

Community Meeting Follow-up: ZMA201500008 Adelaide
Crozet Community Advisory Committee
January 20, 2016

In attendance: Kyle Redinger, applicant; Elaine Echols, staff; CCAC; other residents

Kyle Redinger provided the following information to the CCAC:

As you may know, I grew up and attended public schools in the Crozet area. I moved back 10 years ago to be an entrepreneur after leaving the security and career opportunity of a large technology company I worked for in Seattle. I moved back because I love our community and wanted to have a career here. As a Crozet native, I love the area and have seen its transition since I've been a member of this community for over 30 years.

Approximately a year ago, I first started analyzing the Adelaide property and how it fits into the Crozet Master Plan. I remember at my first pre-application meeting, I had hand drawn layouts that in no way would have complied with the Master Plan. Our initial plans called for well over 100 units and we've had multiple revisions to ensure that we comply with the complex requirements associated with a project like this.

After studying the Plan, reviewing staff comments, countless hours of phone calls, engineering studies, and meetings with various stakeholder, we arrived at the proposed plan for Adelaide. It is built around the Crozet Master Plans' model for the property and the guidance the staff have shared with us over a lengthy and detailed design period.

*Based on many hours of analysis and under the guidance of County staff, our proposed development is within the guidelines of the Crozet Master Plan. As described below our vision for this project is to **increase pedestrian safety, create homes that are affordable for median wage earners, and provide many financial and community benefits to Albemarle County.***

We have done everything to the designation of the Master Plan in order to accurately implement its vision with the Adelaide development.

Benefits to Albemarle County

It is important to note that the County is growing by approximately 1,500 people per year and these people need places to live. Our target market is a 55+ downsizer market that wants smaller, more manageable homes that incorporate universal design elements such as large first floor master plans and amenities for people to age in place.

Through the creation of 93 homes, we are achieving many County benefits. The County benefits of rezoning include:

- a) **Increased Pedestrian Safety:** We will increase pedestrian safety by creating safer walkable areas and connecting to a planned walking trail*
- b) **Workforce Housing:** We are able to provide homes that are affordable for median wage earners not just wealthy people*
- c) **Affordable Housing:** We are proffering 14 affordable units and currently working with Habitat for Humanity to implement these houses effectively*

- d) **Tax Base:** We are increasing the taxable amount of the land by over 1500% from its current value. This results in a substantial increase in direct taxes and indirect taxes associated with this development that can be used to fund services and other citizen benefits
- e) **Cash Proffers:** We are proffering the maximum allowable cash proffer which can be used to fund necessary expansions at schools and other county facilities
- f) **Trail Connectivity:** We are connecting to the Crozet Trail system
- g) **Creation of Mixed-Income Community:** We are encouraging mixed income communities through the creation of Adelaide
- h) **Preservation of Rural Areas:** By developing within the designated growth area, we are helping preserve the rural areas of the County

Ninety Three Units is fully within the Crozet Master Plan

Based on three pre-application meetings and lengthy review with County staff, we have submitted the site for R6 zoning because R6 falls within the Crozet Master Plan and offers the most fitting standard guidelines for the product mix we are offering.

- County staff has assured us that R6 zoning is in compliance with the Crozet Master Plan.
- With 93 units, on two parcels that total approximately 20 acres, our effective density is about 4.7 units per acre, not 6 units per acre.
- There is an existing designation for “Neighborhood Density (Low)” which could have been used to designate this parcel as lower density; it was not. This designation is only used on the north western-most outskirts of the Crozet area
- A walking trail across Cory Farm to Clover Lawn is planned and funded, ensuring that we will have a walkable, urban environment for our development
- Harris Teeter and Clover Lawn represent a “center” and the plan reads:

“the ideal distance from focal point to boundary is approximately a 1/4 mile radius (i.e., a five minute walk). The center is the most intensely developed, while the middle and edge bands around the center become progressively more residential, less mixed use, and less dense”

- This center sees over 9,000 cars per day, which makes it a very important center and an ideal location for a higher density development because of its proximity to retail shops and jobs
- Adelaide is approximately 1/10th of a mile further than the “ideal distance” from a center. Based on an average walking speed of 3.1 miles per hour, we are less than 2 minutes of additional walking time from the ideal walking distance.
- While downtown Crozet is “the primary and most important center,” it generates substantially less traffic (~5,300 cars per day) than the Harris Teeter / Clover Lawn center (~9,100 cars per day), indicating that the Harris Teeter / Clover Lawn center is also very important from a dense development standpoint

Traffic Impact Relatively Small

We had EPR, P.C., a third-party certified traffic engineering firm, conduct a study of our proposed rezoning. The site is estimated to generate 782, new daily trips (our study was conducted with a 98 unit count vs. the proposed 93), or 391 trips in either direction.

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, so 391 cars is a very small change to that number*
- *According to the study “the impact by the proposed Adelaide Development on the traffic operation will be minimal (page 8)”*
- *According to the study there will be “no queue on Route 250 through movements, maximum 1-vehicle queue on Route 250 left turn movement (page 8)”*
- *Furthermore, single family detached homes generate approximately 30% more traffic than attached homes, given their larger sizes and number of inhabitants, and accordingly, we’ve selected a product mix that generates less traffic than detached homes.*

We have made our traffic study public as well as the VDOT data, which supports these points.

