ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	**SDP-2026-92: Crozet Fellowship Church Initial Site Plan**
Review Type	Initial Site Development Plan
Parcel Identification	055000000019E0, 055000000019F0, and 055000000019G0
Location	470 Twinkling Springs (Figure 1)
Zoned	Rural Areas (RA), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Crozet Fellowship Church (John Healy)/Collins Engineering (Chuck Rapp)
Magisterial District	White Hall
Proposal	To construct a new sanctuary and parking lot, with associated site improvements.
Context	The property is bordered by I-64 on the north and east, with wooded area on site and in the right-of-way between the site and the Interstate. Residential properties and Rt. 250 are located to the south, and residential, agricultural and wooded properties are to the west.
Visibility	It is anticipated that wooded areas to remain will reduce the visibility of the proposed development from the I64 Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	November 30, 2026
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

There is no recent ARB review history on this property.



Figure 1: Applicant's vicinity map (left) and aerial view of subject property (right).

ANALYSIS

Gray highlight = means recommendations on this guideline can be provided for the benefit of the final site plan submittal, but cannot be the basis for denial of the initial site plan

Yellow highlight = means the guideline can only be reviewed for location/configuration at the initial plan stage, and location/configuration can be made a condition of initial plan approval, and can be the basis for denial

Regular text = means the guideline can be reviewed at initial plan stage, can be made a condition of initial plan approval, and can be the basis for denial

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	Purpose; Compatibility with significant historic sites; **Structure design**		
1	The goal of the regulation of the design of development within the designated Entrance Corridors is to insure that new development within the corridors reflects the traditional architecture of the area. Therefore, it is the purpose of ARB review and of these Guidelines, that proposed development within the designated Entrance	A significant amount of on-site wooded area is proposed to remain with this development, and additional wooded area is in place in the right-of-way between the property and the I64 Entrance Corridor.	Provide architectural plans for review with the next submittal. Choose roof and wall colors that blend with the

	Corridors reflect elements of design characteristic of the significant historical landmarks, buildings, and structures of the Charlottesville and Albemarle area, and to promote orderly and attractive development within these corridors. Applicants should note that replication of historic structures is neither required nor desired.	The wooded area is expected to reduce the visibility of the proposed development from the EC. Architectural designs were not included as part of the official initial site plan submittal; however, early designs shared with staff suggest that the proposed building will include extensive EIFS wall area relieved mostly by scoring. Although architectural details of the building will not likely be discernible from the EC, large wall and roof surfaces may be noticeable, particularly in the months when leaves are off the trees. Choosing muted colors that blend with the surrounding vegetation for walls and roofs will help integrate the building into the surroundings and help promote orderly and attractive development.	surroundings. Given the anticipated reduced visibility of the development from the Entrance Corridor, staff-level review of the architectural design and final site plan are recommended.
2	Visitors to the significant historical sites in the Charlottesville and Albemarle area experience these sites as ensembles of buildings, land, and vegetation. In order to accomplish the integration of buildings, land, and vegetation characteristic of these sites, the Guidelines require attention to four primary factors: compatibility with significant historic sites in the area; the character of the Entrance Corridor; site development and layout; and landscaping.		
3	New structures and substantial additions to existing structures should respect the traditions of the architecture of historically significant buildings in the Charlottesville and Albemarle area. Photographs of historic buildings in the area, as well as drawings of architectural features, which provide important examples of this tradition are contained in Appendix A.		
4	The examples contained in Appendix A should be used as a guide for building design: the standard of compatibility with the area's historic structures is not intended to impose a rigid design solution for new development. Replication of the design of the important historic sites in the area is neither intended nor desired. The Guideline's standard of compatibility can be met through building scale, materials, and forms which may be embodied in architecture which is contemporary as well as traditional. The Guidelines allow individuality in design to accommodate varying tastes as well as special functional requirements.		
9	Building forms and features, including roofs, windows, doors, materials, colors and textures should be compatible with the forms and features of the significant historic buildings in the area, exemplified by (but not limited to) the buildings described in Appendix A [of the design guidelines]. The standard of compatibility can be met through scale, materials, and forms which may be embodied in architecture which is contemporary as well as traditional. The replication of important historic sites in Albemarle County is not the objective of these guidelines.		
13	Any appearance of "blankness" resulting from building design		

