

**Albemarle County Planning Commission  
Final Minutes Regular Meeting April 9, 2024**

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a public hearing on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Members attending were: Fred Missel, Chair; Luis Carrazana, Vice-Chair; Corey Clayborne; Karen Firehock (remote); Julian Bivins; Lonnie Murray; and Nathan Moore.

Members absent: none

Other officials present were: Kevin McDermott, Deputy Director of Planning; Andy Herrick, County Attorney's Office; Andy Reitelbach; Rebecca Ragsdale; Margaret Maliszewski; and Carolyn Shaffer, Clerk to the Planning Commission.

**Call to Order and Establish Quorum**

Ms. Shaffer called the roll.

Mr. Missel established a quorum.

Ms. Firehock said that she was located in Howardsville, Virginia, and she requested to participate in the meeting remotely due to a bronchitis infection.

Mr. Bivins motioned to allow Ms. Firehock to participate in the meeting remotely, which was seconded by Mr. Moore. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

**Public Hearing Items**

**ZMA202300012 Holly Hills**

Andy Reitelbach, Senior Planner with the Albemarle County Planning Division said that the location of the rezoning request involved eight parcels, and these parcels were located on the east side of Route 29, south of Hollymead Drive, with the RST rezoning, now known as Archer North, situated directly to the south-southwest. He said that the neighborhoods surrounding the property included the Hollymead and Forest Lakes communities to the northeast, east, and southeast.

Mr. Reitelbach said that all eight parcels in this rezoning were currently zoned R1, allowing for 30 residential units by-right due to their combined size of over 30 acres. He said that the overlay zoning districts affecting these eight parcels included the AIA Airport Impact Area and the EC Entrance Corridor, with Route 29 being an entrance corridor. He said that steep slopes, both managed and preserved, were present on this property.

Mr. Reitelbach said that surrounding zoning districts comprised PUD Planned Unit Development, such as Hollymead and Forest Lakes to the northeast and southeast, and RST, now called Archer North, was zoned PRD Planned Residential Development. He said that properties to the west across Route 29 were zoned RA Rural Areas.

He said that regarding the comprehensive plan for this site, these eight properties fell within the Places 29 Master Plan. He said that they had a mixed designation for these eight parcels: Urban

Density Residential, and Private Open Space and Environmental Features. He said that Urban Density Residential recommended a range of 6.01 to 34 units per acre, along with secondary uses such as retail, office, and commercial that support the neighborhood.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the recommended maximum residential building height was 45 feet or four stories. He said that the Private Open Space designation required privately owned recreational amenities in open space areas to protect environmental features, such as floodplains, steep slopes, and wetlands.

Mr. Reitelbach said that surrounding land use designations included commercial mixed-use in Hollymead to the north along Route 29. He said that Hollymead and Forest Lakes were primarily designated neighborhood density residential. He said that RST Archer North was also designated residential, with some areas designated Rural Areas around Route 29.

Mr. Reitelbach said that in the proposal for this application, there were eight parcels totaling approximately 30.821 acres, currently zoned R1. He said that the existing use consisted mainly of forests with a few single-family detached houses and accessory structures. He said that the applicant requested the property be rezoned to PRD to allow for a maximum of 410 dwelling units. He said that these units would be a mixture of multifamily and single-family attached units.

Mr. Reitelbach said that at 410 units, the property would have a gross density of 13.3 dwelling units per acre and a net density of approximately 20 dwelling units per acre. He said that both density calculations fell within the range recommended by the Places 29 Master Plan for urban density residential.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the specifics of the proposal, based on the application plan shown in the previous slide, included 410 units across seven different designated building envelopes. He said that the development would consist of a mix of multifamily and single-family attached units with a maximum height of four stories, as recommended by the Places 29 Master Plan.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the public street network would primarily consist of Archer Avenue, which connected to US 29. He said that the proposed development would primarily run eastward and then southward through the area, connecting to the RST Archer North development in the south and eventually reaching Ashwood Boulevard. He said that upon reaching Ashwood Boulevard, it would connect with Archer Avenue, passing through the Brookhill neighborhood until it reached Polo Grounds Road.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the majority of this development consisted of a public street network; however, the access ways and travel ways within the multifamily units would be privately owned and maintained as part of those residential buildings.

