

Received



A New Century "... dedicated to representing private enterprise, promoting business and enhancing the quality of life in our Greater Charlottesville communities."

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May 29, 2015

TO : The Honorable Jane Dittmar, Chair, Albemarle County Board of Supervisors
& Honorable Albemarle County Supervisors
The Honorable Thomas Foley, Albemarle County Executive
Ms. Lee Catlin, Assistant Albemarle County Executive
Ms. Faith McClinic, Albemarle County Economic Development Director

cc: The Chamber Board of Directors
Chamber North Charlottesville Business Council

FROM : Timothy Hulbert, IOM, Chamber President

RE : ALBEMARLE COUNTY US29 BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PLANS & SIGNAGE

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As you know, over the past several months, our Chamber leadership, North Charlottesville Business Council leadership and several Chamber member business people have met several times with Albemarle County and Virginia Department of Transportation officials regarding both the County's and VDOT proposed mitigation efforts relative to construction on our US29 main street corridor. We greatly appreciate your efforts and receptivity to our concerns. Thank you.

The Albemarle County Board of Supervisors' and professional staff's courtesy at these meetings exploring our common concerns regarding the economic disruption associated with the "US29 Solutions" projects and Albemarle County's Business Assistance mitigation plans provide a basis for improved county-business cooperation. Again, thank you.

As you know from our April 20th memorandum to you all, our Chamber continues our partnership efforts with Albemarle County and the Virginia Department of Transportation in the various traffic safety and business disruption remediation efforts.

- ✓ Our Chamber, working with Albemarle County and VDOT in developing inviting safety and messages to our membership and our community, has adopted an all-encompassing "Open For Business" message across our regular member communications – *ChamberBits* (4,000+ subscribers – twice weekly), cvillechamber.com, etc.
- ✓ Our Chamber is regularly publishing, positive direct, real-time and continuing traffic safety messages with our membership in our "Open For Business" highlights – *ChamberBits*, cvillechamber.com, etc.

- ✓ Our Chamber has become a partner with VDOT in its planned "Get Around" map, having provided extensive business information which we developed, and will expand upon, for more than 500 US29 Corridor enterprises. We will distribute this map broadly and have encouraged others (CACVB, businesses, etc.) to do so. Further, when VDOT makes this map available digitally, we will incorporate it into our Chamber communications.
- ✓ At your request, our Chamber is actively considering our upcoming schedule of events, particularly our "Business After Hours" for opportunities in and near the construction zone. Such events are hosted with cost to the business(es). One possibility is a large multi-business "US29 Open For Business – After Hours" in or very near the US29 / Rio Road Interchange Project, coinciding with the planned construction.
- ✓ Our earlier invitation to the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, for your designated representatives to join our Board of Directors at our Tuesday, June 23rd meeting (7:15-9AM), stands. We are eager to hear from you on the current status of your decisions and share with you, our ideas further. Our meeting is held at the Holiday Inn on Emmet Street.

As you also know, our Chamber supports Albemarle County's proposed general media and matching grant business assistance communications efforts. Given the size of the challenge ahead, the County's proposed budgeted amount (\$150,000+), while sizeable, might need to be increased. The VDOT traffic safety-& access US29 communications program budget of \$400,000+ offers additional opportunities. We have made messaging suggestions to both the County and VDOT professional staff.

Finally, signage:

As previously communicated in our April 20th memorandum, our Chamber supports a temporary and greatly liberalized Albemarle County business signage policy – well prior to, during and for a limited time after the construction period – removing restrictions and allowing additional signage, fully informing motorists and consumers of the access and availability to conduct business in the project zones.

In our continuing discussions with VDOT and several Albemarle County public officials – including all six Albemarle Supervisors – we have refined and explained our temporary US29 signage proposals. Reinforcing the "**US29 Open For Business – Construction Ahead, Drive Safely**" message, we respectfully request – as a key component of the County Business Assistance Program – that large, oversize signs, perhaps two in each direction, incorporating the names and travel distance of those business most directly impacted by the large construction project.

To that end, attached is one concept of what the "**US29 Open For Business – Construction Ahead, Drive Safely**" signs might look like. (The County's professional communications staff most likely could improve on this preliminary concept.) The signs will tell and reinforce with motorists and customers, that these businesses are open. They should be oversized, placed well in advance of the construction in both directions, and outside the VDOT right-of-way. Designed, placed and maintained by Albemarle County would posit them outside the County's regulatory restrictions.

Our Chamber favorably anticipates the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors action in approving a set of effective business remediation measures. We look forward to your reply.

Again, thank you.

US29 OPEN FOR BUSINESS

CONSTRUCTION AHEAD, DRIVE CAREFULLY

DoubleTree by Hilton 2.7 Mi.

Brown Honda 2.4 Mi.

Jim Price Chevrolet 2.9 Mi.

Better Living Building Supply 2.9 Mi.

Gander Mountain 2.9 Mi.

AMF Kegler's Lanes 3.3 Mi.

Crutchfield 3.3 Mi.

Colonial Auto Center 3.3 Mi.

Storage Solution Center 3.4 Mi.

ACAC Fitness & Wellness 3.5 Mi.

Albemarle Sq. Shopping Center 3.4 Mi.

Goodwill Retail Store 4.0 Mi

Fairfield Inn & Suites 4.4 Mi

CenturyLink 4.5 Mi.

Albemarle Magazine 4.6 Mi.

US Post Office 4.7 Mi.

Holiday Inn - University Area

5.2 Mi.

Piedmont Workforce Network 5.3 Mi.

Shops at Stonefield 5.3 Mi.

Kmart 5.4 Mi.

