

Crozet Downtown Zoning Community Meeting #1

Crozet Fire Station

May 10, 2007

Comments from Group Discussion

“What are the challenges and opportunities for achieving your vision for downtown?”

HOPES for downtown

- Desire for ONE unified downtown. Pull together both sides of the railroad tracks
- Multi-functional downtown with many uses/activities in close proximity
- Friendly for businesses and industry
- Sustainable building downtown
- Pedestrian and Bike access improved
- Sufficient lighting and increased safety
- Entrances into Crozet should be beautiful and welcoming
- Zoning should encourage open space/common space to be provided downtown
- Potential for sharing space/resources, e.g. alley behind Fabulous Foods
- Existing businesses should be able to afford to remain in Crozet after redevelopment
- Zoning should address issue of affordable housing
- Building on the strength of existing greenways, connecting them into downtown
- Place utilities underground where possible in redevelopment

CONCERNS for downtown

- Some parts of downtown are in disrepair (dilapidated buildings)
- Parking – how and where can enough parking be provided downtown to accommodate the increase of people living in or visiting downtown (current parking inventory of spaces shown in a map that was displayed at the meeting)
- Traffic - currently all of downtown traffic is funneled onto one street (240 to Crozet Avenue). An alternative Main Street is the key.
- Pedestrian safety as a result of the increased traffic
- Managing the transition between current zoning and new zoning is important. There is concern that the by-right options in the interim will be more advantageous for developers.
- Minimum parking requirements by current zoning are unachievable for new businesses (or existing), should look at other approaches to parking
- More street lights and traffic lights in downtown?
- Competition with Old Trail. Old trail's 250,000 sq. ft. commercial space versus ~130,000 sq. ft. existing in downtown. Downtown must be attractive for business investment
- Impact to adjacent residential properties. How will rezoning affect property values?

SOLUTIONS for downtown

- Possibility of an overlay district. How could this play out in Crozet?
- Possibility of Crozet developing its own Architectural Review Board

Individual Responses from Comment Sheets

- Rezoning should encourage development downtown
- Rezoning needs to happen quickly – downtown is competing with 250/Old Trail
- Tying North and South downtown together important albeit difficult to get the railroad to cooperate
- Keep character of Crozet. Do not create a generic downtown.
 - This includes keeping the barber shop/Mexican restaurant frontage
 - Appropriate scale of development
- Correct storm runoff problem which causes “lakes” in front yards west of Crozet Ave and South of Jarmans Gap
- Connect Downtown with existing Growth Area
- Make it easier to develop properties using the neighborhood model
- While it may be challenging, it is important to create a pedestrian/bike friendly environment downtown.
- Mix of Use (shop, browse, worship, eat, work, live, and enjoy nature)
- Beautification efforts (like streetscape)
- Green spaces/ public space for outdoor enjoyment
- Challenge of parking
 - central location with safe pedestrian access
 - attractive but adequate lighting of parking
 - possible public transportation tie-in
 - relaxation of requirements but still accommodation for parking
- Challenge of relieving traffic
 - Idea for diverting traffic on new main street and keep cars out of ‘center’ of downtown. This includes closing the underpass to vehicular traffic.
- Businesses
 - Have small business in Crozet. No big business or businesses that are not used frequently
 - Local business should be able to stay in downtown
- Provide affordable housing
- Area of the area to be considered –downtown boundary in question
- Conflicts between VDOT ROX and Master Plan goals
- Setbacks between zoning districts should be reduced for greater utility

Workshop Comments

- Need a better stated focus of why Crozet needs different zoning downtown
- Concern that not all of the participants understood the reason for the meeting
- Take home materials in “layman’s terms” would help participants be better informed and more able to discuss the issues at the meetings
- I’m so impressed that we get asked for input
- Business community not yet in Crozet should be involved in this process – Don’t limit input to only existing businesses
- Try to keep introductions short in the future so there is adequate time to deal with zoning issues

BIKE RACK ISSUES (to be reported to the County as issues/opportunities)

- Pollution of creek and streams
- Possibility of the new Main St. becoming a pedestrian mall
- New Main St. eventually impacts on traffic patterns