricky. She said that she believed the proposed path was a good move that would be valuable in the long term for residents in adjacent neighborhoods. She said that as she considered the future, including the planned extension of Eastern Avenue, she thought change was inevitable. She said that while it may be a while before that happened, this area would likely undergo significant changes. She said that what currently felt awkward about accessing this development would likely become more sensible at that point.

Ms. Brown said that with that being said, it was still in the future, and none of these details had been fully figured out. She said that she believed there was potential to make this zoning work. She said that if they could increase density on the south side to match the density of the adjacent area, south of Colony Drive, it would seem like the most logical approach. She said that this would also provide space for parking. She said that where the density was increased near the ravine and 10 feet away from the back of those houses, she understood it may be meeting the regulation, but it was not sensible and was disregarding the impact on quality of life. She said that she viewed this as a puzzle to solve, and she would love to see it solved.

Ms. Brown said that she believed it was important to build density in their growth areas because they did not have enough. She said that this area was close to many amenities, and its walkability was a significant advantage. She said that once the Eastern Avenue connection was made to other neighborhoods, connectivity would improve. She said that she thought the key issues were density distribution with regard to the south side, and she would like to see a shift toward being more respectful of neighbors on Patriot Way. She said that she believed it was essential to develop a plan to protect the private properties from people cutting through, especially with a density at this level. She said that they should also create some type of proffer agreement for protecting the mature trees on the property.

Mr. Murray said that he agreed with the comments made by his colleagues, highlighting the public path and open space as positive attributes of this project. He said that one concern that was raised was the HOA maintenance, and he did have concerns about that in terms of affordability. He said that for instance, the large stormwater pipe that would carry stormwater a considerable distance to the stormwater pond could lead to maintenance concerns if it failed. He said that the private roads and other infrastructure posed access issues that were not typically found in other sites.

Mr. Murray said that he had supported lowering parking requirements in Development Areas because often there were access to public transportation, easy access points, sidewalks, and

other amenities that were lacking in this site. He said that protecting the private property nearby by delineating it in some way was also important. He said he agreed that it would be great to find a way to save those trees. He said that the current configuration of the units against the ravine was problematic, so if it was possible to solve that, and if they could move or increase density on the south side, that would be beneficial.

Mr. Murray said that it sounded like the community would support a lower density than what was being proposed, and he thought the Comp Plan provide a range for density was intended to acknowledge situations where the site could not accommodate the upper end, but the lower end would still provide a beneficial level of density.

Mr. Moore said that he appreciated the public comments from the 330 Windy Knoll residents, and he had the opportunity to review the photographs of the property which provided valuable insight into the site from various views. He said that when considering 11 townhomes being part of that view, he did not think it would be detrimental to their views or quality of life. He said that he also empathized with the concerns about the proposed road through the front yard, as he could understand why that would be unsettling. He said that he wanted to emphasize that the property owner had the right to decide how to use their land, as per Virginia's property rights laws, which applied to the neighbors as well as the subject property.

Mr. Moore said that this applicant had the right to request to build a denser development so long as it was meeting the County's regulations and priorities for development, including water management and modern construction techniques. He said that this should also include what the County had prioritized in terms of denser development and varieties of housing types. He said that what he was hearing from the neighbors was that they would welcome a few neighbors, just not townhomes. He said that what it meant in effect was that they only wanted larger, single-family homes that cost more and attracted people with high salaries.

Mr. Moore said that it was not the role or the priority of this Commission to prioritize those neighbor preferences for single-family homes over people who needed affordable housing, even if it was only a few units. He said that with so few parcels that were developable, and with so many imperfect proposals to develop those parcels that were rejected or reconsidered, they were never going to keep up with demand for housing. He said that they needed to take larger action, and market solutions alone would not solve the whole issue, but they could stabilize things. He said that outside solutions such as social housing, land trusts, and limited equity housing co-oops could solve the affordability issues on top of the larger supply. He said that at this point, however, they were not even addressing the need for a larger housing supply.

Mr. Moore said that this proposal had some oddities due to the terrain, he did not want to reject this addition to their housing supply. He said that he understood how the 330 Windy Knoll neighbors would be seriously affected by this development, but as planners for the County, this was a relatively modest step that he believed they needed to take.

Ms. Firehock said that she had no issue with the proposed density for the site. She said that she did have concerns about the arrangement. She said that some of them had communicated their recommendations to the developer, and the burden of the development was concentrated in one area, which was not topographically necessary. She said that she was thinking about how they could achieve equity for residents with backyards and density. She said that it was possible. She said that she wanted to push for more housing in the County, but she wanted it to be well-

designed. She said that if that meant a developer needed to revisit the project multiple times, she was willing to support that. She said that to reiterate, she had no problem with the density of this project.