Mr. Reitelbach said that there were two main entry points for this project. He said that one was a right-in right-out entrance off Route 29, and the other connected to Archer Avenue, which continued southward, ultimately linking up with Ashwood Boulevard.

Mr. Reitelbach said that two emergency access points only were recommended: Reuben Lane, located near the intersection of South Hollymead Drive and Route 29 in the northwest area of the property; and Derby Lane, a cul-de-sac within the Hollymead subdivision, situated in the northeastern part of the property.

Mr. Reitelbach said that three future inter-parcel connections were proposed for the three parcels located in the middle northern region of this project, which were not included in the current

proposal but were surrounded on the west, south and east sides by the subject property, and by the Hollymead subdivision to the north.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the applicant had suggested a shared use path along Archer Avenue, connecting with the shared use path proposed in the Archer North RST development and also linking to the existing shared use path along the east side of Route 29.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the applicant proposed a Class B primitive trailway through the wooded areas within the development, following the stream that runs through its center. He said that the proposal included 15% affordable housing at 80% Area Median Income (AMI), consistent with the County's affordable housing policy when this application was submitted and reviewed.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the construction of public streets, particularly Archer Avenue, required some disturbance to the stream buffer and preserved steep slopes. He said that this was necessary for connecting Route 29 to the Archer North development located in the south and for associated utilities on public streets.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the project proposed 40.5% of the site dedicated to open spaces. He said that a 100-foot forested buffer was planned along US Route 29, as per the Places 29 master plan for entrance corridors. He said that along the north and east boundaries of the site, adjacent to existing Forest Lakes and Hollymead neighborhoods, there was a proposed 30-foot buffer of undisturbed and landscaped areas.

Mr. Reitelbach said that three main amenity spaces would be distributed throughout the site, including recreational facilities such as a clubhouse, pool, and tot lots. He said that the forested areas along the WPO stream buffer and preserved steep slopes would remain mostly forested, with the exception of portions disturbed for public street construction. He said that a Class B primitive trail was proposed in these forested areas to allow for recreation.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the multifamily buildings were primarily located in the central and western parts of the development along Route 29 and Archer Avenue, while townhouses and single-family attached units were situated near RST, Forest Lakes, and Hollymead.

Mr. Reitelbach said that with 410 multifamily units, it was anticipated that up to 148 additional students may be generated and attend Agnor-Hurt Elementary School, Lakeside Middle School, and Albemarle High School. He said that Agnor-Hurt Elementary would become overcapacity with this proposed development, while Lakeside Middle would remain under capacity. He said that Albemarle High School, which was already overcapacity, would continue to be overcapacity with additional students from this development.

Mr. Reitelbach said that there were several positive aspects of the rezoning request. He said that it aligned with the urban density residential guidelines of 6.01 to 34 units recommended by the Place's 29 Master Plan. He said that it adhered to the applicable neighborhood model principles, providing affordable units at 15% of the total number of constructed units - a figure consistent with the County policy at the time this application was submitted and reviewed.

Mr. Reitelbach said there were concerns regarding this development. He said that it would result in additional student enrollment at area schools that were already overcapacity or cause a school like Hollymead Elementary School to become overcapacity over time. He said that the initial mention of Agnor-Hurt Elementary was an error. He said that the figures were correct, he just said the wrong school name.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the second concern was the development's potential impact on preserved steep slopes and WPO stream buffer areas, which would be disturbed to construct some of the project's public spaces.

Mr. Reitelbach said that while constructing these streets helped connect various developable parts of the property and avoid additional cul-de-sacs in the area, it did come at the cost of disturbing preserved natural areas. He said that despite these concerns, staff recommended approval of ZMA 2023-12 Holly Hills.

