

# **BOYS & GIRLS CLUB - NORTHSIDE**

## **CRITICAL SLOPES WAIVER – SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUEST**

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**PREPARED BY:**



**TIMMONS GROUP**

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## Introduction

A Special Exception is being requested per Section 4.2.5.a of the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance for a waiver to grade within critical slopes to support the development of the Boys and Girls Club facility. Per Section 4.2 of the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance, steep and critical slopes are protected and preserved throughout the County to reduce “rapid and/or large-scale movement of soil and rock, excessive stormwater run-off, siltation of natural and man-made bodies of water, loss of aesthetic resource ... all of which constitute potential dangers to the public health, safety and/or welfare.” Within this application, we hope to demonstrate both the need for approximately 0.79 acres of critical slopes impact as well as the mitigation efforts implemented to ensure slopes are impacted responsibly in order to protect downstream land.

## Existing Conditions

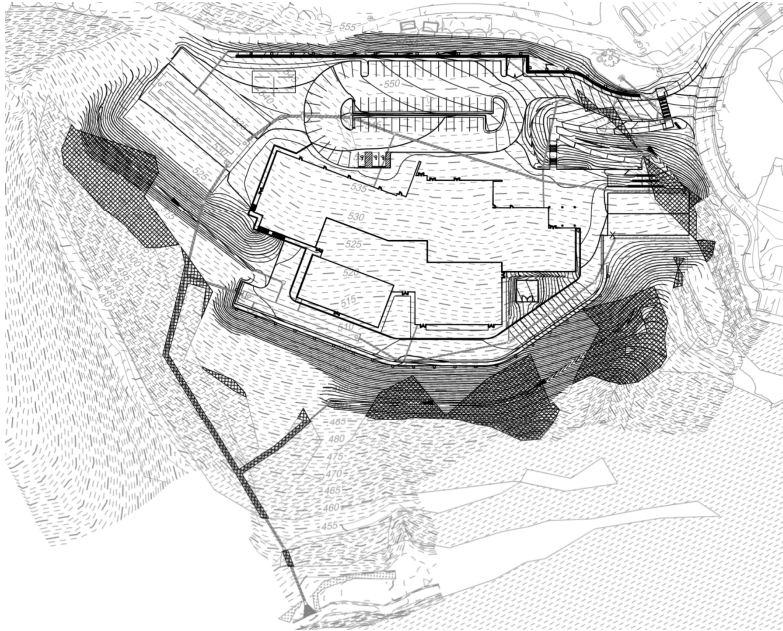
The subject property (parcel 06000-00-00-078A0) is located off Lambs Lane within Albemarle County. It is zoned Rural Areas (RA), and the portion of the site being developed is currently undeveloped, forested land. The subject portion of the property is adjacent to Jack Jouett Middle School (and associated fields) to the north, Lambs Lane and the Ivy Creek School to the east, and undeveloped, forested land to the south and west.

Per Albemarle County GIS, there is a large area of critical slopes located within the subject property. Most of the critical slopes are located along the southern and western portions of the site.

## Proposed Special Exception

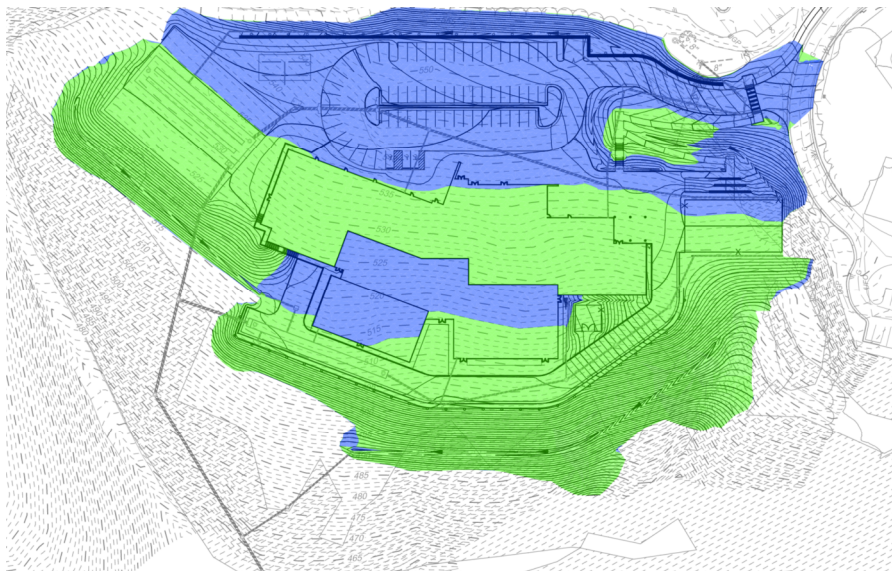
As proposed by WPO202000005, a Boys and Girls Club community center will be developed on the subject property, along with associated play fields and a surface parking lot. Per Section 4.2.5.a.3, a critical slopes waiver may be granted if it is found that it would “not be detrimental to public health, safety or welfare, to the orderly development of the area, or the adjacent properties; would not be contrary to sound engineering practices.” Additionally, the waiver request must prove that “strict application of the requirements of Section 4.2 would not forward the purposes of this chapter or otherwise serve the public health, safety or welfare.”

In this case, the critical slopes disturbance is proposed (see **Image 1** below) in order to grade from the proposed site to existing grade along the southern and eastern boundaries of the site, construct proposed erosion and sediment control measures, and install site drainage. In total, about 0.79 acres of critical slope area is proposed to be disturbed. In no case is the building located within the designated critical slope areas. In order to avoid the critical slopes, significant retaining walls (between 20’ – 30’ tall in most areas) would have been required along the southern borders of both playfields, as well as along the southern portion of the access road. This would create safety risks and fall hazards for the hundreds of children attending Boys and Girls Club each day. As a result, with public safety at the forefront, it is safer to waive the critical slopes requirement than to comply. Additionally, by grading rather than constructing retaining walls, the natural aesthetic of the site and existing drainage patterns will be maintained to a larger extent.



**Image 1:** Areas of critical slope disturbance proposed on site.

It is important to note that most of the grading within the critical slope areas will be fill (see **Image 2** below); cutting will be minimal and will only occur during the erosion control phase to accommodate proposed sediment traps. To prevent siltation and excessive runoff, soil stabilization matting and reforestation will be provided on all slopes steeper than 3:1 during construction. Super silt fence will also be placed downstream of the grading to further prevent silt-laden runoff from exiting the site. Lastly, reverse slope benching and swales will be utilized in the final condition where proposed fill slopes are steeper than 3:1 and exceed 20' of vertical grade change; this will ensure drainage is conveyed over the fill slopes without eroding them.



**Image 2:** Cut (blue) versus fill (green) areas on site.

## Conclusion

While the Zoning Code specifies the protection and preservation of critical slopes within the County, it also calls for sites that promote public health, safety, and welfare. Therefore, a waiver is being requested to grade within designated critical slope areas rather than build 20' – 30' tall retaining walls. This will allow a site layout that is safer and more efficient for the users, as well as one that mimics most closely the existing character of the land. Care will be taken during construction to stabilize slopes and prevent silt-laden runoff.