



408 Park Street
Charlottesville
Virginia 22902

T434.984.1358
F434.984.4158
www.nbwla.com

November 7, 2005

Rebecca Ragsdale
Senior Planner
County of Albemarle
Department of Community Development
401 McIntire Road, Room 227
Charlottesville, VA 22902-4596

Re: Request for Critical Slopes Waiver for the Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center,
Route 20, Albemarle County, Virginia

Dear Rebecca:

I am writing on behalf of the Lewis & Clark Exploratory of Virginia, Inc. to request a waiver for the disturbance of critical slopes in the construction of the entrance road to the proposed facility.

The proposed entrance road is a continuation of the existing gravel road that skirts the play fields on the northwest side of the park. The proposed road continues up the hillside between the barn/upper play field/dog park and the 100' stream setback.

Although a small section of the road crosses an area of steep slopes (no greater than 27% slope), the road is located to minimize grading while achieving a 10% road slope. All grading activity will occur outside of the 100' stream setback. Proper erosion control measures will be enforced during construction to minimize runoff and sedimentation. The proposed road crosses existing fields, which will be immediately reseeded after disturbance and protected until grasses are well established. Although the intention is to seed the disturbed areas with native warm season grasses (which develop extensive root systems), additional shrubs and trees could also be planted to extend the vegetated buffer zone along the river. Vegetated swales along each edge of the proposed road will catch runoff and redirect to areas of lesser slope for groundwater recharge. If necessary, a small bioretention pond could be placed near the low point of the road to store and filter runoff.

An alternative road alignment could route traffic through the existing Darden Towe parking lot and around the edge of the play field. While this is a viable option, park officials have voiced their opposition to this alternative.

The visitor's experience starts with the entrance road. Therefore, it is our intention to design the proposed road in an environmentally sensitive manner which preserves the aesthetic character of the rolling Virginia landscape while implementing measures to slow runoff and protect the health of the Rivanna River.

We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sophie Johnston
Landscape Architect
Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects

Attachment: Set of 6 drawings dated 10.18.05

C: Fran Lawrence and Kay Slaughter- Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center of Virginia, Inc.
Warren Byrd, Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects