

**Crozet Community Advisory Council – Minutes**  
**Thursday, January 16, 2014 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**  
**The Meadows, Crozet, Virginia**

**CCAC members present:** Meg Holden (Chair), Nancy Virginia Bain, George Barlow, Bill Schrader, Phil Best, Kim Guenther, Jennie More, John Savage, Meg West, Brenda Plantz, Leslie Burns, Ann Mallek (Board of Supervisors), Tom Loach (Planning Commission)

**CCAC members absent:** Beth Bassett, Mary Gallo, Janice Applebach

**Public attendees:** Sandy Williams, Michelle Anderson, Jim Duncan, Mike Marshall, Paul Grady, Tim Tolson

**Chair Meg Holden called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.**

**1. Agenda Review** (Meg Holden – CCAC chair): Meg Holden welcomed our visitors, distributed the agenda and reviewed it with the Council, and welcomed any additions. It was agreed to move the discussion about the Barnes Lumber project in downtown Crozet to the top of the agenda. Paul Grady introduced himself and said that he was there to present a petition to ask the County Board of Supervisors to keep the Ivy Transfer Station open.

**2. Approval of Minutes from the November 21, 2013 and December 19, 2013 meetings:** John Savage moved to accept the minutes of the November 21, 2013 and December 19, 2013 meetings as presented, seconded by Bill Schrader, and the minutes of the November 21, 2013 and December 19, 2013 meetings were approved by vote of the Council, subject to any changes that Council members brought to the Secretary within the next week.

**3. Public Comment:** Meg Holden encouraged public comments or questions now or at any time during the meeting.

**4. Project Updates/Information:**

- **Downtown Development/Barnes:** Meg led off the discussion by saying that everyone should be heard on this important matter, and we would go around the table to discuss it. Bill Schrader started the discussion noting some confusion on this issue as it relates to the Crozet Master Plan, which emphasized locating business downtown. He expressed concern that the first developer to consider the project wanted to change how the plan is intended to work, and thought that the Special Use Permit process embodied in the recent zoning text amendment is not protective enough and allows a developer to follow its own plan.

Tom Loach said that the change in the process should be read in context. This change does not make a change in housing type by-right. The project will still have a buffer around the edges of the property. Tom noted that when Mr. Stoner was here, we were describing to him our vision as embodied in the master plan, but we as yet have not heard much what his vision is. Tom further noted that Mr. Stoner showed us a mixture of uses, but not mixed use. Another speaker noted that the project will require a rezoning and this creates the chance to get it right.

Crozet residents would like to see it developed but not to the detriment of the rest of downtown. Bill expressed concern that once the residential buffer is built, the commercial area will be lost. Tom said that he would like to see more details of Mr. Stoner's plan for rezoning.

Meg noted that Mr. Stoner is an experienced local developer and she understands that he is well-regarded. She expressed concern that a developer from elsewhere may be less interested in what the community wants. There is always a risk that a developer will monetize as much of the project as possible and then walk away. Meg noted that if nothing happens with the site, business could be lost to the commercial part of Old Trail. Meg said that we can ask Mr. Stoner to attend another CCAC meeting to tell us more and hear more of our ideas.

Jennie was concerned about the speed at which the ZTA went through, as Wayne Cilimberg was here in October to talk about it, and then it went forward quickly thereafter (the following week). Several members asked how we can be sure of his interest in what the community wants. John said that Mr. Stoner seemed open to listening and wanted to know what the community wanted. We have to keep in mind that we all want to see the property developed with thriving commercial uses, such as shops and offices. John noted that whoever does develop this property has to make the numbers work, and it will be vacant if they won't.

Tom noted that the land is not a detriment as vacant, and will get more and more valuable. Tom said that Mr. Stoner's presentation was adequate and that he had clearly looked at draft plans from other developers to see what would work and what would not. The flex space did not seem viable to Mr. Stoner and he does not seem to be including that. In particular it should be noted that he wants relief from proffers on 92 homes (at \$17,000 for each single family home). If this was done, then the public would be contributing significantly to the project. The purpose of proffers is to make sure the community does not pay for infrastructure. Tom wonders what the developer would have to do in return. Ann said that this discussion would occur much further down the road and that the December meeting was intended to be a listening session. She said that he is a "build from the bottom up planner," and starts with clean slate. She said that we gave him a lot of good ideas, which he took with him. We really need something to look at, and that will be many meetings away, so it's premature to judge.

Kim asked whether he has he listened to the community before on other projects. Ann says the Jefferson School was a successful project, as is Belvedere, but the latter does not have its commercial side yet. Brenda said that as a business owner she likes more homes close by, but she does not really want that kind of development, and would rather see commercial, retail and light industrial rather than a village of homes there. Residential areas can be problematic for adjacent businesses and she worries about creeping residential use. It was noted that four stories are permitted all the way to the boundary. Katurah Roell's plan tried to taper this to the edges, but it's difficult to do. Ann said that it may evolve that way, noting how uses change on the Downtown Mall. It is necessary to have some flexibility in the way the spaces are used.

