

Crozet Community Advisory Committee – Minutes
Wednesday, July 15, 2015 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Crozet Public Library, Crozet, Virginia

CCAC members present: Jennie More (Chair), David Stoner (Vice Chair), George Barlow, Mary Gallo, Beth Bassett, Kim Guenther, Phil Best, Kim Connolly, Brenda Plantz, Leslie Burns, Jon McKeon, Lisa Marshall, Susan Munson, Alice Lucan, Ann Mallek (Board of Supervisors), Tom Loach (Planning Commission)

CCAC members absent: John Savage

Public attendees: Mike Marshall, Bill Schrader, Paul Grady, Bob Pineo (Design + Develop), Rosalyn Keesee (Design + Develop), Sean Tubbs, Tim Tolson, Emily Kilroy, Lee Catlin, Terry Miyamoto, Frank Stoner

Chair Jennie More called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Agenda Review (Jennie More – CCAC chair): Jennie More welcomed our visitors, distributed the agenda and reviewed it with the Committee, and welcomed any additions.

2. Approval of Minutes from the June 17, 2015 meeting: The June meeting minutes are unavailable and will be presented at the August meeting.

3. Project Updates/Information:

- Review of graphic presentation that is available to give a better view of development in Crozet – Bob Pineo: Tom Loach introduced the first item by noting that he thought it would be a good idea to show the CCAC what we can see with the new technology for proposals from developers. Bob Pineo and Rosalyn Keesee are with Design + Develop LLC. Bob is an architect and Class A contractor and started this company to show people how construction and development projects impact people. He said that these are great tools to show decision makers and the community what a project is going to look like. He developed these tools while working in Boston and then applied them to the built form. He wanted a better way to communicate ideas and tell the story why people do what they do because the communication affects the end result. Bob mentioned that he does architectural work for Region 10. He then showed the CCAC graphics for the Ragged Mountain Dam site, which he said helped to show the context of the issues. He was able to use publicly available information to show what the dam was planned to look like, and noted that his graphic representations are easier to understand than straight architectural elevations and plans. Design Develop also modeled the Western Bypass for Charlottesville Tomorrow and this representation became part of the public debate. He said that his firm has also modeled planned buildings in Crozet. Bob said that the power of the tool is that it can show a sequential story of what is going to happen and test the plan graphically. He also showed the model, at various scales, for the new hotel Marriott suites being proposed for Ridge/McIntire and West Main in downtown Charlottesville. His system is able to take two dimensional drawings and apply three dimensions. His firm also did modeling for the new Market Plaza and have has moved that project through the entire process. Bob noted that

they can also depict the interior of buildings. He then showed us their depiction of Vito Cetta's Spring Hill Village at the terminus of Avon Street at Route 20, which was prepared for a Planning Commission presentation. They used neighborhood design guidelines and produced a piece for both zoning and marketing purposes. He also showed us the Rivanna Village project depicting the community amenities to give a flavor of what is being proposed. He explained that the displeasure that followed completion of The Flats on West Main in Charlottesville might have been averted if a similar rendition had been prepared and presented to the decision makers. Bob also showed the CCAC work they had done for Riverside Village and access issues in Shockoe Bottom. He reiterated that these tools can be used to tell many stories, for approvals, for funding, etc. Tom noted that he likes in particular how the tools show how projects affect people.

- Information about new signage for the Crozet Volunteer Fire Department – Tom Loach: Tom discussed with the CCAC the CVFD's plans for a new sign, noting that we are all familiar with the current sign. The CVFD is proposing a new electronic sign, which if approved would be the second one in the county. Because it is on an entrance corridor, the Architectural Review Board is looking at this, and some of the features that they have requested have made the sign very expensive (and some of the suggested features cannot be done). So the CVFD is working with the ARB and Planning staff. Tom said that the CVFD would like a resolution of support from the CCAC. The sign will be a four by eight foot brick structure with all LED lights that adjusts the brightness to ambient light (with an illumination limit set by the County). ARB is requiring that the text of the sign cannot change more frequently than every fifteen minutes or so, and no graphics are permitted. Tom said that the text will be the same sorts of things that they put on it now (red flag days, happy birthday, etc.). The sign will cost approximately \$40,000 and is sourced to a local vendor. ARB had wanted a higher resolution sign, but Tom said that they don't need it because they will not be displaying graphics. The only other electronic sign in the county is at the SunTrust building at the corner of Rio Road and U.S. Route 29. Tom is hoping for support for the idea and will suggest some language next month. It was asked whether the county could have different sign rules for public service groups, but Ann noted that having two sets of rules causes problems. It was also suggested that the county see whether other communities have guidelines for these signs. Tom said that the vendor had a demonstration sign at the county office building the other day. This matter may be placed on the August agenda.

