Albemarle County Planning Commission
FINAL Minutes September 17, 2019

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a public hearing on Tuesday, September 17, 2019, at 6:00 p.m., at the County Office Building, Lane Auditorium, Second Floor, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Members attending were Tim Keller, Chair; Julian Bivins, Vice-Chair; Daphne Spain; Karen Firehock; Pam Riley; and Bruce Dotson.

Members absent: Jennie More; and Luis Carrazana, UVA representative.

Other officials present were David Benish, Interim Director of Planning; Rebecca Ragsdale, Bart Svoboda, Kevin McDermott, Andrew Knuppel, Michaela Accardi, Rachel Falkenstein, Francis MacCall, Andy Herrick and Sharon Taylor.

Call to Order and Establish Quorum

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

From the Public: Matters Not Listed for Public Hearing on the Agenda

Mr. Keller invited comment from the public on other matters not listed on the agenda. Hearing none, he invited discussion from Mr. Doug Walker.

Mr. Doug Walker, Deputy County Executive, introduced Ms. Jodie Filardo, the new Director of Community Development and welcomed her to the County. He noted her 18 years of experience in government service in Arizona as well as her extensive experience in the private sector. He added that she will be working to fill the vacant Planning Director position.

Ms. Filardo addressed the Planning Commission and said she looked forward to working with and coming before them in the future.

Consent Agenda

There were no consent agenda items.

Work Sessions

ZTA201900006 Rio-29 Form-Based Code

Ms. Michaela Accardi, Senior Planner with Community Development; and Ms. Rachel Falkenstein, Principal Planner, presented. Ms. Accardi explained that this was the second of four work sessions to receive the Planning Commission's feedback on the Rio-29 form-based code and that they would be presenting topics on streets, parking, and public space. She added that several county staff were present as well to serve as subject matter experts to present staff recommendations on those topics.

Ms. Accardi said she would provide a brief overview of the project background, scope, and engagement to date. She said that staff's technical teams would provide an overview of their research, community engagement, and findings for each of the three topics. She said they will discuss each of the topics individually, as done in the previous work session.

Ms. Accardi provided a background and overview, beginning with project goals. She said the first goal is to support and incentivize development that aligns with the vision of the Rio-29 Small Area Plan through a vibrant process and allows transition and flexibility over time. She said the second goal is to establish clear expectations for all stakeholders involved (residents, property owners, developers, and the county).

Ms. Accardi said the third goal is to find appropriate balance between flexibility and regulation. She said the fourth goal is to draft an ordinance through an inclusive and transparent process that fosters an understanding of zoning and form-based code.

Ms. Accardi presented the project work plan to serve as a reminder of where they were in the process. She explained they wrapped up community events held during the summer and have been conducting economic development focus groups over the past month. She said there would be two additional work sessions with the Planning Commission scheduled for October and November, with the goal of bringing a draft framework of the ordinance to the Board of Supervisors in December.

Ms. Accardi said that as an overview of what staff had heard from the Planning Commission during the August 20 work session, staff should refine the definition of "light industrial" to allow for small application components in Rio-29. She said staff also heard that they should require the form, but not the use, which promotes active uses on the first floor along key streets in the Core area of Rio-29. She said key elements included items such as window transparency and ground floor ceiling heights. She said that for building standards, staff heard that they should prioritize preserving the views and vistas from the Entrance Corridor and conduct viewshed analysis to determine existing vistas.

Ms. Accardi said they also heard that block size should be regulated and allow for variation if pedestrian passages are provided. She said they heard a shift in height recommendations from the Small Area Plan, limiting height to 4 stories, allowing up to 5 stories for bonus factors, and allowing up to 6 stories via special exception.

Ms. Falkenstein spoke about Rio Road. She presented an image of the street plan overlaid with place sites in the Rio-29 Small Area Plan. She said that Rio Road is a boulevard within the Urban Core area.

Ms. Falkenstein said that discussion staff has heard from the Planning Commission, as well as from some of the stakeholders, is whether or not Rio Road is the appropriate area to concentrate development activity as well as to accommodate pedestrian activity. She said she would discuss the reasoning for this and remind the commission why the neighborhood is designated the way it is.

Ms. Falkenstein described Rio Road as being four travel lanes, with a turn lane down the middle. She said that as one approaches the Rio/29 intersection, it widens, with several turn lanes in some areas and being about 90 feet wide. She said the reason Rio Road was designated as a boulevard and an Urban Core area was because it is the only existing east-west public street

through the Rio-29 area and as such, it is the only way to get across the planning area. She said that while some will say it is not currently a safe or friendly environment, it is the only crossing point for pedestrians in the plan area.

Ms. Falkenstein added that it is the only grade-separated crossing point of 29 North, north of the city, and does provide an opportunity for a key linkage in a commuter route they are working on called the North Town Trail that will connect Hollymead all the way down to the City of Charlottesville, noting that the Rio Road area is currently a gap within that commuter route.

Ms. Falkenstein said that there was development and redevelopment potential along Rio Road, noting that they just approved a project on Rio West, that the Northside Library was a recently-completed project, and that staff has had some initial conversations with other property owners and developers along Rio Road who have an interest in development and redevelopment. She added the visibility they have heard from the development community is important, and the visibility that Rio Road provides as a high-traveled corridor is key for redevelopment.

Ms. Falkenstein pointed out that investing in Rio Road bike-ped infrastructure and concentrating or encouraging development there does not necessarily preclude the development of other main streets within Rio Road. She said the plan was intentionally flexible within the four quadrants to allow redevelopment internal to the quadrants, and that Rio Road will continue to provide that key linkage among the four quadrants.

Ms. Falkenstein provided examples of equivalent types of streets and other localities that have the dual function of high traffic and great pedestrian streets. She said the first example was Main Street in Bozeman, Montana. She said it was very similar to Rio Road in terms of width as well as vehicles traveling per day. She described it as a main street within a town center, with businesses and pedestrian activity. She said the community invested in some public streetscape improvements and it won a Great Street award with the American Planning Association in 2012.

Ms. Falkenstein presented the example of U Street Northwest in Washington, D.C., noting that it is similar in size to Rio Road and while it does not have the same level of traffic, it is still a high-volume traffic corridor. She said that those who have been there would identify it as a vibrant safe where they feel safe to walk, yet still handles a high volume of traffic. She said this street was awarded a Great Street award by the American Planning Association in 2011.

Ms. Falkenstein said that the commission could consider great streets that are high volume in cities they have visited that can serve a dual function of moving traffic and being great places for people to be. She acknowledged that it can be difficult to envision this for Rio Road as it exists today, as it is oddly oriented and doesn't feel safe for pedestrians. She expressed that with some public investment and with development along the corridor, the county could see this shift and the road becoming a better street and better place.

