

**Crozet Community Advisory Council – Minutes**  
**Thursday, September 26, 2013 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, Beth Bassett, Bill Schrader, Phil Best, Kim Guenther, Jennie More, John Savage, Meg West, Ann Mallek (Board of Supervisors), Tom Loach (Planning Commission)

**CCAC members absent:** Mary Gallo, Brenda Plantz, Janice Applebach, Leslie Burns

**Public attendees:** Lee Catlin, Mike Marshall, Bob Helton, Jim Crosby (Crozet Safety Corps), Jim Duncan

**Chair Meg Holden called the meeting to order at 7:04 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.

**2. Approval of Minutes from the June 19, 2013 and August 15, 2013 meetings:** John Savage moved to accept the minutes of the June 19, 2013 and August 15, 2013 meetings as presented, seconded by Bill Schrader, and the minutes of the June 19, 2013 and August 15, 2013 meeting were approved by vote of the Council.

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

**4. Project Updates/Information:**

- Update on the new Library and Library Fundraising (Bill Schrader on fundraising and Lee Catlin on the use of the first floor): Bill said that the big news is the ribbon cutting at 10am on Saturday and they are hoping for 350 to 400 people. Arrive early! Mudhouse will provide coffee and new tee shirts with a secret design will be sold. There will be several speakers, including Delegate Steve Landes, and Ann Mallek will officiate. Bill said that visits to library are up, circulation is higher by 18% over last year, and 350 new library cards have been issued. Good numbers of high and middle school kids are using the space. Right now the collection is 43,000 books, 10,000 more than the old library, but more books are needed. More will be said about funding on Saturday, but the fundraising committee will stay on until September 28, 2014. Meg H. says the book moving day was a successful event, with excellent participation by Crozet Elementary students and many grandparents. Video of the event has been played around the world and audio has been on many NPR stations. Crozet historians will try to locate pictures from the 1984 book brigade and put them up in the Library.

Lee Catlin reported on the status of renting the first floor. After going through the request for proposals process, one response was received from the private sector for a new running shop, Crozet Running, to be operated by John and Michelle Anderson, who are already active in the Crozet community. CCAC members agreed that this is a good use, and is not competitive with

other businesses in town. They are hoping to open by December in the space on the left side of the building. They will sell running shoes and gear and will host events. On the right side in a somewhat smaller space, Lee hopes we will have an “adventure outpost” that will be oriented toward tourism assets in western Albemarle, including Shenandoah National Park, County parks, the wine trail, breweries, etc., making it a focal point for active recreation. The Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau is the key player. There will be a meeting next week at the library to start the creative process for the space (3pm on Friday, October 4). Staffing will mostly be handled by the Convention and Visitors Bureau, which has a contractual obligation to maintain a visitor center in the County. It is also possible that the National Park and local parks might have some involvement too. Bill said that the Superintendent of Shenandoah National Park has expressed interest in reacquainting the surrounding counties with the Park. Staff have been looking at visitor centers in other outdoor-oriented places, such as Asheville and Boulder, and trying to get ideas for what would attract the most attention. There could be synergies with the running shop and library. This idea is more likely to be launched in spring in better weather.

- “Tourism Zone” issues: The state has a somewhat complex program for gap financing of tourism facilities. If the project has 80% of its financing in place, then this program provides funding for the final 20%. The idea is to borrow against future tax revenues. When the project starts generating revenue, the state rebates 1% of tax revenue back, which is matched by the county and the developer. The increased tax revenue generated by the new facility (which would go into use sooner than it would have without the program) is expected to exceed the 1% revenue that is given up. The idea is that this program would finance a project that would be unlikely to get full conventional financing. In Crozet, the likely project is a hotel with a restaurant. A program like this is new for the Board of Supervisors, which has not done incentive programs before. Only projects that are in a defined tourism zone established by ordinance can qualify. The program does not obligate the County to do anything, but it does create a pathway for such a project. Projects that qualify are facilities that do not already exist in the zone (a deficit in tourism infrastructure). Staff looked at this and thought that the Crozet Development Area is the major tourism area in the County with a hotel deficit and reported this to the Board. The tourism zone would be the same as the Crozet Master Plan Development Area. There is already some interest on the part of the current applicant looking to build a hotel. Ann said that the Board is now split on this. Staff has said that the target facility is an appropriately scaled small or boutique hotel, which is more difficult for a lender to finance, and so this program would be appropriate. Staff will be going back to the Board next week to recognize the deficit in the County and to suggest that giving up future tax revenue is a way to make this work. Ann asked that CCAC members come to the BOS meeting on Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. to support this. She said that the County’s Economic Vitality Plan tasks the staff with the responsibility to find programs like this. The program can run for 20 years until the debt is retired. Ann said that Fredericksburg and Virginia Beach have adopted an ordinance like this and it has been successful. Because other localities have done this, there are examples in place to help Albemarle. John Savage said that he thought this would be a good program and provide a needed service to western Albemarle. Non-traditional financing would make this kind of hotel viable. Ann said that the Wednesday meeting is not a public hearing, interested citizens should come for the discussion. Lee explained that the program is designed to address the identified need in western Albemarle and other types of tourism facilities would not qualify.