Increasing Pedestrian Safety

Based on our analysis of two of the three traffic cases (we are still waiting for information from the County police on the third incident), the pedestrian was travelling along or crossing the highway. In order to check the mailbox, as Carroll Herring did, or to travel on a skateboard, as Yunze Sun did, you would have to be within a couple of feet of moving traffic.

Our plan does several things to increase pedestrian safety, including:

- *We offset a pedestrian trail along 250 by a minimum of 20 feet, ensuring that pedestrians can travel much more safely along 250*
- *We remove any mailboxes from 250 to the interior of the development*
- *We create access to the Crozet Trail system and internal sidewalks, encouraging pedestrians to stay away from dangerous highways*
- *We will connect to the planned Cory Farm trail extension, ensuring our development is easily walkable to a commercial area*

Creation of Workforce & Affordable Options in Crozet Area

By-right developments and Old Trail result in high-priced homes that create exclusive price limits for median workers in the Crozet Area. We are targeting homes between \$250,000 and \$400,000 for Adelaide which is much more affordable than what is currently available in the new housing stock.

- Old Trail's average cost is \$190 per square foot for new homes (vs. \$140 per square foot for non-Old Trail homes in Crozet), and they are likely reducing density because they are selling to a wealthier buyer who can afford more space and larger lots and the complications of storm water management*
- Other newer developments (e.g. Westlake & Chesterfield Landing) which are building homes by-right result in prices well over \$500,000, given the economics of development*
- We are building 15% of our units as affordable units, for a total of 14 units which are price-controlled and available to qualified affordable buyers through the support of Habitat for Humanity*

Lack of Interconnection Options

We are aware of the County and VDOT's desire for interconnectivity. Early in the process we studied interconnectivity options to neighboring developments and found the following:

- On the Western and Northern boundaries of Adelaide, there are critical slopes and stream buffers which prevent the construction of roads*
- To the East, a connection to Cory Farm is drawn conceptually, but there are no easements in the Cory Farm plats which would allow the construction of interconnected roads*
- Furthermore, connecting to Cory Farm would create a large disturbance of Cory Farm and we are trying to minimize any impact on our neighbors.*

Before I ask for questions, I would like to ask Elaine Echols to provide information on what the Comprehensive Plan recommends for this area. Specifically,

- What does the designation of Neighborhood Density mean?*
- Is R6 zoning within the designation of the Comprehensive Plan?*

Elaine Echols, Acting Chief of Planning for Albemarle County Community Development, said she was there representing Megan Yaniglos, the project coordinator. She said that she would be able to speak to the recommendations of the Crozet Master Plan and provided the following information:

- The property in question has two designations – Neighborhood Density Residential and Parks and Green Systems. Neighborhood Density Residential allows for 3 – 6 dwellings per acre, but no commercial uses except near downtown. Uses are primarily single family detached buildings, but, some townhouses and attached housing are also allowed. The Parks and Green Systems designation does not allow for any units. This designation identifies environmental areas intended for preservation along with other important open space and parks.*

- *On this parcel, the Parks and Green Systems designation refers to environmental features and other important open space. There is a green buffer along Route 250.*
- *Staff believes that the Plan suggests that the density could be at the low or high end of the density range or somewhere in the middle. Staff does not believe that low density is necessarily expected because the very low density areas are designated with a yellow and black hashing color on the Master Plan. The buffer along Route 250 was intended to provide for a rural look and feel along Scenic 250. For these reasons, staff thinks that, provided the density is between 3 and 6 units per acre on the land shown in yellow on the Master Plan, it will be in keeping with the plan.*
- *With the R6 designation, the “6” refers to 6 units per acre. If the property shown as neighborhood density (in yellow on the Master Plan Land Use Plan) were developed at 6 units per acre, it would be within the recommended density range.*
- *The most important part is not the density – it is the design. The design should drive the density and if the site is designed well, it can support a higher density. I’ve not reviewed the plan, so I can’t comment on the design.*
- *The Comprehensive Plan promotes density on greenfield sites. Strategy 5b in the Development Area Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan says that, “On greenfield sites, encourage developers to build at the higher density of the density range, provided the development will be in keeping with the Neighborhood Model.” It says that for infill sites, there should be more attention paid to compatibility. This site is a hybrid of greenfield and infill. On three sides, there is greenfield and on the eastern side next to Corey Farm, it might be looked at as an infill site.*
- *Staff recognizes that there are other perspectives on what the Master Plan recommends for density in this area. I believe that Mr. Loach, former Planning Commissioner for Crozet, has said that this area is not appropriate for the higher end of the density because it is at the edge of the neighborhood, the center of which is Clover Lawn. Different perspectives are okay because ultimately, it is the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors who make the interpretation of the Plan. They need input from staff as well as the community, which is why it is important for the CCAC to help provide guidance. The CCAC’s role is to help implement the Master Plan. If you believe that staff’s interpretation is not correct, you should say so and we will report that information to the PC and BOS in our staff report.*

Questions and Answers – SA = Staff Answer; AA = Applicant Answer; C = Comment

Q: Can we get copies of your plan?