	should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.		
5	It is also an important objective of the Guidelines to establish a pattern of compatible architectural characteristics throughout the Entrance Corridor in order to achieve unity and coherence. Building designs should demonstrate sensitivity to other nearby structures within the Entrance Corridor. Where a designated corridor is substantially developed, these Guidelines require striking a careful balance between harmonizing new development with the existing character of the corridor and achieving compatibility with the significant historic sites in the area.		
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.		
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.		
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	The site plan notes a covered portico along the front of the new sanctuary and a covered walkway connecting that portico to the existing sanctuary building. These features are expected to help establish human scale.	None at this time.
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.		
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	The new building is not expected to have the appearance of a trademark building.	None at this time.
16	Window glass in the Entrance Corridors should not be highly tinted or highly reflective. Window glass in the Entrance Corridors should meet the following criteria: *Visible light transmittance (VLT) shall not drop below 40%. Visible light reflectance (VLR) shall not exceed 30%. Specifications on the proposed window glass should be submitted with the application for final review.*	Given the position of the building relative to the Entrance Corridor and the anticipated limited number of windows in the new building, window glass is not expected to have a significant impact on the corridor.	None at this time.
	Accessory structures and equipment		
17	Accessory structures and equipment should be integrated into the overall plan of development and shall, to the extent possible, be compatible with the building designs used on the site.	The proposed plan does not show new accessory structures or equipment that are expected to be seen from the corridor.	None.
18	The following should be located to eliminate visibility from the Entrance Corridor street. If, after appropriate siting, these features will still have a negative visual impact on the Entrance Corridor street, screening should be provided to eliminate visibility. a. Loading areas, b. Service areas, c. Refuse areas, d. Storage areas, e. Mechanical equipment, f. Above-ground utilities, and g. Chain link fence,	A dumpster is proposed across the parking lot, to the west of the proposed building, where it is not expected to be seen from the Entrance Corridor.	None.

	barbed wire, razor wire, and similar security fencing devices.		
19	Screening devices should be compatible with the design of the buildings and surrounding natural vegetation and may consist of: a. Walls, b. Plantings, and c. Fencing.		
21	The following note should be added to the site plan and the architectural plan: "Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated."	The note does not appear on the plan.	Include the standard equipment note on the plan.
22-31	**Lighting**	Lighting is not included in the initial site plan.	Provide a complete lighting plan with the next submittal.
	Landscaping		
7	The requirements of the Guidelines regarding landscaping are intended to reflect the landscaping characteristic of many of the area's significant historic sites which is characterized by large shade trees and lawns. Landscaping should promote visual order within the Entrance Corridor and help to integrate buildings into the existing environment of the corridor.	Existing wooded area that is to remain between the on-site buildings and the Entrance Corridor street exceeds the frontage planting requirement and is expected to maintain visual order along the corridor.	None.
8	Continuity within the Entrance Corridor should be obtained by planting different types of plant materials that share similar characteristics. Such common elements allow for more flexibility in the design of structures because common landscape features will help to harmonize the appearance of development as seen from the street upon which the Corridor is centered.		
32	Landscaping along the frontage of Entrance Corridor streets should include the following: a. Large shade trees should be planted parallel to the Entrance Corridor Street. Such trees should be at least 3½ inches caliper (measured 6 inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 35 feet on center. b. Flowering ornamental trees of a species common to the area should be interspersed among the trees required by the preceding paragraph. The ornamental trees need not alternate one for one with the large shade trees. They may be planted among the large shade trees in a less regular spacing pattern. c. In situations where appropriate, a three or four board fence or low stone wall, typical of the area, should align the frontage of the Entrance Corridor street.		