Meg H. then asked if we should have a resolution to support the tourism zone. Nancy Virginia moved that we adopt an appropriate resolution in support of the tourism zone, to say that the CCAC states its support for creation of the tourism zone in the Crozet Development Area to support a moderately sized and appropriately scaled hotel to meet the acknowledged deficiency here, with appropriate recitals describing the value of such a zone to the area. The motion was seconded by John Savage and approved by vote of the CCAC. The secretary was instructed to draft the resolution and then circulate it among the council members.

- **Status of Barnes Property:** Ann said that Wayne Cilimberg would be coming to our next meeting to talk about a zoning text amendment proposed for Crozet, which would address the difficulty in having a mixed use in every building in a project. The change would address the concern of many citizens that there not be stand-alone apartment buildings in Crozet (mixed uses would be permitted in a single structure). This would allow flexibility in building uses and address a difficulty in planning development of the Barnes property. This would be a limited change of language for the downtown zone and would allow single family and townhouses by special use permit. Ann said that Frank Stoner has purchased the property from the bank and has started reactivating the old zoning application. Staff is in the process of determining whether he can do that. Tom said that he had spoken to Mr. Stoner and Tom is concerned about the overall plan. What will be the split between business and residential use? He said he thought that the idea has been to extend the downtown use and not add 30 acres of residential use.

- **Explain development rights between Crozet and White Hall:** Tim Tolson had mentioned this issue to Meg H., this having been circulated by the staff. There is to be some sort of change between White Hall and Crozet. Members of the CCAC did not know what this is and would look into it further.

- **Update on plans for the old library:** Lee said that the police department is indeed interested in locating a substation there, but nothing is decided yet. The County would likely go through a similar process as done for the ground floor of the library. They would look at the space's attributes and constraints and determine the highest and best use (HBU). Once all the library property is completely out of the structure, the County will work with a consultant to assess the building for, *inter alia*, structural, Americans with Disabilities Act, and asbestos issues. How much cost to upfit the structure for particular uses? They will then follow guiding principles including stewardship of its historic character, facilitating foot traffic, and providing a lively street front presence. CCAC members commented that the building could be a connector between downtown and the other side of Three Notch'd Road. What uses will do this? Are there other criteria? Challenges include ADA compliance, constrained parking, and the effort involved for the County to lease another space. There are three choices: sell it, lease it or use it. This issue will come to the BOS in November, and then there will be community meetings to talk about this. There will likely be a town hall meeting in late October to talk about the streetscape (which is out to bid now), and would be a chance to talk about the adventure outpost, streetscape and this project. In January or February, the HBU determination would go to the BOS. It is possible the space could go to the police, social services or other county office needs, but we need an engaged process to figure this out. Ann said that she is still plugging away for light rail and we shouldn't change the building so much that it could not be repurposed back to a train station. Other space will come open in a few years, including the old Crozet School. So

this needs to be a careful conversation because the train station is a special building. Lee said she is intrigued by the first floor of the library being a professional business or open grounds type of space, which is likely a need in Crozet. Proposals for the train station have been made for a law office or art gallery. The old school might be a good business incubator too, but any change there might be several years away. It was also noted that a police presence at the train station might keep things quiet in the downtown Crozet area. Let Lee know your thoughts. CCAC noted that the criteria for the train station must include preservation of the building.

