Albemarle County Planning Commission
November 29, 2011

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a meeting on Tuesday, November 29, 2011, at 6:00 p.m., at the County Office Building, Lane Auditorium, Second Floor, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Members attending were Russell (Mac) Lafferty, Ed Smith, Thomas Loach, Linda Porterfield, Don Franco, and Calvin Morris, Vice-Chair. Commissioners absent was Duane Zobrist, Chair. Julia Monteith, AICP, Senior Land Use Planner for the University of Virginia was present.

Other officials present were: Susan Stimart, Economic Development Facilitator; Lee Catlin, Assistant to the County Executive for Community and Business Partnerships; Amelia McCulley, Zoning Administrator/Director of Zoning; J.T. Newberry, Planner; Elaine Echols, Principal Planner; Andy Sorrel, Senior Planner; Wayne Cilimberg, Director of Planning; and Greg Kamptner, Deputy County Attorney.

Call to Order and Establish Quorum:

Mr. Morris, Vice Chair 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:

Mr. Morris invited comment from the public on other matters not listed on the agenda.

Jeff Werner, Piedmont Environmental Council, spoke to Mr. Franco's comments from a previous meeting regarding total residential build out projections and encouraged staff (possibly Steve Allshouse) to contact the Loudon County fiscal planner to understand how they do that.

There being no further matters not listed on the agenda, the meeting moved to the next item.

Consent Agenda:

a. **Approval of Minutes –** May 10, 2011 & June 21, 2011
b. **Resolutions of Intent** – Urban Development Areas – Streetscapes:
   1. Zoning Ordinance, and
   2. Subdivision Ordinance

   (Wayne Cilimberg)

c. **Resolution of Intent** – Phase III Industrial Uses (ZTA201000004)
   (Wayne Cilimberg)

d. **Resolutions of Intent** – Process improvements for:
   1. Zoning map amendments and special use permits,
   2. Review of applications for site plans, and
   3. Review of applications for subdivision plats

   (Wayne Cilimberg)

Mr. Morris asked if any Commissioner would like to pull an item from the consent agenda for further review.

Mr. Lafferty asked for clarification on item d. process improvements. He asked what happens if the fee is not paid and if staff could indefinitely hold an application.

Mr. Cilimberg replied as it regards to fee payments under the legislative process change proposals. He noted under the concept agreed to by the Board that re-zonings and special use permit applications would be reviewed first and cleared for processing before the fee is paid. But nothing is being proposed tonight that specifically makes those changes as what is before the Commission is only a Resolution of

Intent to proceed with changes reflecting what the Board concurred with which the Commission also saw at the joint work session with the Board and ARB.

Mr. Lafferty pointed out he noticed if the applicant does not reply to the comment within six months, then the application is voided.

Mr. Cilimberg replied that was on the ministerial process side, which was a little different process.

Mr. Lafferty asked if the request would just sit there or was there some priority of applications.

Mr. Cilimberg replied site plans are treated a little differently because they are following the requirements of the zoning ordinance for a specific inclusion of information. So if there is no response to staff review comments after 6 months and/or the fee is not paid, then the application would have to be resubmitted and a new fee at that time would be paid.

Mr. Lafferty noted he did not read that the application would have to be resubmitted.

Mr. Franco requested that item d. be pulled from the consent agenda for further discussion.

Mr. Loach questioned the background of the urban development areas. It says in 2007 the General Assembly adopted a requirement that all localities with a population of between 20,000 and 130,000 and a growth rate of 15% or more designate urban development areas (UDAs) in their comprehensive plan. He asked if the 15% is over a decade.

Mr. Cilimberg replied that it is over a decade. That was the same legislation under which the Commission reviewed the two UDA's ultimately amended into the comp plan. It is under this same legislation that staff would also be bringing forward some changes in the zoning.

Ms. Porterfield noted Mr. Franco took care of her request.

Motion: Mr. Franco moved and Ms. Porterfield seconded for approval of the consent agenda items a, b,1., b.2. and c.

The motion carried by a vote of (6:0).

Mr. Morris noted the consent agenda items a., b.1., b.2. and c. were approved. He invited discussion on item d. He asked for staff's interpretation.

Mr. Cilimberg said staff has brought to the Commission a resolution of intent that reflected what the Board concluded based on the minutes and the actions of the joint work session of the Commission, Board and Architectural Review Board in August of this year. Staff reflected directly what was the conclusion of the Board, Commission and ARB work session and are asking for resolutions of intent that would allow staff to move forward with the actual work on ordinance provisions, which would not be enacted until they go through a public hearing process with the Planning Commission and then with the Board of Supervisors. This is simply the first step towards that ultimately taking place. Staff typically has brought resolutions of intent to the Commission because they meet more often than the Board and it allows those things to get started in the pipeline with the understanding that nothing is obligating them to approve anything in particular. However, the ordinance work would be based on the outcome of that Board meeting, which would come to the Planning Commission for discussion in public hearing.

Mr. Franco pointed out his concern is the resolutions basically are the bottom line of the consensus of the Board regarding the process. If they recall that joint meeting was started 45 minutes late. There was a heavy discussion that took place. In discussions he had with some of the Board members he was not sure it was fully vetted amongst the Board. Since this is really an action that the Board has initiated his preference would be that they act on the resolution. He has concerns of whether this really represents consensus. He would hate for staff to take their resolution and move forward with a process that maybe the Board has not fully vetted.

Ms. Porterfield agreed with Mr. Franco because if the Commission acts on this they are essentially removing the Planning Commission from the items that are going to be taken care of here. That is the basic philosophy that was presented to them. The Planning Commission is not going to be part of this anymore. She was not sure that all Commissioners agree they should be removed. If the Board wants to remove the Commission, then that is up to them.

Mr. Cilimberg pointed out that passing the resolution does not actually enact that removal being referred to. It would lead staff to write provisions that would do that if enacted. However, again it comes through the public hearing process with the Planning Commission. He noted that what Ms. Porterfield just mentioned applies to the site plan and subdivision process.

Ms. Porterfield noted unfortunately staff is recommending option one with the six items that go with that. Option one is that the site plans or subdivision plats will never be called up for review by the Planning Commission. The Commission would essentially be removing themselves. She thought that was something not vetted by the Planning Commission at all as to whether they agree with that.

Mr. Kamptner clarified that the resolution does not remove the Commission from anything.

Ms. Porterfield noted that the philosophy behind it does.

Mr. Kamptner noted the Commission is not obligated to even recommend whatever ordinance comes out of this resolution.