Mr. Murray said that he had a question concerning an intermittent stream depicted on the western side of the property. He asked if a site determination had been conducted to verify its intermittent nature. He asked if he would observe water flowing within the stream if he visited the location today.

Mr. Reitelbach said that he was unaware if it had been determined whether they were intermittent. He said it was reviewed with a stream buffer in certain areas.

Mr. Murray said that no site visit had been conducted yet. He said that he seemed to recall in the past, there was a policy about mitigation when a stream buffer was impacted, involving a two-to-one ratio. He asked what the present mitigation policy for impacts to stream buffers was.

Mr. Reitelbach said that he was unsure about the current policy. He said that the engineering division would assess any effects on stream buffers and adhere to guidelines and regulations, implementing necessary mitigation measures. He said that parking spaces or residential lots would not be permitted in residential areas or within stream buffer zones. He said that he must consult with their engineering division to determine the precise mitigation policies in effect at present.

Mr. Bivins said that he would like to ask a couple of questions. He said that it was helpful to know that RST had been renamed Archer North. He asked if they had any idea when this would go through the site review process. He said that given the addition of a second entrance, they should know when the project would actually happen.

Mr. Reitelbach said that there was a site plan under review for Archer North.

Mr. Bivins said that in the CAC report, a response to a question stated that there was no conflict with schools. He said that he was aware that both Hollymead and Lakeside schools were not currently at full capacity, and the County was constructing another elementary school in the area. He said that they were building two schools. He said that their concern remained that this development, along with others proposed, may overcrowd these schools before the new school was completed.

Mr. Bivins said that the completion status of the two new schools was unclear in the information provided. He said that there seemed to be a discrepancy in the staff notes, as it stated that the schools were at capacity, while also mentioning they were not currently at capacity. He asked for clarification.

Mr. Reitelbach said that Albemarle High School currently exceeded its capacity, while Hollymead and Lakeside were presently under their respective capacities. He said that upon the completion of the development, it was anticipated that the student population would increase, causing Hollymead to surpass its capacity as well.

Mr. Bivins said that at the same time, he believed it was essential for the public to understand that there were two schools on the agenda for that part of the County, in addition to High School Center Two, which would add capacity at the Albemarle High School location.

Mr. Bivins said that he wanted to emphasize that there was ample space to accommodate students due to the elementary and high schools under consideration for this area. He asked if the applicant would be able to provide more affordable units if they were able to do so.

Mr. Reitelbach said that should the applicant have interest; they could offer more affordable housing than currently recommended in the policy.

Mr. Carrazana said that previously, Mr. Murray raised a question regarding the effects of stream buffers. He asked whether the impacts to the buffers were only caused by the road construction.

Mr. Reitelbach said that it would be road construction and related utilities, including water lines.

Mr. Carrazana said there were locations where it was evident that they were crossing the stream.

Mr. Reitelbach said that no residential units or amenity facilities would be constructed within the stream buffer.

Mr. Moore said that he was curious about the format of these reports, specifically the bottom section of the front page that listed both positive aspects and concerns. He asked about the consistency of a concern regarding additional student enrollment, given that they only catered to this age group, and they did not list impacts on elder care or Fire and Rescue capacity. He asked if it should not be presented as a negative factor but rather something they anticipated and planned for.

Mr. Reitelbach said that it was worthwhile to take into account this aspect during the assessment of rezoning applications. He said that the fire rescue department examined new applications to evaluate the potential effects on their capacity to deliver adequate fire services.

Mr. Missel asked whether they could explain the rationale behind choosing a PRD over an NMD.

Mr. Reitelbach said that given that this development predominantly consisted of residential properties, it was more sensible to opt for the PRD approach as they were primarily focused on residential areas. He said that the NMD, on the other hand, aimed to promote a diverse range of uses within the development.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the applicant expressed no interest in incorporating commercial development as part of this project. He said that since this area was mainly designated for urban density residential in the Places 29 Master Plan, with residential being the primary use, it aligned better with PRD rather than the more mixed-use NMD.

