

**Albemarle County Planning Commission
Final Minutes July 23, 2024**

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a public hearing on Tuesday, July 23, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Members attending were: Fred Missel, Chair; Luis Carrazana, Vice-Chair; Julian Bivins; Corey Clayborne; Nathan Moore; Lonnie Murray

Members absent: Karen Firehock

Other officials present were: Michael Barnes, Director of Planning; Andy Herrick, County Attorney's Office; Cameron Langille, Kevin McCollum, Jodie Filardi, Bart Svoboda, Kevin McDermott, and Carolyn Shaffer, Clerk to the Planning Commission.

Call to Order and Establish Quorum

Ms. Shaffer called the roll.

Mr. Missel established a quorum.

Other Matters Not Listed on the Agenda From the Public

There were none.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Clayborne motioned the Planning Commission adopt the consent agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Carrazana. The motion passed unanimously (6-0). (Ms. Firehock was absent)

Public Hearing

SP202400016 Community Christian School

Kevin McCollum, Senior Planner, said that he would be providing staff's presentation for the Community Christian Academy Modularity, a special use permit amendment for an existing private school. He said that the Community Christian Academy was an existing private school located within Cross Life Community Church on Rio Road, at the intersection of Rio Road and Old Brook Road.

Mr. McCollum said that the site, which included two buildings, a parking lot, and a playground area, was zoned R2 residential and covered 3.14 acres. He said that it was home to both the Cross Life Community Church and the Community Christian Academy private school, both of which had approved special use permits. He said that the most recent special use permit approval for the school had increased the student enrollment to 150 students last year. He said that no other site changes had been proposed at that time.

Mr. McCollum said that two slides showing the existing conditions of the site based on Google imagery were presented. He said that the first image, from July 2023, showed the existing conditions from Old Brook Road. He said that the second image, from January 2024, displayed the existing church building, which also served as the school building, viewed from Rio Road. He said that the conceptual plan from the previous special use permit approval in 2023 illustrated the existing buildings, parking lot, and parent-student drop-off loop.

Mr. McCollum said that the proposed concept plan for the special use permit amendment application included the removal of the parsonage building and the addition of a building envelope for up to three modular buildings. He said that a landscape buffer was also proposed between the new building and the parking area, as requested by the Architectural Review Board. He said that the development was within the

entrance corridor and therefore was subject to the Architectural Review Board's review process, which assessed the proposed landscaping and building design. He said that the project would require a site development plan and Virginia Erosion and Stormwater Management Plan.

Mr. McCollum said that through the site plan process, staff can request additional landscaping buffers, street trees, and any screening as needed. He said that staff had reviewed the proposal and had no major concerns that were not already addressed by zoning ordinance requirements or the proposed conditions. He said that he would not read all of these conditions but could certainly refer back to them. He said that these were the recommended conditions, which were straightforward and had been updated to reflect the new conceptual plan. He said that the staff recommended approval of the special use permit application with the recommended conditions.

Mr. Clayborne asked if the proposed conditions were carried over from the previous submissions from the applicant.

Mr. McCollum said that was correct. He said that they updated the first condition to reflect the most recent conceptual plan, and the date was accordingly updated. He said that a buffer area was also included between the proposed building area and the entrance corridor. He said that the maximum enrollment remained unchanged, as did the age range of students and the hours of operation.

Mr. Clayborne asked why it was necessary to legislate the age of students as opposed to being an organizational policy.

Mr. McCollum said that the condition was included in both the 2023 approval and the original approval from 2012. He said that it pertained to building code, although he believed it might not have been necessary.

Mr. Bivins asked if it was correct that they were not determining whether to allow the school's enrollment to increase.

Mr. McCollum said that there would be no change in enrollment.

Mr. Missel opened the public hearing. He asked if the applicant had a presentation.

Dr. Kimberly Moore said that she was the Executive Director for Community Christian Academy. She said that she would speak to a couple of questions previously asked. She said that the two and a half-year age requirement was due to the number of entrances into those rooms, a condition established when the building was a preschool. She said that regarding their return, it was partially correct that instability with Riverstone had contributed to their situation.

Dr. Moore said that they were a wonderful church, but they did not own the building where they were located. She said that the church had had a challenging relationship with the owners, who initially did not want to provide a multi-year lease. She said that they believed they could purchase the property after their lease ended, which did not happen. She said that they only provided six-month extensions. She said that moving a school in six months or a year was not feasible.

Dr. Moore said that she discovered today that they had finally agreed to a three-year lease agreement, which was a new development. She said that the stability of a permanent location was needed. She said that the second priority was launching their high school, which they intended to be small. She said that they required sufficient space for this endeavor. She said that although they were not currently seeking additional students, the lack of classroom space for their current enrollment of 150 students in a K-12 program was a concern.