Mr. Kevin McDermott, Transportation Planner, presented. He said he would review the Small Area Plan and what was described in the street section, as well as some of the work that has been done since then in developing the form-based code. He said the Small Area Plan identifies four major street typologies – boulevard, avenue, local street, and through corridor (being Route 29). He said that they would focus on boulevards, avenues, and local streets. He said the plan also identified what components of the street section would look like, including travel lanes, medians, bike lanes, sidewalks, and landscaping.

Mr. McDermott reminded the commission that the design he presented is a conceptual road plan and that all the streets that do not exist today could be moved in the future. He said the design was to provide a general idea of what they envision the road network to look like.

Mr. McDermott said the boulevard typology is expected to carry the highest level of traffic, with four lanes, and noted that landscaping was important here in also to calm traffic and make the road feel more inviting. He said this would hopefully lower speeds as well. He said that Rio Road is the only boulevard in the plan that has been identified and that they expect it to continue to function and carry the same amount of traffic due to its access to Route 29 and the fact that it is the only crossover. He said they would also like to improve the road for bicyclists and pedestrians and make it more inviting for them. He indicated to bike-ped facilities on the plan, as well as pedestrian zones.

Mr. McDermott said the next level of street is avenue, which is expected to be two-lane and that parking may be added to many of them, though not required. He said medians are a component of the avenue as well, and that they are also landscaped streets that encourage low speeds. He noted that avenues will still carry a significant amount of volume, and they expect to see bike-ped activity there as well.

Ms. Spain asked if "low speeds" meant 35 mph.

Mr. McDermott replied that speeds on avenues were expected to be 25-35mph.

Mr. McDermott presented local streets, which are the lowest level of streets in the plan. He said they have much lower capacity as they serve local traffic, yet they connect to through roads. He said local streets make up the majority of the Rio-29 street network and will be expected to be built in tandem with major developments. He explained that these have been moved away from separated bike facilities, but they have bike access. He said parking could be located on these streets, as well as farther setbacks with more pedestrian space and frontage zone.

Mr. McDermott said that in working with Mr. Frank Pohl and Mr. Tim Padalino, they assessed other form-based codes that how they relate to streets. He said they looked at numerous examples, with a couple that stood out for various reasons. He presented the San Francisco Better Streets plan, which had unified standards, guidelines, and implementation strategies to govern how the city designed, built, and maintains their pedestrian environment. He said that while it balances the needs of all the users, it turned the street into more of a public space, with a strong focus on pedestrian amenities. He expressed that the way it was organized gave examples of the different amenities to place into the streets.

Mr. McDermott presented another case study, this one being for the city of Lacy, Washington. He said it was a hybrid form-based code similar to what Albemarle is considering, and that the plan worked very similarly in terms of the different street levels and components and amenities of the streets. He said that they started out by looking at the components of the street, and now they are looking into further details as far as how amenities would build the street, which would be included in the form-based code.

Mr. McDermott took the examples to the public for community engagement, from which they came up with a list of various amenities and how they could be implemented into the different types of

streets. He presented a table, noting that the public focused on the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists. He said that the items that were highly rated included the high visibility crosswalks, protected bike facilities, bike parking, benches, etc. He said they also focused these amenities in higher traffic areas, such as boulevards and avenues.

Mr. McDermott said the public also identified the idea that perhaps some of the other streets could be focuses of more intense amenities, referring to those streets as "destination streets." He said that within a development, there may be many different local streets, but there may be one that could have a higher level of amenities, which is where more activity would occur. He indicated on the table to amenities that would be optional or required (standard).

Mr. McDermott said that staff recommends the Small Area Plan's future network uses this basis to establish the street locations and how they connect. He said those locations would be determined during the redevelopment phase and in collaboration with developers, the street sections for each type would be used in conjunction with the street's improvement table.

Ms. Falkenstein said staff's question for consideration about streets is, *"Which conceptual streets on the Rio-29 future connectivity plan should be subject to higher street improvement requirements known as destination streets."* She said staff's recommendation is that the local streets within the Core be considered destination streets, meaning they would have a higher level of amenities provided on them as well as higher frequency.

Mr. Dotson asked if the second sentence on the screen could be explained.

Ms. Falkenstein replied that the sentence was intended to allow for some flexibility. She recalled Mr. McDermott's comment that the street network is very conceptual, and that staff was taking a random guess at where streets might be located, as many of the sites could be large developments, teardowns, or phased developments.

Ms. Falkenstein said they fully anticipate that street locations will be determined at the time of site development and plan. She said it allows for flexibility if a developer of a large property decides that they want their destination street to be a long street cutting through the property rather than short segments of streets. She said staff would be open to this as long as legalities of the plan are still being met, if there is still an uninterrupted street network provided, and if connectivity goals are still being provided.

Ms. Spain asked what would determine the equivalent length if they are conceptual now, and the length is still conceptual. She asked how the developer would know how much would have to be provided.

Ms. Falkenstein replied that this was a good question and would likely need to be workshopped more. She explained that a regulating plan would be developed where staff will show street locations, and that perhaps there could be a measurement taken to determine the length of street within a site.

Ms. Firehock said she generally agreed with the recommendations and offered her thoughts. She said she was pleased to see that in the middle of the main boulevard going east to west, staff has recessed the planting area. She said she was glad to see low-impact development strategies being implemented.

Ms. Firehock brought up the fact that many of the vibrant streets that were showed in the presentation included vibrant street trees. She said one of the problems with the county currently is that there are not standards for urban tree planting. She said she had sent staff a chart of soil volume requirements to allow a tree to survive. She said for example, half of all urban trees planted live about 9 years, and the reason they die is because they do not have enough volume for their roots (deemed as "tree coffins"). She mentioned that at The Shops at Stonefield, the top halves of the trees died, so the top halves were cut off. She explained that this would not trick the trees, and that they will still die.

Ms. Firehock continued that there were many things, such as permeable pavement, and other ways to get water to roots. She expressed that if the county wants to have vibrant, successful streets, they need to adopt standards, if possible. She said this had to do with bonding trees, and that many development projects plant trees in July as that was when they arrived at that part of their plans, even though it is known that this will harm the trees. She suggested that standards be developed, even later, because otherwise there may be great ideas for the streets to look good but that they may not last. She concluded that the county was headed in a great direction.

Mr. Bivins referred to the Rio-29 Street Improvements table. He said that given Ms. Firehock's comments on green infrastructure and stormwater control, he would like to suggest that the options on the table be set as standards. He said on the green median that goes up Route 29, 75% of the trees there are in distress. He expressed that the upper part of the Rio/29 intersection appears unkept, with weeds and dirt in the open. He said that green infrastructure could be a hallmark for the county.