Ms. Porterfield said she did not agree with the resolution of intent based on what has been presented.

Mr. Kamptner asked to be clear that would be items d.2. and d.3. He asked if that was correct.

Ms. Porterfield replied that was correct. She supported what Mr. Franco had suggested as the way to go.

Mr. Franco said he understands the Commission is not approving anything other than the resolution. He did not think they should devote effort to something if it is not the Board's wishes. Having them actually confirm that this is their consensus would be helpful.

Mr. Morris said recalling that session it was extremely hurried and almost at the last minute they had to go back into session and said let's do something.

Mr. Franco agreed with Mr. Morris. He did not agree with the whole direction they were going. However, he was not arguing that at this point. He would like the Board to confirm that there was consensus along these lines.

Mr. Morris asked for motions.

Mr. Kamptner asked for a couple of motions. What he was hearing is that none of the Commissioners have a concern with the resolution dealing with the legislative process d.1. That is just to work on the processes for zoning map amendments and special use permits. By statute and ordinance those will always come through the Planning Commission anyway. Therefore, the process in that regard is not being changed.

Mr. Morris asked if he wanted d.1. separated and voted on separately, and Mr. Kamptner replied yes.

Mr. Franco said he was comfortable with that.

Motion: Mr. Franco moved and Ms. Porterfield seconded for approval of the resolution of intent for consent item d.1.

The motion carried by a vote of (6:0).

Mr. Morris asked for a motion on consent agenda items d.2. and d.3.

Mr. Franco asked if they could just simply not take an action or do they need to vote this down in order to get it to the Board.

Mr. Kamptner suggested the motion could be to direct staff to present it to the Board of Supervisors for their consideration.

Motion: Mr. Franco moved and Mr. Lafferty seconded to direct staff to refer consent agenda items d.2. and d.3. to the Board of Supervisors without recommendation for their action.

The motion carried by a vote of (6:0).

Mr. Morris noted the consent agenda was approved that includes the resolutions of intent shown in Attachment 1 and 2. (Attachment 1 - Consent Agenda Item a. – Resolutions of Intent – Urban Development Areas – Streetscapes: 1. Zoning Ordinance and 2. Subdivision Ordinance. Consent Agenda Item b. – Resolutions of Intent – Phase III Industrial Uses (ZTA-2010-00004). Attachment 2 – Consent Agenda – Resolutions of Intent – Process improvements for: 1. Zoning Map amendments and special use permits)

Work Sessions:

a. <u>Economic Vitality Action Plan Annual Update</u> (Lee Catlin)

Lee Catlin and Susan Stimart presented a Power Point presentation regarding the Economic Vitality Action Plan Annual Update.

Ms. Catlin noted the discussion was about the first year of the Economic Vitality Action Plan and presented the following information.

The Board adopted an Economic Vitality Action Plan in August, 2010 following a very extensive public discussion and review process. Several items that are particularly important for the conversation the Commission will be having this evening will be highlighted. It is important to recognize how the Economic Development Policy of the County's Comp Plan is the foundation of this Economic Vitality Action Plan. It is really the implementation piece of that.

The stated purpose of the Economic Development Policy is to provide the local citizenry an improved standard of living and enhanced quality of life, which is really very much what the action plan is all about. The action plan states very specifically that it builds on existing commitments to growth management and that all objectives, strategies, and action items in the plan are intended to achieve outcomes that are consistent with the goals of the economic development policy section and all other sections of the County's Comprehensive Plan. The action plan is nested within and lives within the guidance of the Comp Plan. The things they were going to be talking about this evening and over the next couple months are very important to how this plan gets implemented.

The primary goal of the action plan is to increase the County's economic vitality and future revenues through economic development by expanding the commercial tax base and supporting the creation of quality jobs for local residents. The benefit and economic well being first of current local residents and existing local businesses is part of the philosophy and purpose behind the action plan. The Board reviewed and endorsed a three-year work plan in November since the Economic Vitality Action Plan was developed as a three-year action plan. The plan outlines the milestones that are supposed to be accomplished in that year with the recognition that many of the things they want to see come from this plan are much more long term than three years. There are hopefully some milestones along the way that let us know they are at least on the right track with some of the actions they are taking.

The first year of the plan has focused on several key areas establishing what they would consider basic functions of a more focused proactive economic development effort, including being focused on supporting existing businesses, business retention, business start up and expansion, and some level of business attraction support as well. Another key area of focus for the first year has been achieving meaningful regulatory reform that streamlines processes while maintaining the quality and high standards called for in the Comp Plan and desired by the community. Those were the things in the first year they were focused on trying to achieve.

The following points were discussed in the presentation:
- Review Status of First Year Work Plan
- Successes and Challenges
- Review Metrics

Objective 1: Improving Business Climate and Image - By September, 2011

One caveat when she says things are complete is it means that actions are on track and under way. These actions will never be complete because it is not one of those things they would check and say they were done improving the business climate. They will be doing that forever. However, the action steps that they specifically wanted to take to achieve these they feel like are either on track or have been accomplished.

Status:	On track with work plan, working on establishing single point of contact
Highlights:	Listening tour, quarterly roundtables, partner interaction
Next Steps:	Phase 2 website upgrade, continued quarterly roundtables, continuing outreach In developing those relationships

Objective 2: **Simplify/Create Certainty in the Development Review process - By September, 2011**

▲ All action items in this objective are completed - small business assistance underway

Status:	On track with work plan, process improvements are ongoing
Highlights:	Development review changes, ARB process improvements for Entrance Corridor Development, small business toolkit
Next Steps:	Administrative and legislative process improvements, sign ordinance

Objective 3: Supporting Quality Employment Opportunities – By September, 2011

▲ Approach for target industry study approved
▲ Targeted business retention program underway

Status:	On track with work plan
Highlights:	Target Industry Study, Business First, job gains, schools/business partnership
Next Steps:	Target Industry Study – existing business analysis and workforce study, continued business retention

Objective 4: Increased Options for Industrial Land (LI) Users – By September, 2011

▲ Zoning ordinance change for LI uses and Countywide voluntary rezoning completed
▲ Comprehensive Plan update process underway

Status:	Several strategies/actions still underway
Highlights:	Zoning ordinance amendment work
Next Steps:	LI uses, voluntary rezoning, Comp Plan roundtable done and Comp Plan update process moving forward

Objective 5: Focus on Rural Economy – By September, 2011

▲ Roundtables completed, findings to BOS

▲ Home occupation ordinance revisions completed

Status:	On track with work plan
Highlights:	Home occupation changes, farm wineries, 2011 Local Food awards, Winebloggers conference
Next Steps:	Monticello Artisan Trail launch, agri-business Comp Plan roundtable that the Commission will be hearing the results of in the discussion this evening.

