

Crozet Community Advisory Committee – Minutes
Wednesday, August 19, 2015 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Crozet Public Library, Crozet, Virginia

CCAC members present: Jennie More (Chair), George Barlow, Mary Gallo, Beth Bassett, Kim Guenther, 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: Dave Stoner, Phil Best, John Savage

Public attendees: Mike Marshall, Emily Kilroy, Bill Schrader, Jim Duncan, Delegate Steve Landes, Mac Lafferty, Cliff Fox, Elise Cruz (Charlottesville Tomorrow), Paul Grady, Sue Nelson, Aaron Carroll.

Chair Jennie More called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. Agenda Review (Jennie More – CCAC chair): Jennie More welcomed our visitors, and in particular extended the CCAC’s welcome to Delegate Steve Landes. She then reviewed the agenda with the Committee, and asked for any additions. Susan Munson asked whether the Crozet Volunteer Fire Department electronic sign matter should be on the agenda. Tom Loach then summarized the plan to replace the existing sign, which is falling apart, with an electronic (LED) sign. He noted the community service aspect to the new sign, which not only can provide general announcements, can also advise the community about accidents that block roads, red flag warnings, etc. It was suggested that the sign also show public safety messages such as amber alerts. Tom said that he would ask for this to be placed on the agenda when it appeared that the CCAC would need to discuss it again and potentially take action.

2. Approval of Minutes from the June 17, 2015 and July 15, 2015 meetings: Susan Munson made a correction to the June minutes to note that of the two ideas for generating revenue for stormwater management described in Greg Harper’s presentation, tax-exempt properties are exempt from the stormwater service district but not exempt from a stormwater utility fee. Subject to such correction, and any others communicated to the secretary within the one week from today, Mary Gallo moved to approve the June 17, 2015 minutes, seconded by Susan Munson, and the June minutes were approved by vote of the CCAC.

Brenda Plantz noted that John Savage was listed in the July minutes as both present and absent (he was absent) and subject such to correction, and any others communicated to the secretary within one week from today, Kim Guenther moved to approve the July 15, 2015 minutes, seconded by Susan Munson, and the July minutes were approved by vote of the CCAC.

3. Project Updates/Information:

- Information about agenda, time management and review of materials prior to meetings - Jennie More: Jennie noted that the agenda contains an estimate of time to be devoted to each matter and asked the CCAC to make every effort to keep within that guideline so that we can stay on schedule. We make an effort to place specific issues on the agenda so that discussion

stays within that topic. In particular we do not want later agenda topics, particularly if they are presented by a guest, to lose time. Please review the agenda in advance, consider questions carefully and stay on topic. Jennie welcomed feedback on this, and said that she will try to get more materials out ahead of time so the CCAC can review them. Liaisons can also send information out to the CCAC ahead of time so that members can come in with their questions and comments.

- Review/discussion about Community Meetings - Tim Tolson and Frank Stoner: Tim Tolson (Crozet Community Association) and Frank Stoner (Milestone Partners) updated the CCAC on the recent community meetings held to discuss the Barnes Lumber property. Tim said that CCA website has a tab for the Downtown Crozet Initiative Barnes Lumber property (<http://cca.avenue.org/dci/>) that contains information from the meetings, with resolutions, and it will be updated from time to time. The DCI committee's principles for the project are authenticity, historic precedent, environmental sensitivity, vibrancy, a place to gather, connection to the rest of town, safe and fun with entertainment options, evolved and flexible. All of the findings are set out in the final report. All attendees received a copy of the meeting recap and Tim showed the CCAC a copy of the report, which contains the development principles. The second meeting built on the design concepts identified at the first meeting. Tim showed the CCAC maps of the area with different design scenarios and road and connector locations. Tim encouraged everyone to send him their thoughts or they can be posted on the website. The concepts show the initial design and later phases. People want a public (i.e., not owned by a private business or other party) space or green that the community can access, so the space would be publicly dedicated. The plans give a sense of how this evolved. Tim said that a grid pattern seemed to be favored over the other street layouts. Note that the size and shape of the blocks affect the uses that will be there at first and later. Tim said that they hope to have this information on the site for the summer for comment and then start moving forward in the fall. This will be a phased approach and the whole tract will not be planned at once. First will come a rezoning of the land out of industrial use and after that the roads and general layout of Phase 1 will be determined. Mr. Stoner will not be the developer of the entire property. The CCAC discussed the trails and greenways from downtown to the park.