Mr. Missel said that VDOT reviewed the TIA, and they highlighted an issue concerning one of the turning movements, specifically stacking on one of these movements. He said that this concern arose from the assumption that Archer could be connected to Archer North. He asked whether the site plan for Archer North included the connection of the street or if it was a separate internal plan not yet triggering the interconnection.

Mr. Reitelbach said that the site plan included the Archer Avenue connection, extending from Ashwood Boulevard to the property boundary. He said that the applicant could likely provide

further details on this aspect during their presentation.

Mr. Missel opened the public hearing.

Steve Blaine, representing the applicant, said that they had a joint venture in this application with a highly experienced multifamily developer, Dominion Realty Partners, and Stony Creek Development. He said that their CEO, Michael Campbell, was present that night, along with their entire team.

Mr. Blaine said that he understood there were some questions that would be deferred to their engineer. He said that the plan had evolved significantly since its inception, which started in the summer prior. He said that they met with the leadership of both the Hollymead and Forest Lakes neighborhoods before filing the application, receiving valuable feedback.

Mr. Blaine said that the revised plan addressed concerns raised by the community, particularly traffic and inter-parcel and inter-community connections at Darby Lane and Reuben Lane. He said that they had committed to maintaining both as emergency access only. He said that other concerns included impacts to immediate neighbors, which the plan now reflected with a 20-foot undisturbed buffer and a 10-foot landscape buffer.

Mr. Blaine said that the setbacks, as shown in the application plan, were 20 feet, providing a total of 40 feet between buildings and the surrounding community. He said that they had increased interparcel intermobility connections or multimodal connections in response to the community's requests.

Mr. Blaine said that the future Archer Avenue would also have a 10-foot multi-use path. He said that the conceptual images showed the proposed apartment buildings in higher density central to the project, with lower density townhouses adjacent to conventional neighborhoods. He said that the proximity to Hollymead Elementary School presented opportunities to enhance the trail network.

Mr. Blaine said that there was an existing trailway in Forest Lakes, close to their project. He said that they proposed connecting this trail to the northeast corner of their project and linking it with Hollymead Drive. He said that a crosswalk would be installed to help students safely walk to school using the 10-foot multi-use path.

Mr. Blaine said that the bridge shown was from a path connecting Forest Lakes to Baker Butler Elementary, and they envisioned a sensitive trail design with minimal disturbance. He said that regarding concerns about the school, they had conducted an analysis based on projected capacity numbers provided by the Albemarle County School Division.

Mr. Blaine said that Hollymead Elementary had a capacity of 429, but projections indicated it would not reach anywhere near that number in the next ten years. He said that the addition of their project would not overload Lakeside Elementary, as acknowledged by the school division. He said that Albemarle County had faced capacity issues, but this was the projection for the area with the given unit multipliers for elementary schools.

Mr. Blaine said that the big swing factor was the heavy weighting for multifamily units, which had a 0.12 per unit multiplier. He said that in contrast to the analysis in the staff report, using an average resulted in a nearly double multiplier, leading to projections of 86 students.

Mr. Blaine said that they did not fault the school division for this approach since they had not

committed to specific types of units. He said that it was fair to say that they used an average and based it on an average multiplier. He said that the school division had a strategy in place, acknowledging the growth in the area and projecting Hollymead to continue to be under capacity.

Mr. Blaine said that if the capacity was reached, as indicated by the presence of a North Feeder school in the CIP, they had acknowledged this issue since their long-range planning advisory report from five years ago. He said that Lakeside would continue to operate at under capacity.

Mr. Blaine said that a different strategy had been employed for the high school. He said that the approach was unique, as they had developed a center-based system. He said that Center 1 had already been funded, while Center 2 was projected but not yet fully funded. He said that with these two additions, the system would accommodate 650 students. He said that it was the school division recognizing the impending growth in the area.

Mr. Blaine said that the supervisors and CIP funds were aware of this issue, and they did not view it as a negative or unfavorable aspect for this project. He said that they had submitted a special exception for step backs or setbacks.