Mr. Bivins referred to the example of U Street, explaining that it has an interesting history. He said it used to be one of the core streets of the African-American community in Washington, D.C. and that during the unfortunate discourse that took place in the district in the 1960s, it was torn apart. He said for a while, it laid fallow, but then the Marion Barry building was placed on the corner of 16th and U Streets, which is a large local government building. He said this building, which people have to go to on a regular basis, helped to anchor U Street. He said that there was then a significant amount of gentrification that took place on 16th Street, with one of the largest Whole Foods there.

Mr. Bivins said that he liked the U Street example, as it included Ben's Chili Bowl (a legacy business) next to Whole Foods and Marion Barry Building, as well as good transit that includes the metro and buses.

Mr. Bivins said that in the Albemarle community, there are east-to-west and north-to-south factors at play, as well as through commercial traffic and local commercial traffic. He said there are also trucks of all sizes, and the mixture of agricultural and rural use all coming through the Rio/29 intersection. He said that perhaps Bozeman has some of this, but U Street certainly does not. He explained that how the county blends moving local, commercial, and rural use through the intersection, as well as the through traffic and major connection to Downtown (John Warner Parkway), will have to be considered as far as how all the uses are moved through in an effective way.

Mr. Bivins said that if they are trying to make this area a place which will be vibrant (noting that he believed in this vision), he would like to encourage having protected bike facilities across all the roads. He said this is done in Europe and in major metropolitan areas in the U.S. He said if the area is going to be a "hip" place, bikes are needed there, and they must be protected as

people should not have to navigate with through traffic, trucks, and other vehicles that perhaps do not recognize them.

Mr. Bivins said that there was a piece done in The District the previous year about bicyclists being killed and it was only because when people opened their doors when they park, they didn't see the bicyclists. He said it was hearing those kinds of opportunities where when helping design the streets, there should be protected places so that bicyclists and pedestrians are encouraged to go there.

Mr. Bivins also suggested that there be places for charging systems for electric (non-Tesla) vehicles to be located. He explained that Tesla has a proprietary plug, where all other companies are using a common plug. He said in creating an environment that attracts different kinds of use and people coming to the area, charging stations should be considered on those roads to draw people in.

Ms. Riley said that on the Streets Improvements table, under "Enhanced Transit Stops," the note says that they will only be required in locations that are currently served, or will be served, by CAT in the future. She said that a critical component to making the area work will be regular and convenient public transit services. She said if she was a developer reading the table, she would be confused as to whether she would be required to have a transit stop or not, because it is like a Catch-22. She asked how they will know if they will be served by CAT if they haven't planned where the roads will be. She asked if staff could tell her more about how transit is being potentially planned for the area and if she were a developer, how she should interpret the note.

Ms. Falkenstein deferred to Mr. McDermott and agreed that they should be clear in their language so that in the code, there is no confusion.

Mr. McDermott responded that they will have to be watching this as it develops out, and that they cannot say exactly what transit will look like because they don't know what the street network looks like. He said staff currently expects to have the high-frequency transit service on the major roads that they see along the avenues and boulevards, explaining that they could likely define those as they move into the next stages in terms of how frequent they want to see stops on the high-frequency routes (such as Hillsdale, Berkmar, and Rio). He also mentioned a transit center that was proposed at the major intersection.

Mr. McDermott said in terms of local streets, he believed that those will be ones where there would not be enhanced transit stops very often because they are not the kind of areas, he expects to see transit going down. He said that what they may expect to see more are the TNC-type amenities, such as Uber and Lift pull-offs. He said alternatively, there could be a public system similar to this, and that staff is working with JAUNT on how to incorporate the TNC model into public transit. He said staff will have to develop what the frequency or intervals of stops are on the major routes, which is something that could be predetermined to get an idea of where those would be.

Mr. Bivins said if they will be doing this on avenues and boulevards, he asked to consider having bike sheds. He explained that if the county is trying to convince people to come to a place, leave a bike, get onto transit that takes them into town, and then come back and take a bike, this connects to some of the trails that have been discussed, connecting to Hollymead, and that he hoped they would be considering North Point and Proffit Road. He said it is cumbersome to try to put a number of bikes on a bus, and to have a bike shed on the road would be beneficial.

Mr. McDermott asked if, with the enhanced transit stops, Mr. Bivins wanted to ensure that bike parking facilities are included. He said there have been many discussions about how they can require developers to include things such as covered biking, and that bike lockers or sheds could be considered. He said this would be discussed as they get further into the details and that these were good suggestions.

Mr. Dotson said he would be interested to hear Mr. Carrazana's comments, because the central Grounds contains a bike facility. He said he wasn't sure if there were bike facilities at Fontaine.

Mr. Bivins replied that there are, but they are open. He said at the Research Park, each one of the buildings has a bike rack.

Mr. Dotson said the other place that came to mind was the UVA Research Park by the airport. He said there should be consideration as to the kinds of bike facilities that would be appropriate in Albemarle County and that he was not sure if it would be the same as the central Grounds. He said perhaps there should be a different model, and that Mr. Carrazana could likely help acquaint the commission with a range of choices.

Mr. McDermott said this speaks to the public space along the roads, and they are working with other groups as far as how the private developments incorporate bike parking and other bike facilities, such as lockers for employees.

Mr. Keller reiterated to staff that they are headed in the right direction and expressed his appreciation for incorporating the commission's comments from the last work session. He prefaced his comments by stating that they were in the spirit of making the concept better and were not a criticism of it.

Mr. Keller said that on the transportation side, everyone was aware of the academic studies that have been done, more recently about the Twin Cities' mass transit and how its neighborhoods have opened and redeveloped. He said there is a direct correlation discussed, which is where there is a mass transit stop, the property increases in value and becomes a more likely place for people to want to reside due to the time savings. He said in times of bad weather during the year, this is particularly advantageous.

Mr. Keller said he was interested in, when staff arrives to a more finished product, how staff will deal with this aspect of public-private, as the county is putting a large amount of stock in the public component of mass transit. He said it seemed as though where they elect to put the bus stops and bike connectivity to them should be (if following the international model) one of the drivers in the properties that the developers will be first interested in buying and developers. He said this is where consideration should be made as to the market, because there are now studies to show from a number of cities that indicate that developers are interested in protecting their investments and are paying attention to infrastructure.

Mr. Keller expressed that he hoped there would be a preliminary idea from staff as far as where the stops will be, and that the development community would hope for this as well.

Mr. Keller said he was thinking about what makes the examples staff gave (Bozeman and U Street) different, and that this was the access point onto the freeway (in the county's case, 29 North). He said he thinks of Wisconsin and D.C. as an example with Rock Creek Parkway, and

he thinks of Madison Street in the loop connecting to the freeway in Chicago. He suggested relocation of the stop light (so there isn't a continuous turn) as a possibility, but that he wasn't sure where VDOT goes with that as they want a continuous turn.

Mr. Keller said as long as there is a continuous turn option (such as where fast food and tire store are located at the intersection now), which is close to a library (a more passive zone), there are inherent conflicts that need to be thought through. He suggested that staff should consider the boulevard differently in that greater intersection zone than further up.

Mr. McDermott said this was a valid point, and he understood what Mr. Keller was explaining about there being a gap as the bridge crosses 29, and that they will have to be very careful about how they develop this street. He said even though it is crossable, they need to make sure that the gap doesn't feel uncomfortable, because they are looking a couple hundred feet at the next building and then walking over a bridge. He said that trying to integrate the two sides is important. He said there is a recommended stop in the plan shown on one of the parcels, and that it was an example.

Mr. McDermott said that the idea was that they will wait and work with the developer when they come in. He said there is incentive for the developer to try to work with the county to get a major transit stop or hub on their property, and the county can work with the developer to build around that.

Mr. Keller expressed that it was important for staff to have a theoretical transit stop framework that allows for the right amount of distance from walking where there will be residential mixed use, or people will be biking from residential mixed use to those stops. He said this needs to be a component of the plan.

Mr. McDermott replied that a quarter mile is the typical distance staff looks at as far as the distance one would walk to a stop.

Mr. Keller pointed out that there are topographic variations and that a quarter mile one way could be three times quicker than a quarter mile the other way. He suggested the transportation planners take these things into account as they are designing an ideal "utopia" around the city.

Ms. Spain said that what makes the area different from Bozeman, U Street, and other examples are the mountain views. She asked, in terms of transit, if "enhanced stop" means a shelter.

Mr. McDermott replied yes.

Ms. Spain said this was important to any of the stops, as there can be multiple stops but if there is no shelter, it will be difficult for people to use them. She asked if with the landscaping, medians, and separation areas, it would be possible to use the techniques that are used along the interstate now with growing wildflowers and grasses that are only swath-cut a couple times a year.

Ms. Firehock replied yes.

Ms. Spain said they have discussed using locally native plants in the Comp Plan, and that in this instance, it would be worth considering the maximum greenery and pervious surface.

Mr. Keller noted that one of the problems with native plants in the area is that they are on the

edge of cool northern grasses and warm southern grasses. He said that the way climate change is changing the environment, the area will be considered to be southern quickly.

Ms. Firehock said she understood form-based code and that she was considering the branding for the area. She said there are bus shelters in Tucson that were part of an artist's project, with each shelter being designed by a separate artist. She said they are different, but they signify the area. She also brought up Paris and its metro designs. She asked if there was some way to add some flair.

Mr. McDermott replied yes and noted that Ms. Diantha McKeel (Supervisor) is working on this for the two stops in Stonefield, with a call for artists to do projects around those two stops. He said these stops were selected because they are on private property and it was easy to facilitate. He said the idea was to roll this out to other places throughout the county once they get the system in, and that Rio-29 would be a great place for this.

Ms. Firehock said they could then pull in motifs of the mountains and nature scenes. She also encouraged some thought about integrating on-demand bus services that integrate with person devices.

Mr. Bivins said there would be some experiments around this and that the one that would likely happen soonest is on-demand put to Loaves and Fishes.

Mr. McDermott said there may be an experiment done before this one, explaining that JAUNT was introducing a system called Route Match where passengers can request a pickup at a certain time and designated location. He said they could go to a system where if one pays enough money, the bus will come pick the passenger up, and referred again to the TNC model. He said they are seriously considering the Broadway corridor out to Woolen Mills and the connection to the City, which was part of the agreement that was worked out with Willow Tree when they moved to Woolen Mills (that the county would provide a bus service). He said the Route Match program is what the county is considering for this. He said the app provides for a convenient method.

Ms. Firehock said she has seen low-tech programs around this as well, where there is simply a button at the bus stop to push (for people who cannot afford smart phones). She recalled a time that it took her 45 minutes to get from the Rotunda to Whole Foods, because it went in a ribbon-shaped pattern and that at many of the stops, no one was there. She said the bus could be quickly rerouted with the new program so that they eliminate the need to stop at every stop.

Mr. Keller noted that the two approaches were not either-or but were complementary. He offered a cautionary tale on the point of murals being the answer, noting that there have been places with major investments in murals, but that they age out and there are expenses associated with them. He said he was more interested in better design than he is in badly-designed stops with murals on them. He clarified that he wanted buildings and stops in the county that have integrity in their designs without having to be painted.

Mr. Keller stressed that consideration should be made around where the public investment will be that will encourage the private investment. He said that this would not all just come from add-ons that they request through form-based code to the private sector. He said the county could provide much of the skeletal structure to this and accomplish things (such as allowing for the mountain views) by where they place their carefully-crafted public investment – whether it's in the open space, or in the transportation system connectivity.

Mr. Keller said he was ultimately interested in where staff would show the commission this during the course of the work sessions. He said that through his experience and noting examples from around the world, it doesn't have to be a great deal of investment, but it has to be in very key places to encourage it. He acknowledged that there are some developers that have the vision themselves and do it, but that it was the public-private combination of investments that makes a place vibrant.

Mr. Dotson noted that staff has put Question #1 on the screen and that they would likely like a response to it. He said his own response was that he supports the staff recommendation, with one exception in the form of a question. He asked if they really wanted to introduce another new term of "destination streets," because if he is on the boulevard, he thinks of it as the highest destination, but that they are calling local streets "destinations." He asked why they are not just considered to be local streets located in the Core. He said in many places, one needs to know what the facility by type and where it is located, and then they see the specification. He said he was unsure if they needed the term "destination streets," as it may be confusing.

Ms. Falkenstein responded that if there is a developer who wants a destination street outside of the Core, they would not want to discourage this. She said that staff can be thoughtful about introducing 6-7 different street types, as this is the last thing they want to do and would keep the suggestion in mind as they move forward.

Mr. Keller said that in terms of the public-private side, perhaps someone who wants to make a destination street would be willing to provide more of something that the county wants, whether it's transportation infrastructure or amenities. He said that the reality, ultimately, will be with the public-private sector entities, whether it is a Marion Barry type of public building, the library, or a new amazing idea that a developer comes up with in a mixed-use that would make it a destination street. He said he supports staff's recommendation, but that it seems as if a destination street could be at any of the street levels. He said that it could be a local street with amazing residential unit designs all the way up to the boulevard, which is considered more of a pass-through, but not necessarily so.

Mr. Dotson said the way he read the plan was that in the Core area, all the local streets would be considered destination streets. He said it would not eliminate the possibility of greater amenities outside of that but in the Rio-29 area, they are saying they expect it.

Ms. Falkenstein replied he was correct.

Ms. Riley expressed that she was glad that Mr. Dotson articulated his point, because she was having difficulty understanding why they need the distinction of the destination street. She agreed with staff's recommendations, as well as Mr. Dotson's and Mr. Keller's questioning the need for the destination designation.

Ms. Firehock said she supported it.

Ms. Spain said she supported Ms. Riley's opinion.

Ms. Falkenstein turned the presentation over to Ms. Rebecca Ragsdale, a planner within the Zoning Division, to discuss parking findings and engagement.

Ms. Ragsdale said she was part of the parking team that also includes Mr. Kevin McCollum and Ms. Mariah Gleason. She reminded the commission of the current, existing conditions with parking in the Rio-29 area. She said there was a great deal of surface parking (about 40%) and that the recommendations in the plan are to reduce surface parking and to rely more on street parking and other forms of parking, as well as not relying as much on the general standards in the existing ordinance. She said the reason for the result in the Rio-29 area and in other places in the county is that the parking standards are based on an average calculation that is generated from more suburban, auto-oriented type uses.

Ms. Ragsdale said that in looking at the form-based code research, staff considered a range of case studies and that she would be presenting two that were representative of many of the themes they discovered in the research. She said in form-based code, they are seeing that taking a different, more context-sensitive approach is what localities are considering as far as the vision or development for the area in terms of density, transportation choices, and development type.

Ms. Ragsdale said the two examples are Portland and Buffalo and noted that across the nation, localities are either reducing or eliminating minimum parking requirements and adding things such as maximum parking requirements. She explained that the reasoning for this is that it is more flexible in meeting the needs of smaller businesses. She said this has been done in conjunction with other things that staff has touched on in terms of enhanced transit and enhanced amenities for the area. She said the trend now is, in some cases, to update parking regulations and reducing minimums for form-based code areas such as Portland, or to include maximums rather than minimums.

Ms. Ragsdale said that staff, based on their research, came to recommendations to share with the commission that are in line with the public input as well as the recommendations in the Rio-29 Small Area Plan, which is the "park once" approach. She explained this approach involves parking once and enable users to walk within the area, or there are enhanced amenities that allow for different modes of transportation, using bike shelters and enhanced transit stops as part of the network.

Ms. Ragsdale said that traditional parking is coupled with those amenities, and eliminating the minimums allows for the flexible, market-based approach that have been seen in places such as Buffalo. She said the approaches would be context-sensitive in terms of what staff has defined as the character areas. She said when considering the different forms that parking is taking, they are allowing for structured parking where appropriate and by-right, standalone parking, and that surface parking would still be allowed in some areas but would be relegated. She said that on-street parking would count towards required parking.

Ms. Ragsdale said that based on public feedback and the preferences, this would be consistent with what was heard and the direction that was set with the work done on the form-based code plan.

Ms. Accardi said that staff's question regarding parking is, *"How should staff update the parking standards for the Rio-29 area?"* She said based on what Ms. Ragsdale shared, staff found that they are consistently, and administratively changing parking requirements based on application as they come in. She said staff saw this as an opportunity to pilot a new parking approach for Rio-29 in removing minimum parking requirements and creating parking maximum requirements that could be determined by use or building footprint. She said in the Buffalo example, they removed parking requirements entirely and at a certain square footage, required a parking study.

Ms. Accardi said staff also recommends requiring bicycle parking across all character areas, and property owners or developers may exceed the maximum number by special exception. She said this hearkened back to earlier comments that staff recommends encouraging covered bicycle facilities, taxi rideshare options, priority parking for car sharing, and electric vehicles as well as bike sharing facilities. She said this was in considering parking comprehensively in terms of other ways in which people are currently commuting.

Ms. Spain commented that all the discussions seem to assume that the public is young and able-bodied. She said this is not necessarily the case and asked if there was a formula for the number of handicapped spaces per number of parking spaces and how it will be determined with this type of parking.

Ms. Ragsdale said in the street requirements, there are also certain streets that have on-street parking components. She said that in some ways, the accessible parking spaces may be addressed through the street components. She said that staff initially included this in the recommendations in having a certain number of parking spaces required for ADA accessibility. She said more attention could be focused on this again.

Ms. Spain said in terms of a street parking payment system, some older people or those with low incomes don't have a credit card or a way to work different parking systems she has seen in different cities, noting that this can be very frustrating. She suggested that as staff gets closer to the target, they should consider the simplest possible payment system for the on-street parking.

Ms. Riley expressed her appreciation for the staff report, explaining that she was educated by the types of parking and case studies and helped her consider whether she supports their recommendations. She stated that she supports the staff recommendation on this, and that she was initially intrigued by the metric-based policy approach in Portland, but staff's analysis of presenting the fact that Albemarle's excessive amount of surface parking really matched better with the market-based policy approach that was illustrated in Buffalo.

Mr. Bivins said he also agreed with the staff recommendation, but that he hoped they would be sensitive in how they go from free-range parking to paid parking. He expressed that they would not have to have paid parking, but that they would have ways of attracting people to move through and to the places, as developers bring them online. He said it would be about the utilization of the area without a fee for parking, because parking there is not a scarce commodity, and that it would be difficult for those with a collective memory to think that there is a scarcity of parking in that area. He encouraged staff to work with developers so that paid parking does not happen.

Ms. Firehock said that with her day job, she helps cities assess their ordinances and always recommends parking maximums. She said she would also like to see if there is an opportunity in the process to revisit variable space sizing, explaining that some people have small cars and that less asphalt could be used. She said that her understanding from staff is that although the county allows it, they require the travel lanes to be much wider, resulting in the same amount of asphalt. She said she did not understand this and that she hasn't seen it done anywhere else. She expressed that changing the parking standards would be a simple thing and that this question should be addressed.

Ms. Firehock suggested looking for opportunities where there might be shared parking, using an example from the City of Charlottesville where an apartment building shared their parking with construction, resulting in 50% less parking and a greater ROI than having to have two parking lots, each of which would be mostly empty for one-half of the 24-hour period. She noted this could also be done in code.

Mr. Dotson built on Ms. Firehock's statements, recalling the graphic that was shown of Buffalo and the parking areas. He suspected that many of those areas have signs that say, "Parking only for..." and that it was not public parking. He said the culprit is on-site parking and that the staff recommendation is to remove minimum parking. He said he would insert "on-site minimum parking" and expressed that they should still require people to provide parking, but it doesn't necessarily need to be on their site, but could be in a district surface lot, a structure, or a shared lot where there is some assurance of its longevity. He said he would not favor removing all minimum parking requirements, but only the on-site aspect of parking.

Mr. Keller agreed with Mr. Dotson. He expressed that there must be a middle step.

Ms. Firehock added that people could contribute a pro rata share to go into putting the parking where it would work best instead of breaking up the spaces with many small surface lots next to the buildings. She said that parking is often over-required from what is actually needed. She considered uses as well, such as a gym at which people are only present for a short time and that three-quarters of the lot sat empty at all times, even though the gym was successful. She said those uses could be considered, acknowledging that much of it is done by square feet and commercial, but that they could be even further out in terms of flexibility so that they do not end up with too much parking.