Meg Holden says we understand Mr. Stoner's observation that the residential uses help to pay for the infrastructure and commercial space, but could you build some of the commercial at the same time? She noted the mixed uses at Old Trail. Meg says that we should continue meaningful conversations with Mr. Stoner. Tom agrees but says that we need to verify. The

development is planned to be residential on the edges, with more mixed use toward the center. Tom said we should see what he brings back after we expressed to him our views on the community's desires for the property. Hopefully we will be able to see drawings and cross sections of blocks. Tom expressed concern over Mr. Stoner's statement (made a couple of times) that he cannot do mixed use. Other members understood him to say that he would not be able to do the entire project in mixed use, but that there would be a portion in single family, a portion in townhomes, and then mixed use and commercial. We will need him to clarify this. Leslie said that we should find some case studies for him to use as a reference, in addition to those that he described to us.

For a small town our size, what's a practical, usable commercial area? How dense? How much commercial area? Tom says that growth has been approved up to 12,000 people. How much commercial use can these demographics support? For reference, the library has a service population of 29,000. What services are needed for a center of activity? What would the area look like a block away from Main Street? Homes or more businesses? The CCAC should get its opinion on this to Mr. Stoner. Tom said that there are two questions: "how much commercial?" and "in what form?" We will need clarification about to what extent Mr. Stoner's plan accommodates the form in the master plan. Recalling disappointments with Old Trail, Mike Marshall cautioned that the community should not lose track of its own vision, and continue to inquire where Mr. Stoner sees this going. He reminded the CCAC that a number of planners were consulted in developing the master plan, using a variety of models, in arriving at the plan. If a lot of downtown acreage is given up to residential, then it won't reach a commercial critical mass, and business will move to Old Trail and Route 250. Mike noted that nearby properties are zoned for townhouses and there are other properties nearby that are set up to deliver walking customers to downtown. If we end up with a residential downtown, Crozet becomes a bedroom community. We also need to try to lure employers into the middle zone between retail and residential. Mike cautioned against giving a developer authority to proceed before the plans are known. Also, if proffers are waived, other developers will ask for the same thing and the County loses its leverage.

Phil wondered what the tradeoff would be from the developer for relief from the proffers. Ann said that the Board of Supervisors might be able to give credit for affordable housing, and noted that Foothills Crossing decided to go completely by right rather than do more affordable housing. Circumstances have changed now because of reduced property values and the impact of the proffer fee (\$17,000) on the price and the ability to obtain financing. Tom recalled Mr. Stoner saying that he had to have relief from the proffers to proceed with the project, and recommended that we ask Mr. Stoner to show us a plan and then determine what's being offered to the community. It was noted that the proffer for townhouses and condominiums is lower than for single family homes. Ann said that a large portion of the County's funding for the library came from proffers. Ann also told us that some lending programs, such as the HUD programs, have formulas to determine equity requirements and it is difficult to make these work with proffers. Tim Tolson commented that Mr. Stoner ought to have met with the CCAC before pressing for the zoning text amendment and we should be cautious. Meg H. said that she assumes there are others investing in the project and he needs to have a workable plan before he moves forward. She asked if we should have him back. Tom said that he did not see the ZTA as a negative because of the substantial protections afforded by the SUP process, and this adds

another variant to housing types in Crozet, creating a buffer for the neighborhoods nearby. Mike expressed frustration that one text amendment could undo many hours of work on the master plan. Tom reminded us that the issue with the ZTA was that it kept many homes in the downtown area from being non-conforming and that this was reasonable approach. Apparently it was well known that Mr. Stoner needed to know by the end of December whether he could proceed with the bank and needed the ZTA for that.

Nancy recommended that we keep the dialog open with Mr. Stoner, and Kim added that we need to keep pressing him to let us know what he's doing. Leslie mentioned that we could host a charrette for the project, among professionals and representatives of the community. Phil Best recalled the developer of Westlake, who had been told to work with the CCAC for his project to move forward, and Mr. Stoner should seek CCAC buy-in too. Meg W. expressed concern that people will give up on downtown and so we need to engage with a developer, whoever it is, to try to have input. Phil said that we should invite him back and let him know that we need to see the reasons why he needs to vary from the master plan. Bill agreed that our view should be to protect the master plan. Ann said she did not think they were giving up on the flex space but we will need to follow up with him on that. Leslie wondered whether we can require that the commercial uses on the square be constructed at the same time as the residential uses that he needs to do on the edges. Can they find a lender that will allow this? Ann said that Stonefield is all equity funded and did not need a bank, thereby allowing more flexibility. Tom said that it appears that Mr. Stoner is looking toward a similar plan to Stonefield (a mixture of uses). Tom asked whether the County would give the CCAC money to have any plan submitted by Mr. Stoner reviewed by the consultants who developed the master plan. Several CCAC members agreed that we should engage with him and have him back to a meeting.

