

Downtown Crozet Association, Inc
P.O. Box 124, Crozet, Virginia 22932

24 September 2007

Position Statement

**Addressing the Consultant's Recommendations for the
Downtown Crozet Zoning District**

The Downtown Crozet Association, Inc. is a non-profit organization representing property owners, business owners and community members who are committed to the preservation of the downtown business district as Crozet's commercial and cultural center, as envisioned in the Crozet Master Plan. The organization's membership owns approximately 75 percent of the area under study.

DCA members attended all of the community meetings hosted by the zoning consultants and the DCA met after each to discuss issues and options. The DCA also met directly with the consultants, whom we commend for their professionalism, creativity and sensitivity throughout.

New downtown zoning should simplify the development of downtown Crozet, eliminating the suburban-style ruling requirements that are barriers to its revitalization, and make it as attractive to development as other commercial zones in the Crozet growth area. New downtown zoning should be enacted by the Board of Supervisors as the by-right zoning for the district.

The DCA agrees with residential uses in the downtown, but not the introduction of commercial uses in the downtown's surrounding residential neighborhoods, whose zoning should stay status quo until the effect of new downtown zoning proves out over time. A map of the DCA's recommended downtown boundary, incorporating about 75 acres, is attached. The Transition areas described in the consultant's recommendations should not be enacted.

The DCA seeks one downtown district with uniform rules. The DCA essentially agrees with the consultant's description for downtown zoning, including its recommendations for: building height, including the two-story minimum, four-story maximum by-right; building setbacks and stepbacks; breaks in building facades for pedestrian and parking access; minimum required parking spaces; parking setbacks; shared parking and trading agreements; minimum lot size; residential and civic uses; residential density maximums; lighting plan coordination; landscape buffers and screening; and street tree standards. The DCA opposes the inclusion of building articulation rules; these are not zoning matters.

Since the new zoning proposes a two-story minimum height with all stories habitable, *the DCA believes developers will design mixed-use buildings without dictating that* as a requirement, a requirement that could unnecessarily complicate and discourage some new

plans. Single-use buildings should be allowed by-right. The matter of how to use floors should be left to the discretion of property owners. Similarly, it is unnecessary to limit the size of residences. All the current Crozet commercial projects underway outside downtown—Clover Lawn, Three Notch'd Center, the Gateway corner buildings and Old Trail village center—all have mixed uses without that being required by zoning. Each of these has been approved since the adoption of the Master Plan, a fact that points out the relative disadvantages existing downtown, where no new business has established meanwhile and two firms of longstanding have departed for new offices on Rt. 250, leaving spaces that are remain vacant.

The DCA asks for the prompt review of the zoning plan and expeditious action to promote downtown's pivotal place in the Crozet Master Plan.