

ADELAIDE REZONING JUSTIFICATION

TO: Albemarle County Community Members

FROM: Kyle Redinger

RE: Proposed Adelaide Development Justification

DATE: April 25th, 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Crozet is a designated growth area with a master plan that's been in effect for over 10 years. Adelaide conforms to the recommended use and respects the Greenspace designation. The density is below the recommended Neighborhood Density of 3-6 residential units per acre
- According to County Staff, growth in Crozet Development Area "is occurring well below the recommended density range in the Master Plan," with a current population estimate at 6,854 persons, far below the target capacity of 18,000.¹ Adelaide will add 80 additional units.
- To date, over \$14 million of CIP money for neighborhood improvement and library spending has been spent in Crozet
- To help support these large expenditures that are built to provide attractive amenities for the Development Areas and allow for the realization of the Master Plan, the Crozet Master plan encourages housing developments that fit the neighborhood model and provide a diverse housing stock
- Adelaide is designed to meet the requirements and precedent guided by County Staff and the Master Plan for a Neighborhood Model development. Plans have been revised multiple times based on input from County Staff, Planning Commission, the neighbors, the advisory committees and other parties
- The revisions include a reduction in total unit count and density (from 93 to 80 units), a significant change to unit mix (from 0% to 50% detached units), and further setbacks along Route 250 East to maintain a buffer, provide pedestrian access and enhance the rural character of the corridor
- Adelaide incorporates various natural elements of the site, including preserved trees, critical slopes and other environmental buffers to create a thoughtful and needed implementation of the Neighborhood Model in the Crozet area
- Overall, Adelaide has received positive comments from County Staff, the Architecture Review Board, and various community members

¹http://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/forms_center/departments/community_development/forms/PC_Reports/2016/ZMA-15-8_Adelaide_feb_23_Attach_D.pdf

FURTHER COMMENTS

Crozet and Albemarle are highly desirable places to live because our county has a strong commitment to thoughtful community design, high quality schools, and the preservation of its scenic-character. Growth continues to be a necessary result of our joint efforts, and it's important to note that nearly 1,500 new people move here every year. We are able to protect the rural areas of Albemarle because we designate areas for growth. By not growing in Development Areas, not only do we put increasing pressure on developing more rural areas, we create larger income disparities in our community.²

Crozet has enjoyed the benefits of being a designated growth area. For instance, over \$14 million dollars,³ or 40% of County-wide Capital Improvement Program neighborhood improvement and library spending has been allocated to Crozet. Investments in infrastructure such as sidewalks, sewer, stormwater management and road improvements have been made in Crozet. It's important to realize that these benefits are a result of growth and the continued support of the Master Plan, a plan which has been in effect for over a decade.

As we speak, the revitalization of downtown Crozet is happening. Downtown Crozet needs residents from all over Crozet, not just the relatively few homes in its immediate vicinity, to support its vibrancy. To support businesses like retail shops, specialty shops, restaurants, and other merchants common to revitalized downtowns like Charlottesville's downtown mall, we need both people and a community that welcomes a diverse population.

Our workforce needs affordable places to live. Smaller starter homes are often located in areas allowing higher density. We hope to provide a diverse housing stock to appeal to a wider range of residents that want to be part of our community.

As part of this growth, Albemarle County has planned growth to reflect the Neighborhood Model⁴, which designs "pocket communities" around density centers including those listed in the Crozet Master plan, such as the Clover Lawn / Harris Teeter center.⁵ Neighborhood Model developments appear different than developments like Cory Farm, because the Neighborhood Model is more urban-like with the requirement for sidewalks, street trees, curb and gutter and new regulations for stormwater management. Furthermore, the Neighborhood Model⁶ encourages a mixture of housing to "fit the lifestyles and budgets of retirees, single parents, and others." As stated before, this we hope to provide.