Ms. Accardi said she heard general support of staff's recommendation with considering structured and shared parking differently in requiring minimums there.

Mr. Keller said that the reason they need to be thinking in phases is because many urban people will be moving into the leased car by the number of hours, they use it, or days per year they use it. He said in a mixed-use, higher density zone where people own cars but are using mass transit in the urban environment, that percentage of vehicles will decrease because there will be a higher finished car for less annual fees by leasing it. He noted that this would be in the long-term future, and not immediately.

Ms. Firehock said that currently at UVA, there are rules about students having cars or not. She said that students are not bringing their cars because they can get a Smart Car to run errands and that they do not need their cars sitting unused for much of the week.

Mr. Keller said that if Mr. Carrazana were present, he would have liked to see the real percentages of Zip Cars being used, as he believes it is still small.

Ms. Firehock said there is also Uber and Lift now, and the point is that the students are not bringing their cars to Charlottesville.

Mr. Keller said he would like to see the real figures on it but acknowledged that this was where they were trending.

Mr. Bivins said there are new options, and, in most jurisdictions, kids start driving at 16 years old.

He said that Albemarle tends to have more affluent families, so the kid leaves school with a car. He agreed with Mr. Keller that they are not in the future state yet, noting the types of vehicles in the Rugby Road area.

Ms. Accardi turned the presentation over to Mr. Andrew Knuppel, Planner with Community Development, to discuss staff research and recommendations for public space.

Mr. Knuppel said he was on the Public Space/Greenspace team with Ms. Tori Kanellopoulos (fellow planner), and Ms. Emily Cox (Engineer with the Engineering Team). He said the Rio-29 Small Area Plan Conservation Chapter includes the future conservation network. He presented the network plan on the screen, noting that it was a basic network with opportunities to introduce greenspace and leverage existing county properties and provide strategic spaces within each quadrant of the plan. He noted that this was the basis from which they started community engagement and staff recommendations with the process.

Mr. Knuppel said they continued to solicit specific feedback through online and in-person engagement as far as the types of amenities and spaces that community members want to see in the area, and then considered how they can begin to translate this feedback into the code. He said staff heard an overwhelming desire from the community for additional green or public outdoor spaces in the area. He said that looking at the conservation network map, it was a bare-bones framework and that they will determine ways in which to fill it out.

Mr. Knuppel said the Steering Committee expressed interest in figuring out a shared contribution model, acknowledging that there are many things they would like to do with the form-based code but that they need to determine how to leverage resources strategically throughout the process. He said they conducted research on a couple different methods and frameworks from other localities who have initiated form-based code processes.

Mr. Knuppel presented examples from other Virginia localities. He said at the panel in April, they had representatives from Arlington County and Virginia Beach. He presented the Columbia Pike Commercial Center's form-based code, which was one of the first that Arlington County did in the early 2000's. He said their regulating plan actually shows specific public spaces and that the context with Columbia Pike is that it is an existing commercial corridor, it is linear, and the frontage is already there. He said they identified on certain blocks where the greenspace should be. He said this resulted in some interesting effects, because the developer or property owner constructs the public space where indicated as part of the project.

Mr. Knuppel presented the example called Penrose Square in Arlington. He said the public space was built when the Penrose Square development went in and that it straddled a parcel boundary. He indicated to the Penrose Square Arlington County-owned public park and plaza, noting it has trees and benches. He indicated to a place on the west side of the property line, noting that it was still a parking lot for a pharmacy and that food trucks park there. He said this was a prescriptive scenario where there is a specific place and shape on the map for the space.

Mr. Knuppel presented the Virginia Beach Ocean Front Resort case study, noting that it did not have specified locations. He said that for context, the ocean front was a built-out area with a block network that was already there, and the form-based code was mostly intended to improve the quality of design and finalization of the area. He said this code did not require any public open spaces on their map but did require percentages based on building types. He indicated to a mixed-

use building, noting that there were also townhouses and other building types that align with the character areas identified so far in the form-based code and Small Area Plan process.

Mr. Knuppel said there was not a prescriptive way to determine the space or where it should be, but rather, it was a broad percentage. He said for example, the mixed-use building was about 15% of the lot area to be designated as amenity space. He said this was more flexible but could have some applications to how Albemarle would want to structure their public spaces with their identified character areas.

Mr. Knuppel presented a hybrid approach, which was Boulder Junction in Boulder, CO. He explained that it provides for some flexibility and builds off the Arlington example. He said it does show required public spaces in its regulating plan, as well as specifications for place types. He indicated to a plaza and a green on the picture, with both having dimensional requirements, descriptions of what types of amenities or improvements would be appropriate, and impervious surface. He said the regulating plan does require certain spaces to be provided within 150 feet of the location shown, noting that there was variability.

Mr. Knuppel said the Boulder Junction code does acknowledge more of a district like Rio-29 on a smaller scale. He said there are places that are not there yet that will redevelop and super blocks that will be broken down, but the code provides some flexibility as to where the alignments and spaces should be. He reiterated there are minimum outdoor requirements and added that there is also a waiver provision they include for sites that have a low acreage or have access from their entrances to another site nearby. He said they recognize that there are opportunities to build upon what is already there and close by without overly burdening smaller parcels within the area. He noted the language could be referenced in the staff report.

Mr. Knuppel said that staff recommends using the future conservation network outlined in the Small Area Plan as their basis for required outdoor space components. He said these spaces should serve as main public spaces at the main connections that are important to making the vision work.

Mr. Knuppel said staff recommends also requiring a percentage of open or amenity space within each development that is tailored to different character areas. He said, for example, that the Core might be a more urbanized area and could have less open space than the Edge areas, as they begin to transition to a less dense and less urban form of development. He said that space types would be selected from a table, with a number of types listed in the Small Area Plan, and that standards could be developed for those to build upon.

Mr. Knuppel said staff recommends incorporating the required greenspaces and trail connections from the map, allowing them to be counted towards the requirement. He said staff prefers they do what is recommended in the plan to ensure flexibility so that in a larger site that may have a larger burden to provide greenspace, they still get enough greenspace on the site.

Ms. Falkenstein said staff's discussion question around public space is, *"How should the form-based code for Rio-29 balance the goals of a community enhanced through conservation and public amenities with a desire for increased flexibility from the development community?"*

Ms. Falkenstein stated that staff's recommendation is to use the future conservation plan from the Rio-29 plan as a basis for a regulating plan for future public amenity spaces to be provided when the area is redeveloped, with some stipulations that could allow for some flexibility. She

said that if the public space is on a site, it can count towards the minimum requirement, but if it is a larger site (such as a mall) and the property owner doesn't like the location of the space, they would have the opportunity to adjust or refine the location, provided that the design is consistent with the recommendation of the plan.