Mr. Blaine said that the developer's successful approach to green building had also been highlighted by meeting the National Green Building Standard. He said that this standard focused on six key areas of lot and land development to achieve certification, setting it apart from other certifications like LEED and Energy Star.

Mr. Bivins said that he had a couple of questions. He said that he noticed that approximately 40% of the project involved green space. He said that there was a significant topographical change on the site. He asked if, once the development was complete, will a significant portion of it be accessible to the community. He said that he was referring specifically, not to the part near the stream, but the part above Route 29.

Mr. Blaine said that part of the reason for the primitive trail system was to promote passive use, avoiding intrusion on natural features wherever possible. He said that it would be accessible in that way.

Mr. Bivins said that everyone had recognized that while there were some good recreational facilities available, they were somewhat tailored for specific groups. He said that as they considered the tot lots, they should think about them as intergenerational spaces where families, single individuals, and people with children could all gather together. He said that these spaces should not be exclusively designated for tot lots.

Mr. Bivins asked, considering the 62 affordable units of the project, if there would be an opportunity to reassess the financial situation and potentially increase the number of affordable units at any point during the development process. He asked whether they were committed to 62 units.

Mr. Blaine said that no potential owner or investor had been restricted by the County's policy. He said that the developer or owner could review market conditions throughout the process.

Mr. Bivins said that they should maintain an open mind on that considering this would be beneficial for future discussions. He said that there were bike racks present. He asked if there would be electric vehicle chargers installed on the property.

Mr. Blaine said yes.

Mr. Carrazana asked if the special exception for the step backs applied to all the buildings or specific buildings.

Mr. Blaine said that it concerned only two buildings along the entrance corridor on Route 29. He said that the orientation of these buildings was influenced by an ARB preference, as they were apprehensive about having two buildings aligned parallel and a long wall concept. He said that they proposed an alternative: making one building perpendicular to the others. He said that this proposal was well-received by the ARB.

Mr. Carrazana said that in regards to amenities, at present, there was a primary grassy area which encompassed the central triangular space designated as an amenity zone. He asked if there would be room in that space for sports activities.

Mr. Blaine said that he would ask about the developer's experiences, but they would not exclude any activities. He said that they should mention that the facilities would comprise a swimming pool and a clubhouse. He said he was not sure if the space would support a soccer pitch.

Mr. Carrazana said that they should consider some kind of activity. He said that it was essential to provide them with sports options such as basketball courts or soccer fields. He said that although tot lots and dog parks were available, they likely did not cater to the preferences of young children.

Mr. Clayborne said that he would like to revisit the part in the staff report concerning VDOT's concerns about the stacking in the current turn lane. He said that the project proposed an additional turn lane and asked if that would address VDOT concerns.

Mr. Blaine said that it was a late-breaking development, and staff likely received a memo yesterday or today. He said that until the last few days, they were in conversations. He said that it appeared that they had addressed VDOT's concerns, and their recommendation was that no improvements were warranted due to this development.

Mr. Clayborne said that the information was helpful. He said that regarding the affordable housing units, he asked if the intention was to distribute them across the entire project, rather than concentrating them in one building.

Mr. Blaine said that there would not be a designated affordable area. He said that as units became available, if a qualified tenant applied, they would be leased. He said that no distinctions in finishes would exist among the various units.

Mr. Clayborne said that he appreciated the presentation regarding school impacts, and he suggested including measures for offsetting this effect, even if the schools were under capacity. He said that maintenance was essential, and it could be challenging to secure funding at both state and local levels.

Mr. Clayborne said that as they progressed with the site plan, he asked them to consider the green spaces amidst the predominant surroundings of asphalt. He said that they should consider a thorough examination of vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns for safety purposes.

Mr. Murray said that the headwaters of streams played a critical role in stream ecology. He said that currently, the County policy required no buffer at all on intermittent streams, which were often removed altogether. He said that it would be ideal to preserve as much of those intermittent



streams on the western side, even if it necessitated highly engineered solutions.