That concludes a quick summary of the first year and what they have accomplished with the work plan. Susan Stimart will now discuss what they have seen in the year end review.

Susan Stimart, Economic Development Facilitator, continued the Power Point presentation. Staff has done a great job in covering a lot of their successes and positive impacts this year.

New Commercial Development - Super Wal-Mart finished. Staff encouraged them to stay where they were.
Expanding Community Assets - Martha Jefferson Hospital opening brought 1,600 jobs and the new medical offices opening on Pantops.
Leveraging Outside Resources - Micro Ware project where they were able to leverage state and grant resources to help with the expansion of that project with their own economic opportunity fund. Also, 100 new jobs created in the old Comdial building.
Regulatory Reform – Items accomplished during this year with regard to improving the process without lowering the standards or quality such as the New ARB procedures and the County signage work. They are looking forward to administrative processes changes that are underway.
Expansion of Career Ladder Jobs

Year in Review – Challenges

- Lack of Available Product - This was heard at yesterday's Industrial Roundtable. Staff has done a good job of filling our vacant industrial buildings. However, that means they don't have a lot of options for future growth and expansion activities. That is something they need to keep an eye on what they can do to improve that.
    - Researching needs of businesses and identifying options, will be informed by the target industry study
- Stagnant Economy
    - Difficult to overcome macro trends, positioning ourselves to be opportunistic as conditions improve
- Competitive Environment
    - Peer communities offering aggressive incentives, raising expectations
- Job Losses
    - Despite improving unemployment rate, have lost local jobs due to closures

Staff reviewed metrics they are now tracking on a quarterly and annual basis, as follows.

Albemarle County Economic Vitality Indicators (October 5, 2011)

Quarterly Data	**Time Periods**	**Annual Change**
Tax Revenue		
****Sales Tax***	***Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11***	***+ 6.6%***
Hotel/Motel Tax	**Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11**	**+ 11.8%**
Meals Tax	**Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11**	**+ 3.1%**
Jobs & Income		
****Unemployment Rate***	***Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11***	***- 0.8 pp***
Total No. of Jobs	**Q4 CY 09 & Q4 CY 10**	**+ 1.2%**
Weighted Avg. Weekly Wage	**Q4 CY 09 & Q4 CY 10**	**+ 6.2%**
Workforce Ctr. Clients	**Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11**	**+ 38.8%**

General Business Activity		
****Total No. of Business Licenses***	***Q3 CY 10 & Q3 CY 11***	***N/A***
No. of *New* Bus. Licenses	**Q3 CY 10 & Q3 CY 11**	**N/A**
Small Business Dev. Ctr. Clients	**Q1 CY 10 & Q1 CY 11**	**+ 4**
Small Business Dev. Ctr. Training Participants	**Q1 CY 10 & Q1 CY 11**	**+ 5**
Real Estate Market		
No. of Single Family Homes for Sale	**Q3 CY 10 & Q3 CY 11**	**- 2.2%**
Mo. Avg. No. of Single Family Homes Sold	**Q3 CY 10 & Q3 CY 11**	**- 7.0%**
****No. Mos. Supply Single Family Homes for Sale***	***Q3 CY 10 & Q3 CY 11***	***+ 0.58 Mos.***
FHFA Price Index for the C-Ville MSA	**Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11**	**- 5.6%**
Resid. Forecl. Rate per 10,000 Properties	**Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11**	**N/A**
Commercial Vacancy Rate -- No Data Reported		
Development Activity		
****$ Value of New Commercial Bldg. Permits***	***Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11***	***- 48.2%***
$ Value of New Residential Bldg. Permits	**Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11**	**- 2.4%**
No. of New Residential Bldg. Permits	**Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11**	**- 5.4%**
Agricultural Economy		
Wine Production (Liters Subj. to Excise Tax)	**Q2 CY 10 & Q2 CY 11**	**+41.6%**
Private Sectors Jobs as % of Total Jobs	**CY 2009 & CY 2010**	**- 0.7 pp**
Total Assessed Value of Taxable Real Property	**CY 2010 & CY 2011**	**- 0.8%**
Commercial Zoning Clearances	**CY 2009 & CY 2010**	**- 10.9%**
BPOL Tax Revenue	**FY 2010 & FY 2011**	**- 1.0%**
Machinery & Tools Tax Revenue	**FY 2010 & FY 2011**	**- 22.5%**
Resid. & Non-Residential R.E. Tax Split	**FY 2010 & FY 2011**	**No Change**

The indicators that are showing growth includes sales tax, motel tax, and meals tax. From the second quarter of 2010 and second quarter of 2011 they actually saw the unemployment rate go down very slightly. Work Force Center clients went up from where staff was tracking before. Part of that could be attributed to a greater awareness of the facility. The center has been promoted and they have done a lot more outreach. The center has become an important resource for our community. It is a one stop for both job seekers and employers who are trying to figure out how to access some of the different incentives.

The total number of new business licenses staff is saying that data is not available. However, that is because they had to have a starting point. They were not collecting the number of new business licenses from quarter to quarter. By end of this year they should have a good starting point for comparing year to year.

The small business development center is another important metric. They provide grant funding to that federal program and are continuing to seek as many as possible to provide guidance.

The real estate data is difficult to capture. The number of homes has gone down, but they have seen the numbers in the month supply go up slightly. It is difficult to gage exactly where the real estate market is headed from the numbers and combined information.

Looking at the value of new commercial building permits, staff found that went down pretty significantly. However, that is reflective of the Martha Jefferson project being a really big project that was finished with the building permit process in the prior year. That had a big impact on the data.

The last metric is the wine production. Staff is using that as a proxy because unfortunately USDA has cut funding, which went to the State of Virginia for a really great publication used in years past called the Grape Report. It was a state wide report of grape production in the different counties. They are able to

see every year that Albemarle County's grape production is going up. This is the next best resource for staff, which comes from the ABC tax on farm wineries product, which is an excise tax that they pay.

Additional indicators include annual data on employment. As noted, private sector jobs went down slightly as a percentage of total jobs. That is an important metric for staff to gage as they are a university based economy. They want to make sure they are still out there and trying to promote private sector jobs to the extent that they can.

They saw a slight dip in commercial zoning clearances. It is hard to really make a generalization about that going from one year to the next. Regarding Machinery, Tools and Tax Revenue staff will need to see what happens next year. Staff tracks the ratio of residential tax revenue between residential property as well as commercial property. At this point there has been no change in that ratio.