- Update on streetscape: There is an upcoming town hall meeting to discuss this.
- Update on plans for pedestrian crossing signal at Clover Lawn/Harris-Teeter: Ann said that she is working on getting feedback about this from Joel DeNunzio at VDOT. Ann said that the road needs to be re-striped and VDOT is studying its options for this. Phil said he is concerned about the four way stop in Crozet for pedestrians because drivers are watching for cars, not pedestrians, and so perhaps this could be repainted too. Crossing lights for pedestrians are being considered for the Clover Lawn area, but we need to follow up with VDOT on this. Ann said that there may be funding for safety features at the four way stop.
- Update on Safe Routes to School project, with information specific to the crossing at Crozet Elementary: VDOT has approved the plans and this project is going out to bid now. Interested parties will have a month to respond and so the County is looking at early winter to do this. Once a bid is accepted, there is a time frame that the bid remains in effect and the project is completed. The notice to proceed is expected to be issued around November 19. This project may be combined with another crossing elsewhere in the County.

**5. Follow up on the meeting at Mudhouse with Ned Galloway (Beth Bassett and Jennie More):** Jennie and Beth attended the meeting. There were two primary topics, the first being the Environmental Science Academy at WAHS and how it would be operated. It will be broad ranging, so that it will provide curriculum for a broad range of environmental interests from green building to environmental law, and will help with workforce development and with college bound kids. The other topic pertained to long range planning, and both expansion of WAHS and building a new school (such as a comprehensive high school in the northern part of the County) remain possibilities. The Foothills elementary school is no longer a possibility as the developer elected to develop the land by right. There is now growth pressure at Baker Butler. Apparently unpredicted growth because of changes in housing prices caused school populations to shift and the school system was not prepared for that. The concern was raised that such projections should be made in a more comprehensive manner, and this should be reflected in school plans. They need to do a better job predicting where growth is going to be, using better development data. It was recognized that the PTOs are a powerful group that could press for change with numbers at school board meetings. It was noted that people move the western Albemarle for the schools and this is a key resource to protect.

**6. Report on Independence Day Celebration:** We had an e-mailed report from Tim Tolson that the day went well with funds donated to Crozet Park and the White Hall Ruritans. They did not make enough to cover all of the 2014 costs, but they will have a good jump on those. The vendors did well and the Fire Department said that the parade went well. Next year's

celebration will be on Saturday, July 5, 2014. It was noted that with the library and Park dome projects, the community may be “donated out” for the time being. There has been some talk about redesigning the payment process (perhaps per person at the gate). Streetscape construction may affect the celebration next year. The Fire Department has mentioned that it might want to have a competition next year, and perhaps neighborhood competitions could be arranged.

**7. Change of meeting date and place (suggestion of Tuesdays at the new Library):** The library is open until 9:00 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday and we would have to move our meeting day to do that. Alternating meetings between locations was determined not to be a good idea because of possible confusion. We could meet at the Lodge, and might get a number of residents from Old Trail and the Lodge. Let Meg know what you think. Members pointed out that there are probably conflicts with other events on Monday and so Tuesday would probably work better. Bill will see if the third Tuesday is available.

**8. Items not listed on the Agenda:** It was reported that buildings are being cleaned and asbestos removed at the old Acme site. The small house and main building are to be torn down. This will take place over two years, with much debris to be hauled away. There are still concerns about the soils in main building but runoff behind Stonegate is still being tested frequently and seems to be clean.

Ann asked if there was interest in another dance, perhaps in March. Keep that in mind to see if there is interest.

**9. Announcements:** The Crozet Arts Fair is coming up. If you get there early, you can participate in the 5K race/stroll, which will use the Crozet connector trail. Jennie More did some research on Crozet history and found an article from a 1906 Richmond paper about the newly constructed bank and describing Crozet as a progressive town for prosperity. Phil also put together a great history display for the library.

**10. Future Agenda Items:** None mentioned, except the visit from Mr. Cilimberg.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m. on a motion by Bill Schrader and seconded by John Savage.

George Barlow  
Secretary