- **Library Fundraising Update (Bill Schrader):** The fundraising committee continues its work and has agreed to meet through October. The fund currently stands at \$1,060,000 and grant proposals are still pending. The library is being used by many people: September circulation was up 74%, and up 87% in December over the previous year. The door count is 46,000 for September through December, compared to 19,600 at the old library for the same period last year. Internet usage has doubled and 1,128 new library cards have been issued. People are visiting from the edge of Albemarle County, plus Nelson, and Greene Counties. The librarians have worked out special study nights from WAHS this week for exams, and had 75 kids Monday, 90 Tuesday, and 80 Wednesday. Self checkout was used by 5,118 people, the most in the regional system.
- **News on library hours:** The library board has put additional hours in the budget, which has been submitted to the County. We will know at the end of February if we get extended hours. Ann recommended that we have people speak at BOS and budget meetings in support. A question was raised by the audience about adult volunteers reading at story time? It was noted that this raises background check issues and it was recommended that she call John Halliday.
- **Streetscape update:** This work is expected to start soon. Ann said detour issues are being worked out by the contractor and VDOT.

- New CCAC officers by March, who rolls off CCAC Board: Meg H. said that she received an email from Travis Morris at the County regarding expiring memberships, listing who can be appointed and who cannot (Nancy and Bill are not eligible for reappointment). Meg also said to be thinking about a new chair for the council. She thought we would need at least two new members, and we should think about how to locate new candidates. Should we advertise? It was also suggested that we have a party at the March meeting.
- Update on plans for pedestrian crossing signal at Clover Lawn/Harris-Teeter: Ann said that the crosswalk is funded this year and the work should start this spring. The construction of the sidewalk to Cory Farms is in the capital improvement plan for this year. This is part of a phased development of sidewalks and trails.
- Update on Safe Routes to School project, with information specific to the crossing at Crozet Elementary: The water line has been an issue, but this is coming to resolution.
- Note about environmental remediation and building removals at the old Acme Visible Records (see information at Crozet Library, inquire at the desk): This work is proceeding. Mike Marshall reported that the woodshop that was leasing some of the building space has been evicted and that building is being demolished. The tenant has moved to the Virginia Metalcrafters building in Waynesboro.
- Hotel Project: No additional information to report. Ann said that she had heard that the state tourism funding might not help this project and it is waiting on a bank loan.
- Paul Grady and the Ivy Transfer Station: Mr. Grady presented the CCAC with a petition to keep the Ivy Transfer Station open as an enhanced convenience center, and also allow unusual item disposal, mulch sales, etc. He said that he had launched this effort at the recent BOS meeting. The southern convenience center sites were taken off the table, and the agreement with RSWA was extended for another year. Mr. Grady said that the plan had been to close Ivy and build a convenience center in Crozet, which would provide fewer services. Mr. Grady had talked to Ann, who said that it is possible, but a longshot, to keep Ivy open and he would need to convince the BOS that this is a good idea. Meg said that if the council thinks this is a good idea it could take a position on this, and perhaps take this up for discussion at the next meeting. An article about this is planned for the February Gazette. Mr. Grady said that he is hoping to get the petitions to the BOS at the first March meeting. Ann said that there are parallel tracks under way to get the services we need and recommended keeping this issue in the forefront to fuel the fire. She said that there is not sufficient flow to keep the authority going, and the County has been putting in funds to keep it going while we figure out what to do with solid waste. The authority will need to continue in existence to deal with leachate at Ivy, and the City helps pay for that, but it has stopped supporting the landfill generally. The County issued an RFP for three convenience centers and Van der Linde put in a bid and would run them for free. The authority does not want to work with Van der Linde and so the County will need to lease Ivy and run it itself. Mike noted that the petition fortifies Ann's position.

**5. News concerning area schools that affects the development area:** This topic was rolled to next month.

**6. Change of meeting date and place (Bill Schrader):** Because of upcoming holidays, it's not possible to hold a CCAC meeting on a Monday at the library, so it was decided to wait to see if the library's hours are extended (allowing us to meet there on Thursdays) and if so, it might be possible to hold the March meeting there.

**7. Items not listed on the Agenda:** None.

**8. Announcements:** Phil announced that Kim has been elected president of the Claudius Crozet Park board, bringing new energy to the organization. Mike announced that the Bishop of Virginia will allow mass to be said in Crozet, making Crozet a "chapel of ease" which allows mass to be celebrated outside a church. Mike gave us some of the historical context with the Irish Fardowners and masses celebrated at Afton.

**9. Future Agenda Items:** Let Meg know.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m. on a motion by John Savage and seconded by Bill Schrader.

George Barlow  
Secretary