	d. An area of sufficient width to accommodate the foregoing plantings and fencing should be reserved parallel to the Entrance Corridor street, and exclusive of road right-of-way and utility easements.		
33	Landscaping along interior roads: a. Large trees should be planted parallel to all interior roads. Such trees should be at least 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 40 feet on center.	Wooded area to remain, with trees that exceed the interior road requirement, borders the segment of Twinkling Springs that is adjacent to the property.	None.
34	Landscaping along interior pedestrian ways: a. Medium trees should be planted parallel to all interior pedestrian ways. Such trees should be at least 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground) and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 25 feet on center.	Sidewalk is proposed along the northeast, southeast, and southwest perimeters of the parking lot. No perimeter parking lot or pedestrian way trees are proposed in those locations. 135 parking spaces are proposed, requiring 14 interior parking lot trees. 11 large and 3 medium interior trees are proposed. The covered walkway limits the area available for trees along the sidewalk between the sanctuary buildings. Adding trees close to the other sidewalks and parking lot perimeters would provide shade and help soften the appearance of hardscape features on site, but trees in those locations would be hard to distinguish from on-site wooded area as viewed from the Entrance Corridor.	It is recommended that shade trees be provided at 40’ on center along sidewalks and parking lot perimeters.
35	Landscaping of parking areas: a. Large trees should align the perimeter of parking areas, located 40 feet on center. Trees should be planted in the interior of parking areas at the rate of one tree for every 10 parking spaces provided and should be evenly distributed throughout the interior of the parking area. b. Trees required by the preceding paragraph should measure 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground); should be evenly spaced; and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be planted in planters or medians sufficiently large to maintain the health of the tree and shall be protected by curbing. c. Shrubs should be provided as necessary to minimize the parking area’s impact on Entrance Corridor streets. Shrubs should measure 24 inches in height.		
36	Landscaping of buildings and other structures: a. Trees or other vegetation should be planted along the front of long buildings as necessary to soften the appearance of exterior walls. The spacing, size, and type of such trees or vegetation should be determined by the length, height, and blankness of such walls. b. Shrubs should be used to integrate the site, buildings, and other structures; dumpsters, accessory buildings and structures; “drive thru” windows; service areas; and signs. Shrubs should measure at	Existing wooded area to remain is expected to be sufficient to mitigate the appearance of blank walls, if the color of those walls blends with the surroundings.	Choose roof and wall colors for the new sanctuary building that blend with the surroundings.

	least 24 inches in height.		
37	Plant species: a. Plant species required should be as approved by the Staff based upon but not limited to the *Generic Landscape Plan Recommended Species List* and *Native Plants for Virginia Landscapes (Appendix D)*.	Tree and shrub species have not been provided on the initial plan.	Provide a complete plant schedule with the next submittal.
38	Plant health: The following note should be added to the landscape plan: "All site plantings of trees and shrubs shall be allowed to reach, and be maintained at, mature height; the topping of trees is prohibited. Shrubs and trees shall be pruned minimally and only to support the overall health of the plant."	The note does not appear on the plan.	Add the standard plant health note to the plan.
	Site Development and layout; **Development pattern**		
6	Site development should be sensitive to the existing natural landscape and should contribute to the creation of an organized development plan. This may be accomplished, to the extent practical, by preserving the trees and rolling terrain typical of the area; planting new trees along streets and pedestrian ways and choosing species that reflect native forest elements; insuring that any grading will blend into the surrounding topography thereby creating a continuous landscape; preserving, to the extent practical, existing significant river and stream valleys which may be located on the site and integrating these features into the design of surrounding development; and limiting the building mass and height to a scale that does not overpower the natural settings of the site, or the Entrance Corridor.	The proposal maintains existing vegetation in the 100' stream buffer and an additional 50' of wooded buffer. Several mature trees are marked for removal around the existing parking lot, travelways and buildings; two are to be retained. Extensive grading is proposed in the vicinity of the new building and the dry detention facility but the existing wooded area to remain is expected to mitigate resulting visual impacts as seen from the I-64 corridor.	None.
39	The relationship of buildings and other structures to the Entrance Corridor street and to other development within the corridor should be as follows: a. An organized pattern of roads, service lanes, bike paths, and pedestrian walks should guide the layout of the site. b. In general, buildings fronting the Entrance Corridor street should be parallel to the street. Building groupings should be arranged to parallel the Entrance Corridor street. c. Provisions should be made for connections to adjacent pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems. d. Open spaces should be tied into surrounding areas to provide continuity within the Entrance Corridor. e. If significant natural features exist on the site (including creek valleys, steep slopes, significant trees or rock outcroppings), to the	The proposed building is oriented toward the parking lot and the interior of the site, not toward the Entrance Corridor. The position and orientation are reasonable given the locations of the existing buildings to remain, wooded area to remain, and the character of travel along the Interstate. The wooded area to remain between the proposed building and the Entrance Corridor is expected to sufficiently mitigate this orientation.	