The next chart shows the unemployment trends going back to 2007. In 2011 there is a slight dip in unemployment. Right now in 2011 it is at 5.1 percent, which means they have about 51,948 folks employed by September and 2,008 unemployed. Private sectors jobs are a percentage of total jobs, which goes back to 1991, which shows that the ratio is pretty consistent.

Staff reviewed the following information in the Power Point presentation:

- Total assessed value of taxable real property in Albemarle County (CY 2007- FY2011) – This is the largest basis of the county's revenue for paying for services. They are seeing a slight dip from 2010 to 2011.
- Hotel/Motel tax revenue – The chart shows this revenue has gone up. The same is true for Meals Tax Revenue.

Mr. Morris invited questions for staff from Commissioners.

Mr. Lafferty questioned the accuracy of the 15 percent decrease in homes and real estate taxes. His assessed value has gone down much more than the percentage she indicated. He did not think these numbers really reflect what he has been reading in the newspaper. His understanding is that it has gone down a lot more than 15 percent.

Ms. Catlin noted this is also commercial and everything wrapped in. It is not just residential. Staff can get back to the Commission with more detail on it.

Mr. Kamptner pointed out that new construction gets added to the tax rolls.

Ms. Porterfield questioned if it includes the Martha Jefferson Hospital.

Ms. Stimart said staff will get back to the Commission on that.

Mr. Morris said on the number of business licenses he understands staff does not have it now by quarter. He asked if staff had the total for A and B type business licenses.

Ms. Stimart replied that staff does not have the last quarter 2010 to the last quarter of 2011 comparison. At the fourth quarter of 2010 they were at 39 business licenses. At the third quarter of 2011 they were at 64. Those quarters are not exactly comparable because one is reflective of the Christmas holiday season and the other more of the fall period. She has data running from January to October of this year, which shows a total of 232 business licenses. The business licensing process is different in the county and city and hard to compare.

Mr. Morris noted that many people have a class A business license out of their home. Therefore, he was surprised on how many small businesses there were in the county.

Ms. Stimart pointed out these are new licenses for the year. There are over 4,000 in the county.

Mr. Morris invited public comment on the Economic Vitality Action Plan. There being none, the public hearing was closed and the matter opened for discussion by the Commission. He noted there would be separate public comment on the second work session.

Mr. Franco commented that in some of the pictures or information provided, such as the motel tax revenues, it might be helpful to track the total sales and what is being taxed as opposed to what the tax revenues are similar to property values to know whether they are having growth or just an increase in taxes. He asked if the revenue increased simply because the tax rate was increased or because there was a lot more activity.

Ms. Catlin replied that the revenue was increasing. However, that is something that can be shown.

No formal action was taken. Staff will take the Commission's comments into consideration in continuing the process.

b. Comprehensive Plan Review - Rural Land Use & Urban Agriculture (Elaine Echols)

Ms. Echols presented a Power Point presentation and summarized the staff report noting the prior discussion gives some context for some of the work they are doing with the Comp Plan.

PURPOSE OF WORKSESSION

- The purpose of this work session is to set general direction on the issues as noted below and assess if any changes are needed to the goals, recommendations and objectives in the Plan.
- After discussion, the Commission may wish to recommend changes to the Plan that would provide future guidance for zoning text amendments.
- The Planning Commission is asked to discuss the possibility of adding a section to the plan on tourism and to discuss expanding uses in the Rural Areas. Recommendations from this work session will be used in development of the updated draft of the Comprehensive Plan.

The two parts of the work session are:

A. Tourism as a Goal (mostly in the Rural Areas). The urban agriculture will be brought back later in this process for discussion.
B. Expanded Uses in the Rural Areas

Tourism as a Specific Goal - Tourism provides:

- Economic vitality in the County's Rural Areas
- A link to agriculture, historic and scenic preservation, and maintenance of rural character
- Revenue to the County with a limited investment
- A way to make historic properties viable

Goals Should Reference These Parameters

- Reversible
- Appropriately scaled and cited
- Minimal impacts to public health and the environment
- Viable without requiring increase in infrastructure or services

Recommendation

- Add specific goals for tourism

Alternative Uses In the Rural Areas (All alternative uses, except areas of assembly, came out of the Roundtable held on November 1.)

- Transient Lodging
- Food Service

- Distilleries and Breweries
- Special Events
- Low-impact Commercial Recreation
- Areas of Assembly (Re: Special use perm it requests for places of worship)

Comp Plan or Zoning Amendment?
Staff is not talking about zoning text amendments. They are talking about the Comprehensive Plan and how it can support the goals that they have for both our economy and rural area uses. Some of the things they will be talking about would be translated into a zoning text amendment potentially in the future. Special use permits should be kept in mind and are about whether or not a particular use is an appropriate use in a particular location and at the scale being requested. What staff is saying is it should be in the Comprehensive Plan as something to be considered under certain circumstances and it would likely be translated into a special use permit. Then through the zoning text amendment they would be providing the parameters that would be reviewed.

Transient Lodging
- Bed & Breakfasts
- Inns that have been used historically as an Inn and are located in a historic landmark identified in Comprehensive Plan

Bed & Breakfasts:
- Part of a home
- Resident manager
- Inside the home
- Limited number of rooms (Five bedrooms can be used)

Part of the reasons they have these fairly restricted measures is they are trying to promote stewardship of properties in the rural areas and also keep the impacts low. If they have a home that has some additional bedrooms that are available for transient lodging they are going to be dealing with some similar water uses, waste water disposal and similar traffic type of things. They are looking at reversible uses. One could have a B&B in your home, stop operating it, and then the home is still a home. A question has been raised whether these regulations are too restrictive in promoting tourism and allowing property owners to be able to use their properties as bed & breakfast or for transient lodging.

***Questions raised**:*

•Could the manager live outside of the home? There has to be a resident manager.

•Could the B&B be in a building other than a home, such as a barn? Or, could the resident manager be living in a different building other than the home that the bed and breakfast is in?

These issues have been brought up. An email was received from Ann Mallek who is concerned that they may be too restrictive in terms of bed and breakfast regulations and there ought to be some opportunities to use other buildings on site. Staff has relooked at that and will be talking to the Commission about it a little later. Staff thinks there are some conditions under which they could be more flexible in terms of the bed and breakfast in what buildings could be used and how they would be used.