- Information about developers holding public meetings at CCAC – Jennie More and Emily Kilroy: Jennie noted that in the last several months, the CCAC has had developers come to the group and talk about their projects. She said that this is because a year or so ago the planning staff started requiring that the developer hold a public meeting during the early part of the approval process in order to solicit public input. We will see more of these (mostly for rezonings and special user permits), and this is a trend with other community advisory committees too. The CAC is not required to take action; we have to hear the presentation. The staff believes that the CAC is a good forum and provides the developer with an opportunity to explain the project, and it also lets the developer know early in the process what they have to address before going to the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors. Procedurally, the meeting must meet county requirements, and notices are sent to nearby landowners by mail. The only requirement is that the project proponent explain what the project is and what the request is.

A planning staff representative will be there to record questions and comments, and these will be part of the staff report. Generally, these meetings are held after the pre-application meeting with staff, and the BOS will get our comments with the staff analysis. Dave noted that it is important to let everyone know that CACs are not adjudicating bodies and do not have authority to approve projects, and that the meetings are informational. Tom said that the meetings are done early in the process, because the longer one waits, the more the developer has invested in the project and it becomes more difficult and costly to make changes. These are issues that should not be resolved at the board meeting. Leslie noted that it is important to have the public let the developer know of their experience and memories. Ann said that the meetings are important to allow the developer to make the connection with the community and enables parties to learn about issues early. Susan noted that the CACs should be clear that if no comments or complaints are made, it is not a tacit approval. It was also noted that these presentations can take a lot of the CCAC's time and so some developers may be put off a month if a particular meeting agenda is full (this has happened at Pantops). It was noted that there typically is a good bit of lead time on these, but the CAC still needs to be able to decline due to time constraints. In the process, the developer checks with planning staff to be sure the proper steps have been followed so that it is the required public meeting.

- Discussion about possible expansion of the growth area at the 29/64 interchange and what process is involved; are there any implications for Crozet and the Exit 107 interchange – Tom Loach and Ann Mallek: Tom asked that this matter be included on the agenda because of the potential impact on the Crozet growth area and our interchange (Exit 107). Tom said that our interchange was mentioned at the other discussion. It was noted that the area around Exit 107 is zoned rural, but that it was considered for the Crozet master plan, but excised from that because it has no utilities. So there is some concern that it will be put into play, and the CCAC has previously been opposed to such a change. The land under consideration at the Route 29 interchange is zoned R-1 and part is mixed use. Tom is concerned because “our” exit was mentioned as part of the process, and the topic is coming to the Planning Commission at its work session next week. Ann explained that in order to change anything at Exit 107, it would be necessary to have a comprehensive plan amendment and a rezoning, noting that the current Crozet growth area boundary is consistent with the comprehensive plan. It would be important to restate the CCAC's stance because one BOS member said he was in favor of studying all the interchanges, which was not part of the discussion. It was noted that the comprehensive plan is clear on this, and the expansion of light industrial has been studied before. It was noted that the lumber yard is a grandfathered use on agricultural land, but that a comprehensive plan amendment was proposed to make this change. Ann was able to move the issue into the master plan discussion and the master plan was adopted as is. At the U.S. Route 29/I-64 interchange, the property in question is in the jurisdictional area for utilities, so, unlike at Exit 107, this is not an issue to prevent the change. Tom says that the master plans should be sacrosanct; they are drafted to guide development for areas likely to hold a large block of the county population. There was a CCAC resolution in October 2008 resolution on the topic that should be revisited. There are work sessions and public hearings at both PC and BOS levels. The PC work session is on the 21st and September 9 is the BOS hearing. It was suggested that the matter come up in August to reaffirm the CCAC's prior stance. It was noted that at the U.S. Route 29/I-64 interchange, much of the land is zoned for mixed use already. The county is getting information to see what the benefits are, and what could be protected at the same time. Ann

noted that this interchange (Exit 118) is on the long range plan for an upgrade. It was asked when this process become public and people can get involved. There are sometimes confidentiality issues with persons or businesses looking to move here. Bill Schrader said that we need to remember that this is an entrance corridor and scenic highway. The matter will be resumed on August 19.