Mr. Stoner said that he has had two meetings with VDOT, and has also met with Albemarle's Director of Economic Development (Faith McClintic) and the Planning Department, among others. He said that he has been trying to take the concepts from the DCI meetings and put them in something more tangible, such as a survey or topographic plan, to see what the dimensional challenges are. Mr. Stoner will have more to report in September after he receives feedback from the County and VDOT. The CCAC discussed a transition to a more grid-like plan, and it was noted that this would be a change for the County (as it is not a grid plan now). Connections are important in terms of a transportation plan that VDOT would accept. The process becomes more complex when figuring out what connections are possible and how they would impact the phases of development. This will be a dialog with VDOT with more work as he starts to narrow realistic options. The County is supportive of a grid plan, but there are complications because of certain factors, such as extending sidewalks on other existing streets if landowners refuse to grant easements for that. This work will continue for the fall. Has there been feedback for the possible connection under the railroad? Mr. Stoner has met with Chuck Proctor from VDOT's Culpeper office, and it was noted that this may be the most meaningful connection, but VDOT

does not have funds to study it now. Funds need to be located for this purpose. A deferral for the rezoning of the property has been granted for one year. Note that the green space near Crozet Park is part of the Parkside Village Homeowners Association land and is used for a stormwater catchment. It was noted that this would be a good place for a trail. The CCA will stay engaged even though some committee members did not want to press forward. The steering committee will meet again to consider. They hope to have this on the agenda for the September 12 meeting. If any other CCAC members want to help with this work, let Tim know. Leslie is already on the committee but said that she expects to increase involvement. See crozetcommunity.org.

- Block Plan for Barnes Lumber property - Warren Byrd and Susan Nelson: Mike Marshall introduced Warren Byrd as our next speaker. Mike said that Mr. Byrd and his landscape architecture firm, Nelson Byrd Woltz, were heavily involved in development of the Crozet master plan, which won several prizes. We are very fortunate to have him talk with us because of his familiarity with the master plan. Mr. Byrd's deep planning experience and knowledge of the master plan can help us articulate what the community wants.

Mr. Byrd then presented to the CCAC a sketch that he and Ms. Nelson had prepared in response to the three alternative plans depicted in the Crozet Gazette. He said that they wished to add some thoughts about design process and had sketched their ideas atop the consensus grid plan. Mr. Byrd noted that some things were the same as the grid plan, and some are changed. Connectivity was their primary goal in the design with the configuration of the blocks, streets, and open spaces. Based on the existing pattern in Crozet, they repeated blocks that exist and built off of High Street. They did the same on the east side, repeating the adjacent units. Their plan has blocks growing from both the east and west ends, and two parallel streets. The buildings and parking are mostly the same as the consensus plan in the Gazette. The public space system is on the west end, with a narrowing green down to Parkside.

The plan has some on-street parking, but no roundabout at the Square in an effort to slow traffic down. There is a park containing slightly less than one acre, and this space could be as simple as a lawn with trees so that is usable for a variety of activities. It may be possible to add public buildings and fountains if desired. Alice Lucan suggested using native plants for landscaping. To avoid a parking lot wasteland, they propose to have parking and service areas behind buildings and inside the blocks, with some street parking (a decision on street width would dictate the amount of on-street parking by allowing parking on one or both sides of the streets). This decision would be made later depending on what works with the width of the roads and blocks. The plan depicts parking behind buildings and along the railroad, consistent with present use in the Square. Mr. Byrd was asked whether the streets would be wide enough for bike paths and pedestrian areas alongside. He responded that having these features is possible but requires a decision on the number of lanes, and whether there will be on-street parking. He said that it would be helpful to have parking under the buildings, but that is expensive and we would have to see how the plan evolves. Mr. Byrd said that their plan proposes to make Library Street the primary access to the area because the entrance at the Square is a little awkward. Mr. Byrd reminded us to pay attention to the scale of the project. There was also some discussion of where the park or green should be. Mr. Byrd has located the larger buildings adjacent to the current Square in order to reinforce what is already on the Square. A question was raised about a

pedestrian crossing over the railroad and Mr. Byrd said that such a crossing would have to be higher than one would think, analogizing to the Highline in New York City.