Mr. Murray said that the University of Virginia's South Lawn Project offered an excellent example of how an intermittent stream had been preserved and engineered to provide filtering capacity. He said that instead of running it as a culvert under a building, as shown in the plan, he encouraged exploring alternatives that kept the stream on the surface or better managed stormwater on the site by focusing on quality, not just quantity treatment.

Mr. Blaine said that he was quite familiar with the university project as he had resided on Lewis Mountain Road for several years. He said that the stream had been covered for over a century, and they did a good thing uncovering it.

Scott Collins, Collins Engineering, said that they had made efforts to preserve the 2,600 linear feet of perennial streams in the project area, except for two stream crossings. He said that 75% of the intermittent stream would be impacted from the road crossing, not the building.

Mr. Collins said that 50 to 60 linear feet were additionally impacted by the building. He said that it would be routed around and connected to the culvert. He said that the total preserved streams amounted to about 80-90% of the intermittent streams on the site.

Mr. Murray asked if they were seeking other methods for enhancing stormwater mitigation quality and asked what options were being considered for implementation.

Mr. Collins said that the size of this project, as per the state mandate, necessitated 75% on-site treatment. He said that this particular project would provide more than that requirement, making it distinct from typical projects. He said that a significant aspect of this project involved the existing VDOT sediment basin - a stormwater management facility similar to the one in the Brookhill development.

Mr. Collins said that they enhanced the basin and incorporated stormwater management from the Brookhill development. He said that they made the facility a more natural feature. He said that their plan was to apply a similar approach to this project. He said that they aimed to enhance the existing facility, incorporate more stormwater management features, and landscape the area for aesthetic appeal and filtration purposes.

Mr. Murray said that improving the VDOT facility into an effective biofilter would be a true asset. He said that if they could find a method to channel the intermittent stream into the biofilter, it would significantly enhance its functionality at that location.

Mr. Collins said that was a good point.

Mr. Bivins asked if they were talking about the existing biofilter near the blue and orange house on 29.

Mr. Collins said yes.

Mr. Bivins said that it was a large structure made of stone and surrounded by a fence, with a mound designed for water collection nearby. He asked if they were talking about redoing that and integrating it into the property.

Mr. Collins said that was correct.

Mr. Moore asked for clarification regarding the number of units in the area, specifically the request going from 500 units a few months ago to today's request for 410 units. He said that he recalled that PRD allowed up to 700 units. He asked about the process behind determining the current figure and why this particular density was considered in light of previous approvals.

Mr. Collins said that 410 was the suitable option for this development, considering the existing infrastructure surrounding the development and the on-site streams. He said that by taking all these factors into account, it generated the number itself. He said that this number aligned well with the current traffic patterns and maintaining the streams while addressing the remaining development areas. He said that with having recreational spaces and other considerations, it resulted in the emergence of this number as the most appropriate choice.

Mr. Moore said that the site was more challenging than some they had seen previously.

Mr. Collins said yes, it was.

Mr. Moore asked for further information about the emergency exits located on Derby Lane and South Hollymead Drive. He asked for additional details regarding these emergency access roads connecting to the north, specifically what distinguished them as exclusively for emergencies.

Mr. Collins said that it would be a multi-use pathway that was 20 feet wide, allowing emergency vehicular access when necessary. He said that bollards on both sides of the roadway would be accessible for opening by emergency vehicles if main entrances were blocked. He said that this applied to the location on Derby Lane and also the one on Reuben Lane, which served as their connection. He said that an existing driveway along Reuben Lane ensured continued access to properties north of them.

Mr. Bivins said that he needed to state that the Board of Supervisors had been quite clear on this matter. He said that Derby Lane was assumed to be a public road, as was South Hollymead Drive. He said that it was frustrating for communities to request VDOT maintenance while opposing drive-throughs. He said that it was not acceptable for developers, who were making reasonable contributions to an area, to be disadvantaged by residents who wanted the benefits of a public road but did not wish for its usage.

Mr. Bivins said that if a group of taxpayers did not want others to use their public road, they should convert it into a private road. He said that as long as everyone shared the responsibility of funding these roads through their taxes, everyone should have free access. He said that he could not support the bollards for personal convenience and would suggest they make it a private road in that case.