Inns - Bigger than a B&B but smaller than a “hotel”

Issues: water, wastewater, fire/rescue, roads

Historically they have not allowed for new inns to be constructed or new inns to come into existence because they have concerns about the above referenced issues. Staff had a meeting during the last month with the Health Department to discuss what their licensing involves. It was really quite an eye opener to think about the amount of water that has to be used in any kind of food preparation that would go along with an inn. For example, laundering the sheets and towels for an inn could create a large amount of volume associated with the water usage and the corresponding waste water disposal. The

bigger the activity the more impacts it has potentially to roads. So they have been trying to keep those impacts down. Also, they recognize that fire and rescue service is not at the same level in the rural areas as it is in the development areas. People cannot expect that they are going to have intermediate fire and rescue service if they are out in the rural areas.

Questions raised:
•Should inns be allowed in buildings other than historic inns?

•Should inns be allowed in historic structures?

•Should new inns be allowed as solely new construction?

Recommendations:
- B&Bs remain by-right as they are
- Consideration given for unique circumstances such as "accessory unit" for the owner (potential special use permit)
- Inns in historic structures if appropriate in location, size, and scale, and few impacts. When dealing with historic properties staff thinks that the Historic Preservation Committee will need to be consulted before they would come back with any strong recommendations about how those things could happen. They are worried about making sure that our historic properties maintain their historic characteristics, especially architecturally and in their setting. They could provide some good guidance that would help us achieve all of those goals.

Health Department Regulations and Local Foods
Food Service in the Rural Areas - Restaurants

Only allowed in historic taverns, inns, or private clubs in Rural Areas

Issues:
- Water
- Trucks – Food Delivery (Amount of truck traffic)
- Wastewater
- Destination
- Can you keep it local? They want to promote local food production in our rural areas. However, a restaurant needs more than local food to operate.

Recommendations:
- Restaurants in historic structures if appropriate in location, size, and scale, and few impacts
- Unique circumstances such as crossroads community or remote area to serve residents of rural areas with appropriate location, size, and scale, and few impacts

Distilleries and Breweries
- Cideries (hard cider) are currently allowed as farm wineries.
- They get an ABC farm winery license and can enjoy all those same rights for uses.
- Distillation of grapes might have low impact
- Beer production and some distilleries require major amounts of hops/grains and water Microbreweries seem to need a restaurant. (Note: Amelia McCulley, Zoning Administrator is present and can answer questions concerning microbreweries. She has done a lot of research in other communities.)

Recommendations:
- Very small distillation operation might be appropriate if product being distilled is grown on-site (example: brandy from grapes) -- more research needed
- Most distilleries would not be appropriate
- Most microbreweries would not be appropriate
- Microbrewery at scale of winery might be appropriate – more research needed

Special Events

- 200 persons -- by-right at wineries
- 150 persons -- by special use permit for other uses

Recommendation: Further Study

Commercial Recreation
Recommendation:

- Update Zoning Ordinance to reflect current commercial uses
- Assess impacts of commercial recreational uses to see if there is a threshold for low-impact commercial operations to be allowed by-right

Areas of Assembly
Recommendation:

- Identify thresholds where areas of assembly could be by-right

Staff recommends direction should be given about new or alternative uses that could potentially be put in the Comprehensive Plan after further study. If they could find a way to put the parameters around what they would allow in zoning by special use permit and by right, then the Comprehensive Plan can make some recommendations without having to get solely into the details of the zoning text amendment.

Currently the Comprehensive Plan talks about the importance of improvements that would be in the rural areas being reversible so they don't lose that rural area character or a resource they have. One of the things that came out at the Roundtable was the understanding of the people there and how much they wanted things to be appropriately scaled and sited. There was no one at the Roundtable that was asking for a McDonald's franchise. There was nobody at the Roundtable who was talking about putting in a Hilton in our rural areas or any kind of a huge operation. There is an appreciation in our business community for the small scale commercial tourist related uses, which would also need to have minimal impacts. Finally, the alternatives uses would have to be viable without requiring increases in infrastructure or services as noted below.

Appropriateness Guidance Recommendations

- Reversible
- Appropriately scaled and cited
- Minimal impacts to public health and the environment
- Viable without requiring increase in infrastructure or services

Mr. Morris invited questions for staff.

Mr. Loach commented on staff's list regarding the appropriateness. He suggested one of the bullet points to be specific to water quality and usage since almost all of the uses staff outlined in the presentation were predicated on adequate water supplies, such as transient lodging, food service, distilleries, etc. He questioned if staff has looked at the density of these businesses to ensure that the character of the area is not changed, such as the location of more than one winery.

Ms. Echols replied there is consideration for the accumulative effect of a number of these kinds of uses in a particular location through a special use permit process. Since farm wineries are allowed by right, staff cannot restrict them in terms of their locations and whether there are three or four on one road. If there are other uses by special use permit they can consider whether or not the impacts of more than one in a particular area are going to be great enough to go over the level at which they are comfortable because of the cumulative impacts.

Ms. Porterfield asked when talking about transient lodging and historic buildings does staff have an age for historic or will they go with what is national historic. National historic is if they have something that is 50 years or older it could be deemed historic.

Ms. Echols replied there is a list of historic properties in the Comprehensive Plan, which would be the starting point. They would determine whether the property has been identified as an historic property or could be added. The list includes properties with both age and significant architectural or historical characteristics.

Ms. Porterfield pointed out that would exclude the national definition. In other words someone with a property not listed in the Comprehensive Plan could not have this type of lodging.

Ms. Echols replied that right now that is the threshold and their starting point for consideration.

Ms. Porterfield suggested staff look at only allowing a certain number in a specific area on a certain amount of acreage in the rural area in order to minimize impacts. She was pleased to see the Historic Preservation Committee mentioned numerous times in the report since it is a really good committee.

Mr. Morris suggested they give thought to expanding their views on bed and breakfast and allowing restaurants in the rural area. There are a lot of places in other jurisdictions with fewer restrictions. The competition is there and those businesses are doing very well. It just seems they are denying people who own property in Albemarle County from taking advantage of the beautiful area that they have. It would be a preferable place for him to go rather than going to Louisa County and Prospect Hill if he could get the same dinner. He questioned if that area was on well and septic system. However, they really need to take a real hard look at whether there is really a problem with excessive use of water and generation of waste water. He suggested that they expand on this a great deal for bed and breakfast. However, he was unsure about including inns.

Mr. Lafferty asked if Clifton was an inn.

Ms. Echols replied that Clifton was an historic inn. Currently bed and breakfast are allowed by right. Staff would be happy to provide the Commission with whatever information they need to determine whether they want to broaden these parameters.