Ms. Falkenstein said that if there is a development adjacent or very close to a certain radius of one of the public amenity spaces, the developer or property owner could have the option to provide a contribution to the public space to develop it rather than having to provide it on site.

Mr. Keller said the question he had wanted to ask earlier was answered to his satisfaction.

Mr. Dotson recalled that staff had recorded various reactions from the public that there was not enough green or public space in the adopted plan. He shared that perception, noting that it doesn't seem as if there is a great deal of that kind of space in terms of contiguous areas. He said there are pathways and corridors, but not much in the way of small parks or plazas shown in the plan. He said he would support the shared contribution option for developers. He expressed that he was not clear on the logistics as far as not knowing where the streets are, and that there is flexibility. He asked how they would be able to say that if the plan shows a green space, it must be dedicated for public use.

Ms. Falkenstein acknowledged that this needed to be workshopped more to figure this out. She said that Boulder Junction did a good job in providing a circle on a map for the greenspace to go and that it did have some flexibility to it rather than showing exact parcel boundaries. She agreed that staff needs to vet this further.

Ms. Firehock said she had suggested greenspaces such as those in Savannah, where one would not have to walk too far before arriving upon a greenspace to relax at. She recalled discussion about the building adjacent to these spaces being higher in property taxes collected, being more vibrant, and having less vacancy rates. She said there were many great arguments for investing in this, and perhaps the county has to take on some of the responsibility for creating some of it. She acknowledged that the county wants the private sector to accept the form-based code and develop, but from her experience, some of this has to first be provided to show the vision and bring people in.

Ms. Firehock said she knew it was difficult because the street network hadn't been designed, but that she would like to see more. She expressed that there must be a way to determine the green gathering spaces. She said she has been going around the south taking pictures of unused green spaces, noting that the problem with them is that they are too big and undefined. She said that although they could be used for festivals, these only take place a few times a year and the rest of the time, it is too open and hot to spend time there. She asked if there is some way to put in language into the code to prevent people from creating large, empty lawns. She said there could be more guidance provided, whether that is through photographs of successful community greens or the elements that make those greens function.

Ms. Accardi said that the Boulder Junction was a strong example of how there is a description of a public space type, then some landscape architectural elements that would be required, with some flexibility.

Ms. Firehock expressed that more could be detailed as far as programming and definition of space. She said in conservation developments, she continues to see large greens called "the commons" but that there is no one there.

Mr. Bivins said that looking at the map, he was struck by there was only one green swath of land near the Putt-Putt, with the rest of it being asphalt. He said that he had hoped that they would use linear park greenways to create green boulevards that would be a way to move people as well as to break up some of the asphalt. He agreed with Ms. Firehock and said that if staff could spend time with the communities located off Hillsdale Drive and watch the children, they would notice that they stay on the fringe. He said in the part of Fashion Square, they play on the fringe, even though there is lots of asphalt.

Mr. Bivins said that giving the people greenspace that communicates from one place to another and allows them a place to pause and come back would be the kind of community and transportation setting that would be helpful and hopefully wouldn't be expensive to establish. He said that while he appreciates having pocket parks and places, such as in Boulder, unless there is someone to establish a community there, it would not be helpful.

Mr. Bivins considered Albemarle Square and said that if the footprint was redeveloped without necessarily redeveloping the entire space, and the massive amount of asphalt was broken up with a green via, it would soften it and get people to walk there in a way that would make the space more vibrant as well as having the developer feel as if they are moving forward with, but not being bludgeoned by, the vision. He asked if there was a way to connect linear parks, squares, and parks as vias as opposed to isolated entities.

Ms. Firehock said the Highline in New York is a good example, explaining that there can be a greenway that isn't along a river. She said it goes back to the point that the county may need to do some of the investing instead of simply hoping that a private developer will envision and build a greenway. She said that one thing that was successful in Charlottesville was the fact that the city's trail planner, Mr. Chris Gensic, worked with developers to connect the different spokes of the Rivanna Trail. She said she would push for a public vision of an urban greenway that people would want to go to and perhaps pay a premium to build close to it. She said though it would not be a nature walk, there could be vegetation and places to sit.

Ms. Firehock said this could involve acquiring some land and noted that she wanted to be financially smart, but that more investment was needed by the county to realize the vision being espoused.

Mr. Bivins said he wondered about what would happen to the greenspace by Putt-Putt, as there is a large ribbon that comes from Rio Road up to the apartment community. He said this is the closest that people have to a woodland in that area. He said that while the land belongs to someone, if there was a way to perhaps acquire it so it could be a woodland that is incorporated into the new design, that could be a great possibility.

Ms. Falkenstein informed the commission that the county owns the piece of land between Woodbrook and the apartments. She indicated to the greenspace on the map. She said the greenway connecting to it from Rio Road has a public easement over top it.

Mr. Bivins said that as staff continues the design conversation about this, perhaps there is a way to incorporate examples of cities that have this kind of greenspace in a highly-developed area. He noted that this area was not a square.

Ms. Falkenstein agreed, and said they could look for future connectivity to add on to it as it develops and redevelops.

Ms. Riley said she agreed with most of her colleague's comments, and that the recent emphasis on the greenways and connectivity could be shown on the network map, but the staff recommendation is that the county would require the construction of public space based on the network plan. She said if the network plan is not being demonstrated graphically, there is not much being required. She suggested working on demonstrating and expanding this visually.

Ms. Spain said she liked the ideas that have been mentioned and added that staff and developers should be required to read Jane Jacob's Characteristics of Successful Parks, and William White's Public Life of Small Urban Spaces. She said there is a video on this where White test Jacobs' idea. She said that it was not enough to have seating, but there needs to be moveable seating, something to center it, and other factors. She said that this would be a good investment of staff's time.

Ms. Spain highlighted accessibility – not just ADA accessibility (the minimum), but how people on wheelchairs or walkers will navigate the greenspace. She said there are parks that have impervious surface trails that will support a wheelchair, and the Highline has seating every 100 feet or so. She reminded the group that not everyone is young and able-bodied, and that one of her critiques of New Urbanism in general is the assumption that everyone can walk everywhere. She said there will be a larger proportion of people who cannot walk everywhere and encouraged staff not to leave them out of the equation.

Mr. Keller said his colleagues did a great job in critiquing. He said what he heard from Mr. Knuppel was that this was an incomplete piece, and the concept is there about the greenways being woven through the area. He said he was waiting for the next step, once they get through some more specificity.

Ms. Accardi said that staff was challenged by hearing a significant amount of feedback that more greenspace was desired, yet the plan has been through a public process and the spaces were identified. She said the plan was a basic framework and having per-site requirements was an interim way to support an ongoing process and respond to feedback in a flexible way. She stated that this was staff's rationale for the recommendation.