Mr. Clayborne said that he felt compelled to speak up in response, not with the intention of changing Mr. Moore's mind, but to offer his perspective. He said that his stance was not a rejection of the plan due to the number of units, but rather he had concerns about the overall approach. He said that, similarly to what Ms. Firehock had mentioned, he could simply input the plan into an artificial intelligence (AI) system and generate the most units, but that did not account for the human element of design, which required context and consideration of the surrounding area.

Mr. Clayborne said that he appreciated the term "design equity,", as it highlighted the importance of thoughtful design. He said that he believed that with careful consideration, it was possible to find a design solution that did not feel exploitative or unfair to the existing residents. He said that the position that Mr. Moore was responding to was not his position whatsoever, and he did not recall the public ever stating that they wanted single-family, million-dollar homes, either. He said that what he heard was that the way it was thought about and designed did not satisfy what their desires were. He said that out of fairness; he thought it was important to clarify that.

Mr. Carrazana said that he agreed with Mr. Moore that the County needed to increase their housing density, and they had discussed this multiple times. He said that it was one of the foundational aspects of AC44: how they had left so much density on the table in their planning and development, and how they could make the most out of these remaining opportunities. He said that this was a development that had the opportunity to bring more density than the current R-1 zoning. He said that what he liked about the revised proposal was the flexibility of 11 units in the north or 11 units in the south; however, the one point that he found lacking was that there did not seem to be much dialogue with the neighbors.

Mr. Carrazana said that he thought one of the most important comments they had tried to impart was the communication with the neighbors. He said that the equity of design could only happen when there was dialogue between the parties. He said that this property owner had rights to develop their property, but they were trying to build a community here. He said that he would continue to encourage that communication, and because that did not happen, it made him less supportive. He said that what he liked about the proposal was the opportunity for dialogue to lead to real improvements. He said that he did not see the willingness at this point, and he hoped that changed. He said that this was a parcel that could have more density and provide affordable housing, so he hoped it could be improved.

Mr. Murray said that he agreed with Mr. Carrazana; he thought there had been a lost opportunity with regard to community dialogue. He said that before this, the community went to great lengths to organize a public meeting on this project and discuss their concerns, and all the applicant had to do was send a representative to the Crozet Community Association (CCA). He said that he also acknowledged the need for density here. He said that if there was a way to have more dialogue and achieve the density requested, he would support that.

Mr. Murray motioned that the Planning Commission recommend denial of ZMA-2025-00007 Windy Knoll for the lack of community dialogue, the layout of the project, stormwater management, and separation of property boundaries. Mr. Clayborne seconded the motion, which

carried (5-1). (Mr. Carrazana, Ms. Firehock, Mr. Clayborne, Mr. Murray, Ms. Brown voted aye; Mr. Moore voted nay; Ms. King was absent)

Mr. Murray motioned that the Planning Commission recommend indefinite deferral of ZMA-2025-00007 Windy Knoll and SUB-2025-00239 Sidewalk and Planting Strip Waiver Requests. Mr. Clayborne seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0). (Ms. King was absent)

Recess

The Commission took a five-minute recess.

Committee Reports

Mr. Moore said that he recently attended his first Land Use and Environmental Planning Committee (LUPEC) meeting. He said that the presentations were from the Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport (CHO). He said that they were actively pursuing a direct Boston flight, which would be a significant development if successful. He said that they were also exploring long-term plans to increase the airport's size and capacity, including a large construction project in the future, which would enable the use of larger planes. He said that currently, the airport's limited space between the runway and terminal restricted its growth.

Mr. Moore said that the meeting also included discussions and presentations from UVA Health System on transportation and parking, as well as strategic initiatives to encourage ridesharing and maintain a good parking environment. He said that furthermore, there was a presentation on the Three-Notch'd Trail shared use path, aiming to connect all the way to Afton Mountain. He said that preliminary ideas were shared on potential routes, including how the path might connect the City to Afton Mountain. He said that the plan was still in development, as Mr. McDermott informed him that it was not yet final. He said that preliminary lines were being drawn and maps were being created to determine where it might go and the actual implications for the property owners in that area.

Review of Board of Supervisors Meeting - May 20, 2026

Michael Barnes, Director of Planning, said that there were two public hearings held on May 20, 2026. He said that the first was one that was not reviewed by the Planning Commission, regarding Townwood Drive, on Hydraulic Road. He said that this area was a County-owned property, or more specifically, a right-of-way owned by the County. He said that the Service Authority was seeking to install drainage easements across it. He said that the other public hearing was staff's presentation of the Secondary Six-Year Plan (SSYP), which included the Unpaved Road Improvement Program (URIP). He said that the Board had a series of questions about those two projects, and staff would be returning in the future to provide additional clarity on how they prioritized paving and other improvements to rural roads.

New Business

There was none.

Old Business

There was none.

Items for follow-up

There were none.

Adjournment

At 8:40 p.m., the Commission adjourned to June 9, 2026, Albemarle County Planning Commission meeting, 6:00 p.m.

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: