Albemarle County Planning Commission
May 2, 2006

The Albemarle County Planning Commission met on Tuesday, May 2, 2006, to hold a work session at 6:00 p.m., at the County Office Building, Room 241, Second Floor, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia. Members attending were Eric Strucko, Bill Edgerton, Pete Craddock; Jo Higgins; Jon Cannon; Marcia Joseph, Chairman and Calvin Morris, Vice-Chairman. Julia Monteith, Senior Land Use Planner for the University of Virginia, representative for David J. Neuman, FAIA, Architect for University of Virginia, was absent.

Other officials present were Wayne Cilimberg, Planning Director; Lee Catlin, Community Relations Manager; Judy Wiegand, Senior Planner; David Benish, Chief of Planning; Harrison Rue, Executive Director of Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and Greg Kamptner, Deputy County Attorney.

***Call to Order and Establish Quorum**:*

Ms. Joseph called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and established a quorum.

***Other Matters Not Listed on the Agenda from the Public**:*

Ms. Joseph invited comment from the public on other matters not listed on the agenda.

Morgan Butler, attorney with the Southern Environmental Law Center, asked to briefly discuss the report SCLC released yesterday on the tremendous rate of development in the county.

- This is an issue both the Commission and the county staff recognize as important. They have emailed and mailed each Commissioner a copy of this report. Our report looks at the amount of retail that the county can reasonably absorb in the next ten years. It compares that to the amount of retail development currently in the pipeline. According to county staff and consultants the county can support between 1,000,000 and 1,400,000 square feet of additional retail by the year 2015. However, the county currently has either approved or is reviewing about 3,500,000 square feet of new retail space. This is roughly three times what the county can absorb. This would bring the total retail space in the county to a staggering 8,000,000 square feet, and mean more than a 70 percent increase over the current amount of retail space in the county. Our report explores the combined economic and environmental impacts the successive retail development will have on the community. The existing businesses will be harmed, traffic and sprawl will intensify and air and water pollution will increase.

- To address these impacts we offer a number of recommendations to the board. First, we suggest that the board direct county staff to improve recording and record keeping in the amount of existing, approved and proposed retail and office projects and plug this information into the reports that it sends to the Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Second, the board should either defer rezoning requests or encourage developers to postpone them until the various master plans that are being developed for the designated growth areas are completed. At the same time the board should take great care not to approve the major projects that will limit the usefulness of these master plans before they are even completed. This point is particularly relevant to the Commission tonight in preparation of their work session on Places29. He asked that the board insist on better design of proposed projects, including greater inherence to the Neighborhood Model. In addition, the board must use its authority to deny proposals that will have significant adverse impacts and do reflect the Comprehensive Plan.

- Finally, they are recommending that the board phase in the rate of retail growth in the growth areas so that retail development occurs more gradually. The Board recently called for a work session to examine the rate of residential and commercial growth in the growth areas. We hope that a decision to phase in retail development will result. He read an article in the Daily Progress this morning on the release of the report. A suggestion by Tim Colbert was that we are opposing growth in the growth areas. This is simply incorrect. As the report clearly states, they strongly support the concept of guiding development in the areas so designated. However, this does not mean that the county should just approve any development proposal that comes along in a growth area. Rather the county needs to take a look at the big picture of potential retail overload that we face and ensure that the proposals are well designed and then making informed decisions on the proposals before them. He thanked the Commission for allowing him this time to speak.

Ms. Joseph asked if there was anyone else present who would like to speak on matters not before the Commission. There being no one, the meeting moved on to the next item.

Consent Agenda:

Approval of Planning Commission Minutes – January 10, 2006.

Motion: Mr. Morris moved, Mr. Craddock seconded, that the consent agenda be approved.

The motion passed by a vote of 7:0.

Ms. Joseph stated that the consent agenda has been approved.

Work Session*:*

Places29: An update on the three revised Framework Alternatives and on the proposed format for the May charrette and public workshops. (Judy Wiegand/Lee Catlin)

Ms. Catlin said that tonight staff would like to review again with the Commission the project timeline, the public workshop format that is before them, the three draft framework plan alternatives and then have time for questions and discussions. To review the timeline, she noted that it has almost been a year since the effort kicked off with the initial mapping and data gathering. There was a public workshop regarding community visioning on May 25. They did have issue assessment following that and public workshop #2 on November 1, which talked about assets, needs and opportunities. In public workshop #3 they started talking about initial framework plan alternatives in early November. There was a lot of work on refining and assessing those framework plan concepts, which was completed in February of this year. That was when the consultant came to town for the interim visit and gave us the first look at those alternative framework plans. The next major step will be public workshop #4, which will be a series of two meetings on May 18 and May 20, 2006. The objective of those two workshops will be that they will really start identifying preferences when it comes to an alternative framework plan. They will start to get some community consensus around the transportation and land use elements that will move forward in the master planning process. In September, 2006 there will be another opportunity for a public workshop. There will be a draft master plan in a form that the public again will have an opportunity to weigh in on, react to, review and respond to. In December, 2006 the actual draft master plan itself will be presented. Then beginning in January, 2007 there will be a public review and comment period on the final draft master plan. That lets the Commission know where we are and what we have ahead of us in terms of the

process. She asked to spend some time on the workshops that they have coming up in May again so that the Commission can provide suggestions and comments. The Commission is the Advisory Counsel. Therefore, staff is anxious to hear anything that the Commissioners thinks might help make these things work a little bit better. May 18 is the first major event of that charrette, which will be an open house from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Sutherland Middle School. Staff has been working on the outreach efforts. Staff has been trying to get people up to speed and geared up and ready to have good informed discussion about their preferences. They have all talked about the challenge of the complexity of this plan, the size of the plan area and know that they need to stay focused on keeping people coming along with us through the process. So the May 18 open house is an opportunity for people to come in and get a look at the alternatives, have them explained, get clarity, see what the differences are and talk to the consultants. It will be sort of a getting up to speed evening for the public. On Saturday, May 20 they will be having a facilitated public workshop from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. That is the timing which people in small groups will really start to wrestle with what works best in what alternative, what they really think is a preferred way to handle a particular land use element, a particular transit element, or a particular transportation system. They will be taking people through a very structured discussed to get their feedback.

Mr. Morris asked if each group would be working on the precisely the same thing.

Ms. Catlin said that the Saturday workshop will begin with the consultant and staff giving a general presentation to everybody in the group. People will be at small tables in groups, but everybody will be hearing the same information. Then they will start with alternative 1. The consultant will go through the issues and the particular special elements that make up alternative 1 and what defines it from the other alternatives. The whole group will hear the presentation. Then they will pause the presentation and each group will work on a work book with questions that will take them through an analysis of alternative 1 and then discuss what they think works and what does not work. The public will have that moment right after they see the alternative presented for everybody to focus on alternative 1. When that is done then alternative 2 will be presented to the group at large. The consultant will present it. Then, again, there will be a break for the small groups to go through their work book on alternative 2 and get their feedback. It will be the same for alternative 3. After that then the small groups will have an opportunity to work on a page in the work book about compare and contrast of 3 of the alternatives. The Commission will get a copy of that work book page. As an end result they want to get good concrete feedback that points us in a direction when it comes to furthering the master plan and to help in the decision making. Then on May 23 the consultants will still be in town and will be coming back to the Commission and the Board of Supervisors to do a work session basically to present to the extent that they are able to collate it by then on what they heard from the public and what kind of direction, preferences and consensus that they heard from the public. The consultants will have the Commission weigh in on that. Then the consultants will go out and start to build a master plan based on what they have heard.

Ms. Higgins asked if staff was integrating the traffic study components. When somebody starts talking about preferences and what works best she felt that they have lost track of all of that.

Ms. Catlin replied that will be very much a part of it. Ms. Wiegand will take the Commission through the map and will be able to explain it. The traffic component will be very much part of what they will be presenting with the alternatives, which will include the results of the traffic studies and how that feeds into some of the choices that they might make about where the transit should be, where a center should be and what would happen on 29 if this road was or was not built.

Ms. Higgins asked where those results were now.

Ms. Catlin replied that they were still being finalized.

Ms. Higgins said that even reviewing this she felt very much uneasy about it because it might make sense, but what kind of traffic are they talking about.

Ms. Catlin said that is going to be a big piece about it. Tonight they were not asking the Commission to react to these maps. That is the process for May 18 and 20. Staff is asking are the issues that they have heard from the citizens some of the things that they really need to present to them to get to good choices represented in these alternatives.

Ms. Higgins asked when the traffic analysis would be finalized that goes with the map. She asked how close to May 18 would that be.

Harrison Rue said that there are several different things going on. They are actually reviewing the forecast modeling right now. It is just the total volumes on each segment of each road. They are beginning the V Seminal Analysis, which was done on 29/250. That study showed the vehicles going down through and defined trip times. They will be fairly down to the wire on completing that study. But, what really counts is what is presented at the work shop. If they remember the last time that they had alternatives A, B and C on the 29/250 Study they all actually worked well with the traffic. It was the matter of the difference in travel patterns and how it impacts with the land and the centers. He suspects they will have something similar for this, too. They are presenting three networks that more or less work for transportation in sum and total.

Ms. Higgins pointed out that the reason she felt that was a critical thing was because the last time they were presented this information the Board took the Ruckersville By-Pass off. Then in our earlier discussions there was some discussion that the traffic analysis would really show that something like that is not really the issue. They have done one before the other is finalized. She asked if they were still going to be able to make those conclusions. She was assuming that was their conclusion and that the traffic study will indicate that, but she thought that was going to be one of the hot buttons.

Mr. Rue said that they are going to model the Ruckersville By-Pass since it is already included in the contract just from a traffic standpoint as they committed to VDOT. But, they would not include it in any of the presented alternatives. But, again that will be presented at the work shops for information.

Ms. Higgins asked if no conclusion has been drawn from the traffic study on the information what are the overall implications.

Mr. Rue replied that they will not have a conclusion until they finish the modeling. Again, they are running a little bit down on the wire on that.

Ms. Higgins noted that it looks like it has kind of gotten out of sync that way and she was concerned about that.

Mr. Rue said that he did not think they were out of sync. The traffic is so integrated into the land use diagrams that they are not going to be seeing it jump out at you.

Ms. Catlin said again on the 23rd the Commission will get an opportunity to check in with the consultant and make sure that they are moving in the right direction in terms of how they are pursuing things.

Mr. Edgerton asked what role staff anticipated the Commission playing at the May 18 and 20 public work shops.

Ms. Caitlin said that probably they see as an important role is that from here on is the role that the Commission has been playing so far. That is looking at this information, helping staff decide are we hitting the right level here, spreading it out to people in the way that they can so that people come to the meeting as ready as they possibly can because they all understand that somebody coming cold into this process walking in on Saturday morning is just probably not going to be able to grasp what is going on well enough to be engaged as they would want to be. So she would see their time between now and the meeting being much about pushing this information out, directing people to the website, directing them to the Thursday night and Saturday meeting, which is going to be important, In terms of what the Commission would do at the meeting.

Ms. Wiegand distributed, reviewed and answered questions on Attachment 1: Place Types for the Places29 Area dated March 6, 2006 and Attachment 2: Alternative 2 Future Framework Map for Places29. Staff will have copies of another version of Alternative 2 tomorrow for all members that will show a simplified land use pattern. Staff has been going back and forth with the consultants working out how much detail we could show the public before we confuse them. The alternatives we showed at the November workshops were too detailed--participants got into discussions about which land use should go where, rather than the more general questions we wanted answers to at that time. So, staff and the consultants decided to simplify matters. The consultants put together the yellow and orange maps. Staff felt the maps were too simple since the public will want some idea of which areas are residential and which are employment. The consultants have added four land use categories: neighborhood density residential, urban density residential, employment, and mixed use. Staff reviewed the project timeline, the public workshop format, the three draft framework alternatives, and then discussed and answered questions.

As requested, no formal action was taken. The Commission reviewed and discussed the materials and provided the following comments and suggestions.

- The maps should be made as large as possible with the legends more readable.
- Staff will work on the footnote to address the Commission's concerns about what is programmed or unprogrammed. The Commission questioned which projects were included in the footnote and shown on the maps. Staff will review the maps and legends again to make sure all information is accurate.
- Expand public outreach distribution list to include parent teacher organization listings from all schools.
- The Commission questioned when the traffic study would be available and how it would be integrated.
- The Commission asked that the existing bus service and the Park and Ride areas be shown on the maps.
- The Commission suggested that the consultants go through each map one at a time with the public and allow enough time to explain each thoroughly.
- Staff asked that the Commission email any additional comments or suggestions after they reviewed the proposed workbook.

In summary, a work session on Places29 was held by the Planning Commission so staff could familiarize the Commissioners with the public workshops coming up later this month, orient and refine the alternative maps and discuss issues with those maps. In a power point presentation, Ms. Catlin and Ms. Wiegand gave the Commission a preview and familiarization with what the

public will be seeing in May during the public workshop. Staff reviewed the project timeline, the public workshop format, the three draft framework alternatives, and then discussed and answered questions. As requested, no formal action was taken. The Commission reviewed and discussed the materials and provided the following comments and suggestions.

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***Old Business**:*

Ms. Joseph asked if there was any old business. There being none, the meeting moved on to the next item.

***New Business**:*

Ms. Joseph asked if there was any new business.

- Regarding the action taken by the Commission on ZTA-2005-005, Temporary Farm Worker Housing, Mr. Cilimberg pointed out that the Commission indicated an interest in having the adjacent property owners notified when a proposal was made to the county. The Commission did not talk about what might happen if adjacent owners and the applicant were not able to agree on what the applicant wanted to do. In discussing this at staff level it was noted that there is a need to make sure that there is a mechanism that someone beyond staff could review the request if that case occurred. Staff thinks the best way to address that is somewhat like the process the Commission uses for site plans and subdivisions. This would be to allow the item to be requested for review by the Planning Commission. When this item is moved forward to the Board of Supervisors staff will make sure to include language along those lines unless the Commission disagrees or has any concerns.

    - It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to agree with staff's suggestion to include the additional language as described by Mr. Cilimberg in ZTA-2005-005, Temporary Farm Worker Housing.

- Ms. Joseph requested to say one thing about the report "Too Much of a Good Thing." There is a lot of reference in the report discussed earlier about the Neighborhood Model and one of the components of the Neighborhood Model is retail. So that is something that the Commission has to think about. The idea is to get the retail in the Neighborhood Model so that people are not driving all over the place. She felt that the Commission

was now making the attempt to lessen the impact of vehicles on the roads with the Neighborhood Model.

- The Commission discussed the email from Lynda Harrill that talked about Operation Misery.

There being no further new business, the meeting proceeded.

***Adjournment**:*

With no further items, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m. to the May 9, 2006 meeting.

V. Wayne Cilimberg, Secretary

(Recorded and transcribed by Sharon Claytor Taylor, Recording Secretary.)