

Attachment A - Staff Analysis

STAFF PERSON: Lisa Green, Manager of Code Compliance
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: February 18, 2026
PROJECT: SE202500035 2924 Earlysville Road Homestay
PROPERTY OWNER: Ralf O.H. and Emilyann Steinbach
LOCATION: 2924 Earlysville Road
PARCEL ID: 04500-00-00-048B2
MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT: Rio

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL:

The applicants/property owners are requesting authorization to use an accessory structure for a homestay use on a parcel of less than five acres (Attachment B).

County Code § 18-5.1.48(c)(1)(ii) requires that on a parcel of less than five acres in the Rural Areas zoning district, homestays may be conducted only in a detached single-family dwelling or within its accessory apartment, provided that by special exception, the Board of Supervisors may authorize the homestay use of accessory structures. This application is to request a special exception to permit the property owners Ralf and Emilyann Steinbach to operate a homestay use in an accessory structure on the parcel.

CHARACTER OF THE PROPERTY AND AREA:

The 2.305-acre property is located southwest of the Charlottesville Albemarle Airport (CHO), along Earlysville Road. The property primarily consists of manicured lawn, and small scaled farming that includes a temporary seasonal farm stand for cut flowers. The parcel contains a 2155-sf dwelling built in 2023, and a 512-sf detached accessory structure, built in 2025. The property also contains a 160-sf Storage Shed, built in 2025, and two additional small farm structures.

The applicants reside at 2926 Earlysville Road and intend to rent the 512-sf accessory structure as a homestay.

The nearest neighboring dwelling is approximately 353 feet from the proposed homestay location. The majority of the surrounding parcels are a mixture of single-family homes with manicured lawns, mowed fields and forested land.

PLANNING AND ZONING HISTORY:

The property is currently in compliance with zoning and taxation/licensing regulations.

ABUTTING PROPERTY OWNER COMMENTS

Staff had received no comments or concerns about the proposed homestay special exception as of January 27, 2026.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The property is designated as Rural Area in the Comprehensive Plan. This designation includes preservation and protection of agricultural, forestal, open space, and natural, historic, and scenic resources. The Rural Area chapter of the Comprehensive Plan recognizes tourism as a vital part of the County's economy but urges that care be taken with tourist activities so that they do not overwhelm or negatively affect the very resources that make rural Albemarle attractive to

residents and tourists. Staff does not believe that the proposed special exception would conflict with these overall goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUEST:

Special exceptions are subject to County Code § 18-33.5, under which the Board may either approve or deny an application, defer action to allow for changes prior to final action, or refer the application to the Planning Commission.

County Code §18-5.1.48(d)(3) provides that among other relevant factors, in granting homestay special exceptions, the Board may consider whether:

- (i) *There would be any adverse impact(s) to the surrounding neighborhood;*
- (ii) *There would be any adverse impact(s) to the public health, safety, or welfare;*
- (iii) *The proposed special exception would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and any applicable master or small-area plan(s); and*
- (iv) *The proposed special exception would be consistent in size and scale with the surrounding neighborhood.*

Staff's opinion is that authorizing an accessory structure for a homestay use would not cause adverse impacts to the surrounding neighborhood or to the public health, safety, or welfare. As an accessory use to a residential dwelling, the proposed use would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and as the structure is already in existence, it is consistent in size and scale with the surrounding neighborhood.

The applicants would be required to meet all homestay requirements of the County Code prior to operating a homestay. The homestay regulations to be met at that time include parking requirements, safety inspections and meeting building code, neighbor notification of emergency contact, and visible addressing for Fire Rescue. These requirements are verified through the zoning clearance process, which would follow special exception approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board adopt the attached resolution (Attachments F) to approve a special exception to use an accessory structure as a homestay at 2924 Earlysville Road.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Staff Analysis
- B. Applicant's Request
- C. County Code § 18-5.1.48 Homestay Zoning Regulations
- D. Location Map
- E. Parking and Structures Location Exhibit
- F. Resolution