AA: Yes.

C: There is a conflict between the Master Plan transect and the Comprehensive Plan recommended density. The Master Plan does not recommend higher density near Route 250. Property on Route 250 that was previously proposed for density was taken out of the growth area with the 2004 Plan. The high end of the density range is not compatible with nearby development.

Q: (To Applicant) You said you are proffering affordable housing, but, everyone has to provide 15%. Why are you saying that this is something extra you are doing?

- AA: We are partnering with Habitat for Humanity to provide affordable homes, not just money for affordable housing.
- Q: (To Staff) How does this proposal at the maximum density affect the population numbers that were provided during the Master Plan update? Were those numbers at the low, middle, or high end of the spectrum? I thought we wanted things on the low to medium end, not the maximum.
- SA: I believe that our numbers were in the middle because not everyone provides the minimum or maximum available under the Comp. Plan. We will check and report on that.
- Q: The density hasn't changed on your plan (shown in a drawing at the front of the room.)
- AA: We have not changed the plan. You asked for a follow-up community meeting with more time devoted to this project. I am here to try and answer your questions.
- C: Your traffic impacts aren't being addressed.
- C: You are doing away with why we moved here. I came here 4 years ago for the trees and low density housing. I expected anything that changed to look and feel like Cory Farm. If I wanted to live in Old Trail, I would have moved there. Your development should be more in context with the surrounding area. It should be a single family detached product.
- Q: What is the expected price of housing?
- AA: We are providing townhomes so that people who work in Crozet – teachers and firefighters – can afford to live here. The target prices are \$200K to \$400K.
- Q: There is a lot of fast-moving traffic on Route 250. Where will your entrance be in relation to the hill on Route 250? Turning movements onto Route 250 are difficult. Your driveway will be dangerous.
- A: VDOT has asked us to move our entrance on 250 for better sight visibility. It will be near the Century Link box.
- C: Route 250 is dangerous. A couple from another country came to Crozet to live and their son was killed crossing Route 250.
- C: We shouldn't overdo it (with high density development).
- Q: What are the benefits of density?
- AA: Economy of service provision, less expensive to provide infrastructure if development is concentrated, keeps the Rural Area rural, proffers help to pay for impacts from the development, bringing in more people is good for businesses.
- C: (to Applicant) Be honest. The proffers don't in any way pay for the impact.
- Q: I thought you said that you wanted to use the lower cash proffer amount and that you could provide more density that way. How does that work? You say you are paying for impacts with proffers, but, you want to use the lower amount that doesn't really cover the impacts. It looks like a benefit for you and not us.
- AA: No other developers have developed land at the high cash proffer amount.

- C: I represent the neighbors on Route 250. We have concerns about traffic. The proposed driveway is across from the Brownsville Road loop. Traffic visibility is bad – we already have a hard time getting in and out onto Route 250 from Brownsville Road. This will make it worse because the development will be putting a lot more cars on that stretch of Route 250. This is one of the least safe places in Crozet.
- C: Even though this development will be connected to the trail system, nobody is going to walk or ride bikes to get there. There will be a need for more infrastructure.
- C: Putting the kind of density you are asking for in a rural setting doesn't work well. Higher density should be more in the center of Crozet.
- Q: We have started a petition today and have concerns about density, traffic, and school overcrowding. I am a senior and seniors have slower reaction times when driving. There are other seniors who live in Cory Farm. This is going to make it worse for them. Didn't you say you were targeting seniors to live in your development?
- A: We are targeting people who are 55+, but, it won't be a requirement.
- C: I can't drive safely to Harris Teeter and I can't walk safely. This development will not improve the situation.
- C: This is a great concept, but in the wrong place. Nobody will buy there because you are taking your life in your hands when you get out onto Route. 250.
- Q: What could the applicant do by-right on this property?
- AA: 20 units.
- Q: (To staff) Have there been any developments that have gone in at the low end of the density range?
- SA: Yes. There have been some rezonings, but also by-right development such as Westlake and Foothill Crossing. The by-right development came in at very low zoning. The County has a desire and expectation that property with very low zoning will be rezoned for density in keeping with the Comprehensive Plan. Rezoning provides for proffers (voluntary offers to offset impacts).
- Chair: How soon do we (the CCAC) need to provide comments on this plan?
- Staff: There should be plenty of time. This was submitted in December and we haven't even finished our review yet to provide the applicant with comments. Our comments won't be provided until sometime later this month. He will need to resubmit and, from then, it will be at least 2 months before the Planning Commission's public hearing. If the applicant wants to have a work session with the Planning Commission to find out if they support his density, then the Commission's public hearing will be later.
- If the applicant wants a work session, we will let the CCAC know. You will want to come to that Commission meeting and provide any comments you have at that time. A work session can't happen before Feb. 23, in any case. Your next meeting will be before that time. I would recommend that you wait until the applicant resubmits before you develop formal comments on the proposal and how well it meets or doesn't meet the Master Plan recommendations.