Mr. Stoner noted that the current master plan calls for Library Avenue to be continuous to Parkside and that this was likely impossible because of required stream buffers. Mr. Byrd asked whether the master plan should be changed. Also, what is the viable retail corridor for this space? Mr. Byrd said that it might be necessary to challenge the master plan and adapt it if it is not working. We should locate new retail areas and see if that follows the master plan. Mr. Byrd said that he believes that a more gridded, less fluid, block plan is best so that this area will not become a “cut-through.” Mr. Stoner noted that parking is a significant issue and that the economics of the property do not support a parking structure paid for by the developer. So how do we deal with parking issues? Mr. Stoner said that 300 to 400 spaces are required and that one side of a block might all have to be parking. Mr. Byrd said that we should come up with a framework that works for our goals, and work back from there. Mr. Byrd said that the plan does not have that many spaces but should grow organically. It may be necessary to fight the suburban parking ratio because this project is a different circumstance and may not require the same ratio as elsewhere. Mr. Stoner asked about the transect and what happens to areas that are less viable as commercial uses? The transect runs west to east, commercial on the west side, with a gradation to more residential use on the east. We want businesses here that do not have to be closer to an interstate, and this is not meant to be an auto-centric downtown. Tim Tolson said that he would put Mr. Byrd and Ms. Nelson’s plan on the CCA website if that is satisfactory to them. Cliff Fox commented that the Parkside stormwater area could be designed to be something like the Dell on UVA Grounds, and that this would become an element of an interstitial park system.

- Review/Discussion about resolution regarding Crozet exit 107 interchange: Tom Loach summarized yesterday’s Planning Commission meeting, where the vote was unanimous not to approve changing the use at the Route 29/Interstate 64 interchange. He said they wanted to keep it as is. Tom said that one of the speakers recommended that these uses be moved to Yancey Mills, so the CCAC should address this. There was discussion at the Commission meeting about a perceived lack of light industrial space and adding more acreage to the inventory. So Tom thought that the CCAC should adopt a new resolution. Several commissioners also wanted to make sure that the discussion was specific to the 29/64 interchange and was not a precedent for other interchanges. Some commissioners thought it was spot rezoning. Tom recommended that whoever presents a CCAC resolution to the Board of Supervisors explain the context of this resolution. Kim Connolly moved to approve the attached resolution, seconded by Susan Munson, and the resolution passed unanimously.

- Review/Discussion regarding resolution regarding Community Development Block Grant: The most recent email from Dave Stoner was to ask whether the County had heard anything from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. The County was initially told that the proposal was still under review, but was subsequently told by the agency that they were in the process of sending out the letters. A resolution was presented that speaks to this grant and potential future grants. Mary Gallo had noted in the FAQs for this grant that it seemed that if Albemarle County received this grant, the County would be required to complete a proposal for a community improvement grant. Would additional requirements be

imposed in the second round? Ann said that these issues are left up to the communities themselves, and that Albemarle has used these grants in several areas in the county (such as for civic space). The second grant would be for implementation of what was planned in the first round, and all these grants encourage community input. Such a grant would fund implementation of items required in the Master Plan, and could be used to plan the civic space, a marketing plan, and public engagement. Susan Munson volunteered to look into more grant sources, and noted that it would be good to have a committee that looks at grants going forward. There was discussion of having a liaison with the County to identify and bring to the CCAC any grants that the County knows of that would help with this work. We could work with Kristy Shifflett to identify the sources and determine what we want to do. After discussion of the draft resolution and clarifying edits, Kim Connolly moved to approve it, seconded by Kim Guenther, and the resolution passed unanimously.

- Brief discussion about grant subcommittee and liaison roles: Covered by previous item.

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

5. **Announcements:**

- Tim Tolson reported that the Independence Day Celebration hosted approximately 3,300 people. They are considering donating funds to the Volunteer Fire Department for their new sign. Tim thought the event went quite well and they seem to have a winning formula. Next year's celebration will be on July 2, which is the Saturday before the 4th. The VFD likes this schedule as it is easier on their volunteers. Ann thanked the group for doing this work.

- September 28 is the Library's second anniversary, with speakers (including Leonard Sandridge, Phil James, and Hubert Gentry) to give a presentation on the history of Crozet. Make your reservation now.

6. **Future Agenda Items:** None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

George Barlow
Secretary