Ms. Porterfield said right now by right the bed and breakfast is allowed five rooms within the same house. She asked if staff's proposal was to look at accessory structures and increased rooms.

Ms. Echols replied staff was looking at accessory structures, but not increased rooms. However, increasing the number of rooms was something that could be looked at.

Ms. Porterfield suggested if staff was going to have accessory structures it would be worthwhile looking at increased rooms and possibly being by special use permit since it would be outside of the by right. Mr. Sullivan had contacted her about the possibility of looking at active farms to see how they could get into the tourism business. There are people who want to go to farms and spend a certain amount of time. It would certainly help with the economic feasibility of the big farms in the county.

Mr. Franco said in general staff was on the conservative side. Reversible may include the reuse of structures as well. If they have an existing structure, he did not know it has to be historic to allow for it to be reused for an inn or some other use. He would also say that the minimal impact statement ought to be adjusted to reflect what could occur on the site. One of the reasons he supports these additional uses in the rural area is to prevent the conversion of that rural land to residential land. When he looks at water use if he was looking at a several hundred acre farm, he might look at the potential of what it is residentially and at what the water use for all of those uses would be as opposed to just saying minimal to give some kind of appropriate scale. He noted that staff talked about their goal to minimize trucks in the rural areas. To the best of his knowledge cattle, cows, crops, milk, and wood all need trucks in the rural area. The truck traffic already exists in the rural areas. He agreed they don't want to have a big increase in truck traffic and was not looking to overdevelop the county. However, he would like to see it broadened to make it more feasible for people to preserve the whole sections of rural area land.

Mr. Lafferty said he appreciates the difficulty in trying to structure something like this. When they talk about appropriate size and things like that he was worried that in the future people might say well we have too many hoops to jump through and suggest that they streamline this. Then they could lose the effectiveness of what they were trying to do. He agreed with Mr. Franco that this was probably too restrictive right now.

Mr. Kamptner pointed out the Board adopted the country stores regulations three years ago. He did not see where country stores were mentioned particularly in the food service. That was a big issue three years ago in the 20 percent limitation. He asked if that would be considered in part of this review and has staff received any input from any owners of country stores.

Ms. Echols asked Ms. McCulley if she had any input from any owners of country stores.

Ms. McCulley replied not recently related to this.

Ms. Echols said the health department during their discussion with staff gave such good information regarding country stores and food service. There are a fair amount of health department regulations that have to be met. If there is a restaurant or food service use where they are preparing and serving food they have to do regular water testing and send the samples in along with all the other regulatory aspects. Therefore, there is some amount of that which would be self regulating. Staff had not intended on opening up the country stores. If the Planning Commission wants, staff could go into that some more.

Ms. Porterfield suggested that staff take a look at that. If it had not been for the 15 seat maximum for the Batesville Store, it might still be in operation. If they are going to look at restaurants in the rural areas, they need to figure out whether there is a way to accommodate country stores and let them have more seats or something like that.

Mr. Franco pointed out the 15 seats was a state health regulation.

Ms. Porterfield questioned what would be the difference between that and a restaurant.

Mr. Franco replied that he did not think there would be a difference. However, they would have to meet the state health department standards for a restaurant.

Mr. Morris opened the public hearing and invited public comment.

Public comment was taken from the following persons:

- Neil Williamson, Free Enterprise Forum, presented a Power Point presentation and asked the Commission to take a good hard look at the examples presented in other areas and take in consideration allowing those types of businesses in Albemarle County. He asked the Commission to increase the economic opportunity in the Rural Areas; identify and remove unneeded regulatory barriers, identify and mitigate impacts, grow prosperous new enterprises (and jobs) in the 95% of Albemarle that is the Rural Areas.
- Tom Olivier, chairman of the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club and an individual representing a working farm, presented a statement to the Commission. (Attachment 3 – Statement to Planning Commission Regarding the Update of the Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan By the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club dated November 29, 2011) He pointed out the need to cherish and preserve open spaces and the many resources they contain in order to protect their sustainability. Some rural resources are priceless and need to be protected. He encouraged small-scale local production and marketing of agricultural products and arts and crafts in the rural areas. He encouraged staff to support the "eat local" movement. He supported small-scale tourism and recreational opportunities in the rural areas provided they are done so in a manner compatible with preservation of farms, forests, clean water and ecosystems.
- Jeff Werner, Piedmont Environmental Council, encouraged staff to go out to the community for discussion and suggestions regarding the rural areas uses. He agreed with Mr. Olivier they need to make sure the rural area is preserved and there is some assurance farm land remains intact.

Regarding increased traffic he noted in rural area economic activity there is already truck traffic. He suggested that tax credits be taken into consideration.

- Tom Sullivan, owner and leaser of a collection of farms of over 5,000 acres in the Scottsville area, asked for changes in the transient lodging so large farms could have some opportunities made available to increase their income to support and help preserve the large farming operations in the county. He asked that they be allowed to use their large structures, such as a single-family home for transient lodging particularly for weddings. They have to become a winery for special events. It would be great that some part of the wedding party could stay overnight since it is a 40 mile trip into Charlottesville. He has contributed to paving the roads and helped with the fire department. He was not sure if the structures on his farm would be considered historic. However, he would like some consideration for the large farms to be allowed to have transient lodging.

Mr. Morris closed the public hearing to bring the matter before the Planning Commission for further consideration.

The Commission commented on the information provided as follows and asked staff to take their comments into consideration in the continuing work on the Comprehensive Plan.

Comments in general:

- The current goals for reversibility, scale, minimal impact, and viability without increase in services should be modified. The issue of reversibility isn't as important for tourist-related activities.
- To assess impacts, a comparison should be made between a by-right subdivision and a requested use.
- Incentives should be in place to encourage owners to not subdivide their property. Consider a tiered approach for new uses where a by-right use could occur if water usage is equivalent to a subdivision. Above that amount of water usage, a special use permit would be needed.
- Consider approving high water usage using activities on the basis of the Health Department's approval process.
- Farm-tourism should be allowed on a case-by-case basis. Consider an agri-tourist district.

Comments regarding transient lodging and food service (restaurants):

- New and existing structures, not just historic structures, should be available for bed and breakfasts, inns, and small restaurants.
- If there is any preferential treatment for historic structures, a definition for historic structures is needed.
- Allowances should be made for bed and breakfasts (tourist lodging) that would increase the number of guest rooms and also allow for the resident manager to reside in a building on-site that is not the same as the tourist lodge. Consider allowing the use of two to three outbuildings for people to stay as well as five or six rooms within main house that serves dinner.
- Look for similar uses that have been successful in other localities and what was needed to make them successful without compromising the rural areas. Be open to alternative water and sewer systems that could be placed on some of the larger properties.
- Review requests on a site-by-site basis for impact and scale.
- Consider allowing use of an existing structure by-right. Require a special use permit for a new or expanded structure.
- Re-look at country stores to see if parameters should be broadened for food service.