Mr. Moore said that Mr. Bivins had stated some of his opinions on this issue. He said that he supported grids and multiple roads connected to one another, reducing congestion on major routes like 29. He said that this approach provides alternate pathways for cars, improving overall traffic flow. He said that he could acknowledge that increased traffic may cause concerns for residents on Derby Lane, but he wanted to emphasize the importance of prioritizing proper infrastructure development. He said that personally, he preferred the construction of real roads in the area. He said that to clarify, one of the developments would be for rental units.

Mr. Collins said that was correct.

Mr. Moore asked if there was any interest in increasing the affordable units up to 20% with the new developer incentives.

Mr. Blaine said that the client developed the plan for this site, and they had heard how they determined that plan. He said that at that time, those incentives had not yet been implemented. He said that it remained to be seen what impact the incentives would have. He said that the County needed to adopt an ordinance before the incentives could take effect. He said that it was certainly in the right direction for promoting affordable housing, but it may be a different developer that would do that.

Mr. Moore said that he had to ask. He said that he commended the numerous pathways, pedestrian walkways, and sidewalks that appeared to connect various areas, including the school.

Ms. Firehock said that her comment was that she appreciated the maintained connectivity throughout the site. She said that the other comment pertained to the impacts on streams. She said that it was generally true that placing any part of a stream within a box culvert would affect the stream. She said that a bridge would be preferable, although she understood it was more expensive. She said that her question was directed towards Mr. Blaine.

Ms. Firehock said that towards the end of his presentation, he mentioned environmental certifications and a new approach he was adopting that focused more on the land rather than just the building. She said that he had compared this to LEED and other similar systems. She asked if further information could be provided about whether this development would follow a set of environmental principles or if they were seeking certification for this project.

Mr. Blaine said that the developer plans to pursue a certification for this development, aiming to achieve at least the bronze level of the national green building standard. He said that while he was unable to enumerate all factors considered for this certification, the general areas assessed during the evaluation process were outlined in his presentation. He said that Mike Campbell may provide further details on this matter, as the approach had been successfully applied to other projects and garnered positive feedback from both investors and local residents.

Ms. Firehock said that they did not proffer it, so she was seeking more information about what was intended. She said that an exhaustive list was not necessary, but she would like to know what was so green about this proposal.

Mr. Campbell said that approximately 10 to 12 years ago, their company made a decision to incorporate a green designation for all of their developments. He said that over that time, they had completed over 35 green projects, which included office buildings and various levels of LEED certification as well as residential green globes in rehabilitated properties. He said that however, they discovered that the National Association of Home Builders' bronze designation certification aligned effectively with this type of product.

Mr. Campbell said that it appeared that Ms. Firehock was familiar with designations and their associated scorecards. He said that essentially, this designation involved a similar process where inspectors evaluated insulation, series ratings on mechanical units, and established a specific scorecard to achieve the bronze certification during construction.

Mr. Campbell said that over that time period, they had completed 35 green projects designated at different levels. He said that for this particular project, it aligned exceptionally well with the garden-style walk-up product and adhered to their corporate philosophy of being environmentally conscious and doing what is right for their residents.

Mr. Missel asked if there were any members of the public who wished to speak on this item.

Seeing none, he asked the Clerk if there were any speakers signed up online.

Ms. Shaffer said that there were none.

Mr. Missel closed the public hearing and the matter rested with the Commission.

Ms. Firehock said that she had nothing further to add other than that she appreciated how they maintained connectivity throughout the site. She said that the proposal had a relatively light footprint while adding the necessary density for the growth area.

Mr. Moore said that he agreed with Ms. Firehock and that earlier, he had expressed his preference for actual roads instead of bollards at the northern end. He said that however, overall, he found the design to be well-constructed and suitable for adding solid housing to their community's stock.