²https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/page/files/20151120_barriers_shared_growth_land_use_regulation_and_economic_rents.pdf

³https://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/forms_center/departments/Budget/forms/FY16/FY16_Adopted_Budget_R_Capital_Improvement_Program.pdf

⁴https://www.albemarle.org/albemarle/upload/images/forms_center/departments/community_development/forms/Neighborhood_Model/Fitting_the_Pieces_Together_The_Transect_Concept%20.pdf

⁵http://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/Forms_Center/Departments/Community_Development/Forms/Crozet_Master_Plan/Chapter_4-Land_Use_10-13-10.pdf

⁶https://www.albemarle.org/albemarle/upload/images/forms_center/departments/community_development/forms/Neighborhood_Model/Neighborhood_Model_Principle09.pdf

Crozet, in recent times, has seen many by-right and high end developments created, resulting in a need to provide more affordability in the housing stock available. According to 2015 MLS data, new construction home prices have soared to well over \$500,000, far out of the price range of a median family in Albemarle County that earns \$68,000 per year. We hope to provide for this market of home buyers by sensitively and efficiently reflecting the goals of the Crozet Master Plan. Our goal is to make sure that the community designed is a mixed affordable community.

We have talked with various members of the community about affordability or the difficulties of finding a house in Crozet. We have heard that it's very difficult, unless your income is far above the \$68,000 median income or you are an existing land owner.

Adelaide was also guided by researching other similar approved projects, designated under the same "Neighborhood Density" 3-6 Unit designation. These similar projects include Spring Hill, Out-of-Bounds, and Riverside Village which all fell under their master plans for "Neighborhood Density" 3- 6 Units.

Here's what we found: Out-of-Bounds is a 56 unit community on 9.4 Acres of developable area, with 100% of the units designated as attached with density at 5.9 units per acre. It was developed immediately adjacent to a development of 1/3rd acre home sites. Riverside Village is a 69 unit community on 9 developable acres, with 65% of the units designated as attached with density at 7.66 units per acre. Spring Hill is an 80 unit community on 12.63 acres, with 62.5% of the units designated as attached with density at 6.33 units per acre. None of these sites are as close as Adelaide is to a robust commercial center like Clover Lawn/ Harris Teeter.

We are happy to note that the walkability aspect of the Neighborhood Model has encouraged a retrofit to Adelaide's neighbor Cory Farms. A sidewalk will be constructed to allow the Cory Farm residents to walk to Clover Lawn.

We heard several concerns related to Adelaide from the community, staff and the planning commission. In summary, we heard that our original unit count didn't have enough single family homes, that it was too dense, and that we needed to do a better design.

It's important to note that we've done a variety of designs throughout the review process, and that some of the initial designs had the unit count well above 100 units. We have been continually revising our plans and have made major improvements to respond to concerns that we heard.

Our current plan has reduced the unit count from 93 to 80 units; this includes 40 single family detached homes (up from zero); park size has increased and the layout now places detached homes adjacent to the Cory Farms subdivision and complies with the expectations of the County.

Additionally, County Staff reviewed our application to determine if the density was appropriate for our site. County Staff concluded⁷:

⁷http://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/forms_center/departments/community_development/forms/PC_Reports/2016/ZMA-15-8_Adelaide_feb_23_Staff_Report.pdf

If the impacts of the development, compatibility of building type, and the Neighborhood Model principles are appropriately addressed, staff would support development at the higher end of the density range. Approval of development at the higher end of the density range could also help provide balance with nearby by-right development that is occurring well below the recommended density range in the Master Plan.

We agree with staff's assessment of this site.

We also have heard that the traffic impact of the site will be substantial. In addition to various discussions with VDOT, we had EPR, P.C., a third-party certified traffic engineering firm, conduct a study of our proposed rezoning.

The findings of this study and traffic impact can be summarized as follows:

- During peak hours, **we would add only about one car every two minutes** in either direction
- According to VDOT data, 11,000 and 9,100 cars pass the schools and the Harris Teeter/ Clover Leaf centers every day, and adding 371 cars will increase the traffic by 4% or less
- According to the study's author "the impact by the proposed Adelaide Development on the traffic operation will be minimal"

Additionally, a brief study was conducted and found that the frontage along Adelaide has relatively low accident rates, compared with other stretches along 250, particularly the frontage in front of the gas stations and the schools.

Involvement in this process highlights how difficult it is to experience and anticipate change. But in the past 10 years or so, we all might agree that the changes in Crozet include some things that we all enjoy, new restaurants, a new library, new sidewalks and sometimes new neighbors. Throughout the process we've listened to staff, to the community, to the planning commission and we've researched existing precedent and used this knowledge to create the final design for Adelaide.

Thank you for your time and understanding.