Comments on distilleries and breweries:

- Consider distilleries and breweries in the rural areas on a case-by-case basis.
- Although these uses are high water users, there may be sufficient water in an area to support the use.
- Existing infrastructure may be able to handle the traffic.

Comments on Low Impact Commercial Recreation:

- Make changes to the zoning ordinance to "modernize" terminology and regulations for outdoor commercial recreation, such as zip lines and mountain biking.
  All commercial recreational uses in the Rural Areas should be by special use permit because of site specific impacts.

Comments on areas of assembly:

- Develop thresholds for by-right uses.
- Special uses would still be important for higher impact areas of assembly due to potential scale and traffic issues

Comments on special events:

- Special events need to be more equitable across the board. It is unfair for farm wineries to have 200 person events by-right but all other events have to get a special use permit and only 150 persons would be allowed. Farms with large acreage should not have to be a winery in order to have 200 people come for a wedding.

No formal action was taken.

Old Business:

Mr. Morris asked if there was any old business. There being none, the meeting moved to the next item.

New Business:

Mr. Morris asked if there was any new business.

- Request that information be provided to the Historic Resources Committee Chair regarding the demolition of an historic structure at 4620 Burnley Station Road without a demo permit.
- Noted that power lines on Route 29 are being replaced in Greene County, but not in Albemarle County, and such replacement may be desirable/necessary in Albemarle to better serve industrial development needs in northern Albemarle.
- NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING WILL BE ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2011.

There being no further new business, the meeting moved to adjournment.

Adjournment:

With no further items, the meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m. to the Tuesday, December 6, 2011 meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the County Office Building, Second Floor, Room #241, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

_____

V. Wayne Cilimberg, Secretary

(Recorded and transcribed by Sharon C. Taylor, Clerk to Planning Commission & Planning Boards)

Attachment 1 –
Consent Agenda – Resolutions of Intent – Urban Development Areas – Streetscapes:
1. Zoning Ordinance and 2. Subdivision Ordinance.

RESOLUTION OF INTENT (Consent Agenda Item a1)

WHEREAS, a goal of the Neighborhood Model section of the Comprehensive Plan for neighborhoods in the Development Areas is "appealing streetscapes" that will "make the neighborhood inviting with street trees and landscaping"; and

WHEREAS, a key principle of the Neighborhood Model is "Neighborhood Friendly Streets and Paths" that "include streetscape elements such as street trees"; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia, Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment, awarded the County $50,000 in consultant support services to facilitate designating Urban Development Areas and appropriate ordinances for their amendment "to incorporate the principles of new urbanism and traditional neighborhood design"; and

WHEREAS, the scope of work for these consultant support services provided by the Renaissance Planning Group included recommendations for potential amendments to the Zoning Ordinance regarding use of "VDOT street standards to allow street trees in public rights of way . . ."; and

WHEREAS, the County's zoning requirements for street trees have been reviewed and amendments have been identified for consideration that can further the goals and principles of the Neighborhood Model and Urban Development Areas;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT for purposes of public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practices, the Albemarle County Planning Commission hereby adopts a resolution of intent to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 32.7.9.6 and any other regulations of the Zoning Ordinance deemed appropriate to achieve the purposes described herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on this resolution of intent, and return its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors at the earliest possible date.

* * * * *

RESOLUTION OF INTENT (Consent Agenda item a2)

WHEREAS, a goal of the Neighborhood Model section of the Comprehensive Plan for neighborhoods in the Development Areas is "appealing streetscapes" that will "make the neighborhood inviting with street trees and landscaping"; and

WHEREAS, a key principle of the Neighborhood Model is "Neighborhood Friendly Streets and Paths" that "include streetscape elements such as street trees"; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia, Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment, awarded the County $50,000 in consultant support services to facilitate designating Urban Development Areas and appropriate ordinances for their amendment "to incorporate the principles of new urbanism and traditional neighborhood design"; and

WHEREAS, the scope of work for these consultant support services provided by the Renaissance Planning Group included recommendations for potential amendments to the Subdivision Ordinance regarding "location of . . . landscaping to insure appropriate urban form, particularly in public road rights-of-way"; and

WHEREAS, the County's subdivision requirements for sidewalks and planting strips have been reviewed and amendments have been identified for consideration that can further the goals and principles of the Neighborhood Model and Urban Development Areas;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT for purposes of public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good land development practices, the Albemarle County Planning Commission hereby adopts a resolution of intent to amend Subdivision Ordinance Section 14-422 and any other regulations of the Subdivision Ordinance deemed appropriate to achieve the purposes described herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on this resolution of intent, and return its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors at the earliest possible date.

* * * * *

Resolutions of Intent – Phase III Industrial Uses (ZTA-2010-00004).

RESOLUTION OF INTENT (Consent Agenda item b)

WHEREAS, one of the short-term priorities of the County's Economic Development Policy is to initiate zoning text amendments that further enable business and industrial uses in appropriate zoning districts; and

WHEREAS, the County's Economic Vitality Action Plan recommends removing obstacles and expanding options and flexibility for users of industrial land by amending the Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, in implementing the County's Economic Development Policy and the Economic Vitality Action Plan, the Board has already adopted two zoning text amendments pertaining to industrial uses (ZTA-2010-001 and ZTA-2010-002); and

WHEREAS, it is now desired to consider amending the regulations in the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to industrial uses in order to reflect current industrial technologies, and to increase flexibility within the industrial zoning districts while at the same time preserving those districts' integrity for true industrial uses.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT for purposes of public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practices, the Albemarle County Planning Commission hereby adopts a resolution of intent to amend the Zoning Ordinance, including sections 4, 5, 26, 27, 28, 29 and any other section deemed appropriate, as described herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on this resolution of intent, and return its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors at the earliest possible date.