Dr. Moore said that for instance, she taught five different math classes for three middle school grades, and this arrangement did not accommodate their needs. She said that regarding the building, they had originally considered modulars. She said that they wanted to assure that the final structure would resemble a single

building. She said that it would be constructed with wood and hardy plank siding, designed to blend seamlessly with the existing infrastructure.

Dr. Moore said that their school served many low-income families, and they may not be able to complete the project in one phase. She said that they aimed for a 10-classroom building, with both halves mirroring each other and connected end-to-end. She said that the design would ensure that even if they could only afford the first half initially, it would still appear as a cohesive unit. She said that it would not resemble a trailer but would look like a traditional building.

Mr. Missel asked if there were any comments from the public on this public hearing.

Donald Lyon said that he was president of the Raintree Homes Association. He said that this was the main corridor for six subdivisions. He said that he had a question in mind about the appearance of the buildings. He said that it appeared that one building was expanding larger and larger. He said that consequently, the landscape buffering would need to change. He said that the entrance to the building would face the parking lot, and all buildings would face the parking lot.

Mr. Lyon said that another concern was traffic. He said that there were right turns from Rio Road onto Old Brook Road, which were often backed up with city buses. He said that making a left turn from Hillsdale onto Rio Road and then onto Old Brook Road could create a backed-up left turn lane, especially during school opening and closing times. He said that this situation would significantly impact the daily commute on a single lane each direction.

Mr. Lyon said that these were concerns that his neighbors had brought up to him. He said that he expressed a desire to see what the buildings looked like, which were stated to be made of wood, but there were no further details provided. He said that there were questions about the number of buildings and whether there would be further expansion. He said that the setback of the building had remained unchanged, and that was not objectionable. He said that they had legitimate questions regarding the expansion.

Mr. Missel asked if the applicant had a response to public comment.

Dr. Moore said that it was not a change from what had been determined at the community meeting. She said that it would not resemble multiple buildings; instead, it would potentially be constructed in parts. She said that the entrance would be on the church side, and children would enter the building from the same direction but would turn right instead of left. She said that if one half was built first, it would be connected to the other half later, creating the appearance of a continuous building. She said that no additional students were being asked for at this time. She said that the site would be further developed in the future. She said that a traffic study had already been conducted, and steps, including discussions with VDOT, were being taken to address future changes. She said that to clarify, those changes were not being requested at this stage.

John McDowell said that he was also a member of the Raintree Homeowners Association. He said that he acknowledged the efforts of the school, as he and his neighbor Donald's children had been educated at this school years ago. He said that his primary concern was the footprint of the proposed development. He said that the applicant indicated there would be up to 10 buildings, and the diagram appeared as if it would occupy the entire available floor space. He said that although he understood that having one building might be acceptable, the placement of 10 buildings in the available floor space was a matter of concern. He said that he looked forward to seeing the final plan.

Mr. Missel said that this application would be reviewed by the ARB, so they would have some oversight of the aesthetic and fit of the application.

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

Mr. Bivins asked if Mr. McDermott could provide some information regarding the intersection at this location.

Kevin McDermott, Deputy Director of Planning, said that they had applied for a Smart Scale project at the two adjacent signalized intersections. He said that this application had been submitted to a competitive process, and there was no assurance that anything would transpire. He said that there were identified needs for improvement at that intersection, as per the Rio Corridor study, which the County had considered a priority to address.

Mr. Bivins said that he did not find anything in the application that referred to 10 buildings. He said that he only found information suggesting they were discussing replacing the parsonage footprint with a prefabricated house.

Mr. Moore said that there were no proposals for ten buildings or classrooms that he was aware of; it was possible that there were ten classrooms in two buildings that were conjoined to appear as one and function as a single entity. He said that this approach was a common solution for overcrowded public schools, where decent-looking modular classrooms were added in the back.

Mr. Moore said that although it was a private school, it shared similarities with the larger-picture planning of public schools. He said that there was no change in enrollment, and consequently, there was likely to be minimal change in traffic, given the already approved plans and existing arrangements. He said that the longer-term considerations, such as the proposed peanut-shaped roundabout due to frequent accidents at the double intersection, were to be addressed in the future.

Mr. Moore motioned the Planning Commission to recommend approval of SP202400016 Community Christian Academy Modulares with the conditions as recommended in the staff report, which was seconded by Mr. Clayborne. The motion passed unanimously (6-0). (Ms. Firehock was absent)

Adjournment

At 7:57 p.m., the Commission adjourned to Tuesday, August 27, 2024, Albemarle County Planning Commission meeting, 6:00 p.m., Lane Auditorium.



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: 08/27/2024
Initials: CSS