- Information and discussion regarding CDBG Planning Grant – Dave Stoner and Ann Mallek: Jennie said that we need to discuss the filing of the grant proposal and that this needs to be a positive discussion. How will we approach these opportunities in the future? Can the CCAC get information on grants that are possibilities for Crozet? Lee said that it would be a big job for staff to track every conceivable possibility, and so it would be helpful to know what types of projects that a group might be looking to fund. The county's grants administrator can meet with the CCAC to talk about the resources that are out there. If it is a regional matter, the Planning District Commission has a staff member who can help with those. Dave then described the grant proposal, and described the status. He said that the county submitted the application for the community block grant to seek funds for a market study, help with the design of the plaza, and to continue public engagement efforts. The BOS agreed to support it and the application was submitted, but they have not yet heard whether it has been awarded (which would come from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. The concept came from the planning committee for the Barnes project, and they met with county staff to draft the proposal. Several CCAC members then raised concerns about the proposal process and the possible inference that the CCAC approved it. Dave noted that the applicant is the county and not the CCAC, and that the proposal is an advocacy document to try to get the grant. There was a discussion regarding whether the fact that several CCAC members worked on it implies that the CCAC was behind it. It was noted that the submission does not supplant the CCAC and that the county applied for the grant and has to make a conscious decision to accept it. Dave said that he would like to see a vote to support acceptance of the grant. Tom noted that the CCAC and Crozet Community Association are mentioned several times in the proposal, but no one seems to have approved the filing of the application, so there needs to be adequate discussion to do this. Tom raised substantive questions about the need for a market study and civic design, given the size of the public space. Kim Connolly said that she reads the proposal as giving a flavor of the community and not that it was endorsed by the groups. Dave noted that the master plan talks about seeking block grants, and that many points in the proposal were mentioned by Faith McClintic when she met with the CCAC. The plaza/green space is mentioned in the master plan too. There was further discussion about specific text in the proposal and whether this constituted implicit approval. It was noted that the grant funds are allocated monthly and the funds were going to expire, and Tim Tolson said that they saw this proposal as fitting within the planning group's mission. They could get the application in, and then have time to decide whether to accept it. Dave noted that there should be some fluidity in the scope of work and perhaps a design similar to the ones we saw earlier this evening from Design + Develop could be prepared. More discussion about the process followed, and Phil was concerned about submitting because of the urgency of the fund expiration. Lisa asked about what would happen later with the grant funds, if the grant was awarded. It was explained that there would be a request for proposals for a market study, and the county finance and grants staff would supervise that. Lee said that they knew that the grant had not been fully reviewed by all parties to be sure it would be a productive use of money, and that there is still an opportunity to review this. Tom raised a question about

the use of the funds and whether the proposed uses (such as a market study) were needed. Alice suggested instituting a procedure so that when an ad hoc application is being submitted because of an urgency, there must be a post-application process for review. There was much discussion about what the process should be, and what could be represented in the application. Lee noted that the application did not have formal approval by the groups (CCAC and CCA). Kim C. said that the idea was to show cohesion in the community, and that the scope of work lists work that needs to be done. Several members agreed that the CCAC needs a procedure to deal with this kind of thing in the future. Jennie asked CCAC members to think about the award and the timeframe for acceptance by the county, and Lee noted that there is typically a time period to be able to come back to this group to get our OK to accept it. There would need to be some inquiry as to how much flexibility there is in the scope of work. Bill Schrader reported that people he has spoken with were concerned that the funds might benefit the developer. Frank Stoner noted that the public space in the project would be dedicated to public use and there would not be a private benefit. It was also noted that a high quality civic space could cost \$2-3 million, and so the design itself could run into the tens of thousands.

4. Items not listed on the Agenda: None.

5. Announcements:

- Kim Guenther said that Fardowner's would be holding a fundraiser for the Crozet Dog Park. During August, the restaurant will donate 10% of food sales to the effort, in order to match a \$10,000 challenge grant from Red Light Management. Kim handed out the vouchers that must be presented in order to participate in the program and Kim said that the vouchers could be photocopied.

- Beth was pleased to report that the sidewalk and crosswalk in front of Crozet Elementary School are virtually complete.

6. Future Agenda Items: None announced.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

George Barlow
Secretary