Mr. Murray said that he appreciated the emphasis on maintaining density within the growth area as well as promoting interconnectivity. He said that he believed these attributes, along with the substantial allocation of green space on the site and the consideration of providing stormwater mitigation measures beyond merely resorting to a large muddy pit, were significant assets.

Mr. Clayborne said that he concurred with his fellow Commissioners' sentiments. He said that it seemed like a nice project, and it was encouraging to see an increase in density. He said that their parcels were being developed in accordance with the comprehensive plan's recommendations, and he applauded that. He said that he had shared his other comments on the proposal earlier.

Mr. Bivins said that he would give a lift to his colleague on the right regarding the allocation of space. He said that he would suggest expanding the area designated for recreation rather than creating smaller pocket parks. He said that he believed that this would be advantageous for the community as it was built out. He said that additionally, incorporating taller buildings in certain areas, without necessitating elevators for all structures, can contribute to a more diverse skyline and promote the idea that density can coexist with a pleasant environment. He said that by integrating density with trees, hillsides, and green spaces, they could create a comfortable living area that people can enjoy with honor.

Mr. Carrazana said that he believed this comment applied to the staff as well. He said that when reviewing these applications for increased density, which was a frequent topic, he was unsure of how much consideration had been given from the staff's perspective to potentially request exceptions to exceed the current four-story limit. He said that there were developments like this one where they did not encounter road impact issues, which was not always the case.

Mr. Carrazana said that by allowing increased development, they would see more affordable housing units but also an increase in overall housing supply. He said that there were locations that could accommodate this additional density. He said that it was essential to recognize that density was not inherently negative; however, it may not suit every area. He said that this particular location seemed suitable for higher density.

Mr. Carrazana said that moving forward, he suggested finding ways to encourage more density in appropriate sites through dialogue and discussion. He said that initially, this development aimed for a denser community or intended to utilize the challenging site more effectively. He said that therefore, the number of units was reduced. He said that by allowing for greater height, they could accommodate more units.

Mr. Carrazana said that he proposed that internally, they explore ways to maximize density in suitable sites and potentially encourage it. He said that they had observed that a significant amount of untapped density potential remained on the table. He said that when examining their numbers, they should consider this aspect.

Mr. Bivins said that in the past, they had focused on providing net density information to applicants; however, it may be advantageous to allow the applicants to consider gross density instead. He said that this approach would enable the applicants, who invest in costly staff and consultants, to determine how best to utilize the property. He said that this would benefit both the applicants and their community by encouraging creativity and contributing to their vision of a beautiful and thriving area.

Mr. Missel said that he had a few comments, some specific to this application and others more editorial in nature. He said that he wanted to commend the proposal's density, location, and the creative approach to designing infrastructure and the network of streets and buildings. He said that secondly, regarding streets, he agreed with Mr. Bivins.

Mr. Missel said that if there was a public road ending in a cul-de-sac and the opportunity for interconnection to the adjacent property, it seemed illogical to make that inaccessible to the developer. He said that it would help with trip absorption internally. He said that there was no commercial use in this development so there was not a lot of trip absorption, but something like that would help provide with the dispersal of that grid.

Mr. Missel said that from a coordination standpoint, if there was any site plan for Archer North, knowing that that aligned well with their street layout without impacting development density was important. He said that it was crucial to maintain consistency in the area's natural interaction and leverage those benefits. He said that in terms of the special exception application, he noticed that it did not explicitly mention the two buildings, but did mention all of the buildings, which was different from what the applicant stated.

Mr. Clayborne moved that the Planning Commission recommend approval of ZMA202300012 Holly Hills for the reasons stated in the staff report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Murray and passed unanimously (7-0).

### **Adjournment**

At 7:42 p.m., the Commission adjourned to April 23, 2024, Albemarle County Planning Commission meeting, 6:00 p.m.



---

Michael Barnes, Director of Planning

(Recorded by Carolyn S. Shaffer, Clerk to Planning Commission & Planning Boards; transcribed by Golden Transcription Services)

Approved by Planning Commission
---------------------------------

Date: 04/23/2024
------------------

Initials: CSS
---------------