	extent practical, then such natural features should be reflected in the site layout. If the provisions of Section 32.5.2.n of the *Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance* apply, then improvements required by that section should be located so as to maximize the use of existing features in screening such improvements from Entrance Corridor streets. f. The placement of structures on the site should respect existing views and vistas on and around the site.		
	Site Grading		
40	Site grading should maintain the basic relationship of the site to surrounding conditions by limiting the use of retaining walls and by shaping the terrain through the use of smooth, rounded land forms that blend with the existing terrain. Steep cut or fill sections are generally unacceptable. Proposed contours on the grading plan shall be rounded with a ten foot minimum radius where they meet the adjacent condition. Final grading should achieve a natural, rather than engineered, appearance. Retaining walls 6 feet in height and taller, when necessary, shall be terraced and planted to blend with the landscape.	Grading is proposed across the property. The most significant grading is associated with establishing a level pad for the new building and with the dry detention facility. The resulting grade will have a very regular engineered appearance, but it is not expected to be seen directly from the Entrance Corridor due to the wooded area to remain.	None.
41	No grading, trenching, or tunneling should occur within the drip line of any trees or other existing features designated for preservation in the final Certificate of Appropriateness. Adequate tree protection fencing should be shown on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping and erosion and sediment control plans.	Proposed grading is maintained outside the tree line to remain.	None.
42	Areas designated for preservation in the final Certificate of Appropriateness should be clearly delineated and protected on the site prior to any grading activity on the site. This protection should remain in place until completion of the development of the site.	Tree protection fencing is shown around two existing trees to be retained, but not along the larger wooded area at the perimeter of the property.	Show tree protection fencing on/coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping, erosion & sediment control plans for wooded area to remain.
43	Preservation areas should be protected from storage or movement of heavy equipment within this area.		
20	Surface runoff structures and detention ponds should be designed to fit into the natural topography to avoid the need for screening. When visible from the Entrance Corridor street, these features must be fully integrated into the landscape. They should not have the appearance of engineered features.	A dry detention facility is proposed to the northeast of the proposed building and to the southeast of the existing sanctuary building. The facility and related site elements are not expected to be noticeable from the Entrance Corridor.	None.
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.		

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommend the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. Anticipated visibility of the proposed sanctuary building and site changes.
2. Staff-level review of the final site plan.

Staff recommend:

1. Staff-level review of the architectural design and final site plan given the anticipated limited visibility of the development from the Entrance Corridor; and
2. That the ARB forward the following recommendations to the Agent for the Site Review Committee on the Initial Site Plan:
   - Regarding requirements to satisfy the design guidelines as per § 18-30.6.4c(2), (3) and (5) and recommended conditions of initial plan approval:
     1. Prior to Initial Plan approval the following items shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the ARB: None.
   - Regarding recommendations on the plan as it relates to the guidelines:
     1. Provide shade trees at 40' on center along sidewalks and parking lot perimeters.
   - Regarding conditions to be satisfied prior to issuance of a grading permit:
     1. Maintain grading outside the driplines of trees to remain. Show tree protection fencing on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping, and erosion and sediment control plans.
   - Regarding the final site plan submittal:
     A Certificate of Appropriateness is required prior to final site plan approval. The following items and all items on the ARB Final Site Plan Checklist must be addressed:
     1. Provide architectural plans for review with the next submittal.
     2. Choose roof and wall colors for the new building that blend with the surroundings.
     3. Include the standard equipment note on the plan: "Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated."
     4. Provide a complete lighting plan with the next submittal.
     5. Provide a complete plant schedule with the next submittal.
     6. Add the standard plant health note to the plan: "All site plantings of trees and shrubs shall be allowed to reach, and be maintained at, mature height; the topping of trees is prohibited. Shrubs and trees shall be pruned minimally and only to support the overall health of the plant."
     7. Show tree protection fencing on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping, and erosion and sediment control plans for the wooded area to remain.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: SDP-2026-00092: Crozet Fellowship Church - Initial Site Plan
Attach. 2: SDP-2026-00092: Crozet Fellowship Church - Context Plan