Mr. Dotson said that when they get to the point of having the ZTA, they may have found 2-3 ways that the plan needs tweaking and suggested there could be a parallel and simultaneous Comprehensive Plan amended with the Zoning Amendment. He said there could be some things that go into the specifics of implementation and the plan could need some fine tuning.

Mr. Keller observed that the case studies have been useful for staff in developing and presenting the ideas to the commission, and that he did not remember the same number of case studies earlier on in the community involvement portion as staff was trying to elicit their feelings. He encouraged staff to look at some of the city park systems that are particularly well known, such

as the Twin Cities, Washington, D.C., and Chicago to determine their percentages of open space. He said he was not convinced that there needs to be more acreage, but that it was more about the distribution.

Mr. Keller said that an open space that is half the size of the auditorium can be significant if it is tied in through a system. He encouraged looking at these types of case studies in varying sizes. He added that he supported what Ms. Spain said about the psychology of the spaces.

Mr. Keller asked if there were members of the public who would like to speak on the matter.

Mr. Neil Williamson of the Free Enterprise Forum said this marked the second time that he has mentioned his desire to have the totals for the width of each street type. He said that each use piece has been determined, but there is no total.

Mr. Williamson said he was interested in how much more land this would require, but that he was also interested in how much more impervious surface each one creates compared to the existing streets. He said that perhaps public buildings could be used as examples. He said that Rio Road is being considered as a boulevard, and the county owns Northside Library on Rio Road. He said perhaps the county could have facilities look at how they would do with one less row of parking and determine how this would impact the egress because the book drop would have to either be eliminated or modified in some way. He said these are real-world issues that businesses and localities deal with when the road footprint is expanded.

Mr. Williamson said he sincerely appreciated many of the commissioners' comments that focused on the need for public investment to make the vision occur. He said that his appreciation was tempered with trepidation because there is a picture in his mind that had a sidewalk that met in an X, with the planner's pathway, and then worn-down circles which was the pedestrians' way. He said that government doesn't always make the right decisions (noting Kansas City's airport, which was built too far north). He said, however, that interesting things are being done by government in public-private partnerships and leveraging dollars (such as with Barnes Lumber and Willow Tree). He expressed hope that these types of efforts continue.

Mr. Williamson addressed Mr. Bivins, stating his concern that one of the most prominent – even named – solutions is now promoting "zombies" on 29, and that this wasn't done by a private entity, but a state agency. He said he was concerned that this was what the county was looking at and how they will prevent it.

Mr. Williamson mentioned making an optional overlay. He said the county could mandate all they want within the optional overlay and provide the incentives. He said this is being done elsewhere, where 13 or 14 projects that went forward utilized the form-based code. He said people deserve choices and developers deserve choices. He said the county can be more stringent if they choose to do this.

Mr. Dotson recalled that the conversation started with the feedback about Rio Road and being the Urban Core. He said that some people were skeptical about this being the Urban Core, and that it dawned on him that perhaps they have created (with their vocabulary) a mental image that people are not able to apply to Rio Road. He said that describing the character areas as Urban Core, then having a Core around it, a Flex area, and an Edge, was the concentric zone model. He said the peak is in the center, and going back to two years prior, this is the way that the commission was thinking about the intersection – that somehow, there would be a single peak.

Mr. Dotson expressed that Rio Road is a corridor, and if the county continues to call it the "Urban Core," they are trying to make it look like the center surrounded by other things, but that this is not the case. He said it seems as if it is a hybrid and suggested the vocabulary should be changed from "Urban Core" to "Central Corridor" or "Central Boulevard." He said if they continue to call it the "Core," it doesn't feel as if it fits, but if it is called the "Central Boulevard," it starts to make sense, similarly to U Street, K Street, or others.

Mr. Keller said this was an excellent point.

Ms. Firehock said she had the same thought from the beginning of the project.

Ms. Falkenstein informed the commission that staff would be returning for another work session on October 15 and that the topic will be architecture, housing, and placemaking. She said staff was hopeful they could pull everything together in a coherent series of recommendations by November 12.

Committee Reports

Mr. Bivins said the Places29 CAC, staffed by Ms. Accardi, had a precursor of the presentation the prior evening, which was helpful for him and engaged the attendees. He said the online feedback survey was interesting and shows the kinds of questions that staff is putting out to the public and receiving feedback on. He suggested the commissioners look at the survey.

Mr. Bivins said that there has been much discussion about Charlotte Humphreys Park, which is located on Whitewood Road going towards Route 29 on the left-hand side of the road. He said this was the only suburban park that the county has, and everything else being at the forest's edge. He said it is a 23-acre park that is surrounded by houses, with various ways to access it. He noted it has been neglected for many years, but because of the CAC, there is a modified Master Plan being done, and the county is starting to think about how to deal with greenspaces that are surrounded by people on all sides. He said consideration should be made as to how to keep them as woodlands instead of making them into recreation parks. He noted how this relates to the central boulevard that is Rio Road.

Review of Board of Supervisors Meeting

Mr. Benish presented updates from the September 4 Board of Supervisors meeting. He said the board approved the Crozet Master Plan Process.

Mr. Benish said the only project the commission had reviewed that went to the board was ZMA201800002 Hansen Road Offices, which is the office building that is being built on a parking area that is part of The Pointe Church being built behind Giant Food. He explained that the church was a by-right development, and the office building was the rezoning use to allow for additional square footage. He said this was approved by the board as recommended by the commission.

Mr. Benish brought up the board's joint meeting with the School Board, noting that Mr. Dotson and Ms. Riley were present. He explained that the two boards broke into small groups to prioritize the items that had been established for both general government and the school division. He said that through the small group process, what seemed to be the consensus on the higher priority projects were Transportation Leveraging, Economic Development, Water Quality Project,

Stormwater Drainage Improvement Projects, and two school projects (Cale and Crozet Elementary Schools).

Mr. Benish said that from a process standpoint, there was some general direction for the Advisory Committee, which included considering the Comprehensive Plan. He said the committee's first meeting is scheduled for October 15.

Mr. Benish said the board's next meeting with the School Board will be November 13, and the OMB office will be coming back to report to the commission with an update on the process in early October. He said if scheduling becomes problematic, they will definitely come back to the commission on November 5.

New Business

Mr. Benish said the November 5 meeting may still take place, with most members being available for it. He said they will have to ask for this for this to be a special meeting, as it is Election Day, and there will be a motion for it if necessary.

Adjournment

At 8:03 p.m., the Commission adjourned to September 24, 2019 Albemarle County Planning Commission meeting, 6:00 p.m., Lane Auditorium, Second Floor, County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

David Benish, Interim Director of Planning

(Recorded by Sharon Taylor, and transcribed by Golden Transcription)

Approved by Planning Commission
Date: 10/15/2019
Initials: CSS