* * * * *

Attachment 2 –
Consent Agenda – Resolutions of Intent – Process improvements for:
1. Zoning Map amendments and special use permits

RESOLUTION OF INTENT (Consent Agenda Item d1)

WHEREAS, the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance includes regulations pertaining to applying for and reviewing zoning map amendments ("rezonings") and special use permits; and

WHEREAS, in order to improve quality and efficiency in the application and review of requests for rezonings and special use permits, it may be desirable to amend the regulations in the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the application requirements and the review procedures for rezonings and special use permits.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT for purposes of public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practices, the Albemarle County Planning Commission hereby adopts a resolution of intent to consider amending Albemarle County Code §§ 18-31, Administration and Enforcement, and 18-33, Amendments, and any other sections of the Zoning Ordinance deemed to be appropriate to achieve the purposes described herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the zoning text amendment proposed pursuant to this resolution of intent, and make its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors at the earliest possible date.

* * * * *

Attachment 3 –

Tom Olivier, chairman of the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club and an individual representing a working farm, presented a statement to the Commission. (Statement to Planning Commission Regarding the Update of the Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan By the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club dated November 29, 2011 on the following 3 pages)

Statement to the Albemarle County Planning Commission
Regarding the Update of the Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan

By the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club
November 29, 2011

Good evening. My name is Tom Olivier. I am chairman of the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club. I've come to speak to you this evening for the Sierra Club regarding aspects of the Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan update. For the record, I participated as an individual representing a working farm in the November 1 agri-business roundtable discussed in the staff report.

In June, the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club developed a vision statement that we proposed be included in the comprehensive plans of Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville. In August, we sent a letter to the staff of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission expressing concerns about various aspects of the draft Livability Indicators. You should have received copies of both of these previously. For your reference, copies of these documents are attached to copies of this statement.

Your focus this evening is on the rural areas economic vitality. A starting point in that discussion of rural areas should be recognition of our need to cherish and preserve open spaces and the many resources they contain. Research by Advocates for a Sustainable Albemarle Population into the ecological footprint of the Albemarle-Charlottesville community shows that we already are consuming more open space biological products than the local landscape can sustainably produce (see www.asapnow.org/Footprintecological.pdf and www.asapnow.org/Biocapacity.pdf). Every loss of open space moves our community further from sustainability.

One challenge rural areas planning is that some essential rural resources are priceless. Being mammals, humans depend on the ecosystem services provided by natural systems. However, ecosystem services are not usually bought and sold. The lack of commercial value attached to ecosystems and services can easily lead some to propose their sacrifice at the altar of economic development. However, we do so at our peril.

Another challenge arises from changing opportunities in rural industries. In particular, the high price of rural land and modest agricultural production potential of rural land in Albemarle County limits prospects for economically competitive production of agricultural commodities. On the other hand, many new opportunities now exist for local marketing of local agricultural products.

The Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club commends efforts by county staff to support the 'eat local' movement. We also support small-scale tourism and recreational opportunities in the rural areas provided they are done so in a manner compatible with preservation of farms, forests, clean water and ecosystems. We recognize the value of home occupations to rural residents. We encourage small-scale local production and marketing of agricultural products and arts and crafts in the rural areas.

We look forward to reviewing draft text proposals for the new comprehensive plan on the subject of economic vitality. We will be presenting at later dates our thoughts on additional aspects of the Albemarle County comprehensive plan update.

June 14 2011

Proposed Comprehensive Plans Vision Statement
For the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle
From the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club

A SUMMARY OF OUR VISION

Underlying Values

We value a community of diverse individuals and groups who adhere to principles of sustainability, justice, equity and respect for free speech. We cherish individuals, our cultural environment and our natural environment. We recognize our obligation to live within limits of the natural environment. We believe governments, businesses and voluntary organizations should promote access to the necessities of life for all residents. We regard the values and elements of this vision as interconnected and necessary.

Our Envisioned Community

We envision our community as one in which the values above are realized in:

1) The lives of individuals with:
   a) Respect for residents of all races, nationalities, religions and sexual orientations.
   b) Safety and equal justice for all residents.
   c) Equal opportunity for all residents to help plan and implement this vision.
   d) Promotion of healthy communities by minimizing the use of toxins.
   e) Availability of safe, healthy food for all residents.
2) The cultural environment with:
   a) Open and accountable governments.
   b) Recognition by all of obligations to the common good.
   c) Quality educational opportunities for students of all vocations and ages.
   d) Good health care for all residents.
   e) Provisions for ample affordable housing for low-income residents.
   f) An economy that provides meaningful and rewarding jobs for all workers.
   g) Provisions for efficient public transportation and alternatives to the automobile (including bicycles).
   h) Diverse recreational opportunities for all.
3) The natural environment with:
   a) Active protection of essential natural resources (including air, water, natural areas).
   b) Maintenance of stable or near-stable human population size.
   c) Commitment to reduction of per capita energy consumption.
   d) Strong reliance on renewable energy resources.
   e) Promotion of sustainable agriculture.

Gmail by Google

Tom Olivier <cruz.olivier@gmail.com>

Sierra Livability Indicator Remarks

Tom Olivier <cruz.olivier@gmail.com> **Tue, Aug 30, 2011 at 12:36 PM**
To: Stephen Williams <swilliams@tjpdc.org>
Cc: Tom Olivier <cruz.olivier@gmail.com>, Summer Frederick <sfrederick@tjpdc.org>, Elaine Echols <EECHOLS@albemarle.org>, Missy Creasy <creasym@charlottesville.org>, Albemarle Supervisors <bos@albemarle.org>, Charlottesville City Council <council@charlottesville.org>, Albemarle Planning Commission <planningcommission@albemarle.org>, Koren Manning <KManning@tjpdc.org>

August 30, 2011

Stephen Williams
Executive Director
Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission

Dear Mr. Williams:

I am writing on behalf of the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club to present our views on the state of the draft performance indicators of the Livable Communities project. We are commenting on the indicators as they are presented in the Livable Communities project handout "Where are we NOW?" (web link: www.1-community.org/PDF/Handoutfor_06.23PublicMeeting_Final.pdf).

Certain general characteristics of the indicator set concern us. These include:
* The indicators do not cover some important aspects of livability (e.g. justice system performance, health, impacts of population growth on the local environment).
* The emphasis on readily available data sets could lead to omission of measurements of important aspects of the state of our community.
* Some readily available data sets were not utilized (e.g. the U.S. population census; the USDA census of agriculture).
* The links between particular proposed indicators and particular text blocks in local planning documents (City and County comprehensive plans, Sustainability Accords and others) should be specified.

We believe that future drafts of the indicator set should be developed in processes where there is fuller collaboration between local experts, stake holders and local government decision-makers.

We look forward to further work with the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville on finalization of the performance indicators.

Sincerely,

Tom Olivier
Chairman, Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club
tel. 434-831-2408