



County of Albemarle
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING

MARGARET MALISZEWSKI
mmaliszewski@albemarle.org
434-296-5832 ext. 3276

MEMORANDUM

TO: Albemarle County Architectural Review Board
FROM: Mariah Gleason, Senior Planner II; Margaret Maliszewski, Planning Manager
RE: **Entrance Corridor Design Guidelines Addenda – Wooded buffers work session**
DATE: July 1, 2025

The ARB and staff initiated the Entrance Corridor Design Guidelines Addenda to address the gap in the current guidelines in which the unique characteristics of individual corridors are not recognized, and to provide better direction on how the guidelines are applied along the various corridors. Following the ARB's last discussion in August 2024, when the final corridor segment sheets were drafted, remaining work on the Addenda includes general editing by staff and guidance from the ARB on a few specific topics, one of which is wooded buffers. The topic of wooded buffers is planned for discussion at the July 7th ARB meeting, with the remaining topics to be scheduled for future meetings.

The topic of wooded buffers encompasses two key issues. First, "wooded buffers" are referenced frequently throughout the Addenda, but we have not distinguished between buffers that define the character of a corridor and those that are a byproduct of un- or under-developed properties. Second, ARB and staff have observed that wooded buffers expected to screen or limit visibility of newer developments are proving ineffective in some cases, due to factors including topography, composition of the buffers, and location of the buffers within rights-of-way, etc. The Addenda could provide greater guidance on where wooded buffers should be maintained or continued and the future update to the Guidelines could address how wooded buffers can be designed to limit visibility from Entrance Corridors.

The work session discussion will begin with the questions listed below. Images will be presented to illustrate the various buffer conditions. The goal is to allow more consistent references to wooded buffers throughout the Addenda and to provide some constructive guidance in the "How To" section of the document.

1. Are there corridors, or portions thereof, where deep/dense wooded buffers should be maintained?
2. How should the visibility of a proposed development be assessed when a large part of an existing wooded buffer that is identified as "to remain" stands in the right-of-way and is not under the control of the property owner?
3. What details or information should be included in the Addenda to help identify when a wooded buffer will be consistent with the local character/context?