



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 20-563, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 12/16/2020

TITLE:

County support of Thomas Jefferson Foundation's grant proposal for proposed property acquisition in support of the planned Rivanna River Greenway

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Request for Board of Supervisors to submit a Letter of Support for Thomas Jefferson Foundation's grant proposal to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's "Preservation Trust Fund - Public Access Grant."

ITEM TYPE: Consent Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Kamptner, Henry, Crickenberger, Smith, Padalino

PRESENTER (S): N/A

LEGAL REVIEW: Not Required

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: Staff are requesting a Letter of Support from the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors for the Thomas Jefferson Foundation's pending grant proposal to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation's "Preservation Trust Fund - Public Access Grant" program. A draft letter is provided as Attachment A.

The deadline for this grant proposal is December 18, 2020. There is no immediate financial obligation associated with the Foundation's grant proposal or with the County's letter of support.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Natural Resources Stewardship - Thoughtfully protect and manage Albemarle County's ecosystems and natural resources in both the rural and development areas to safeguard the quality of life of current and future generations

DISCUSSION: The Thomas Jefferson Foundation's grant proposal is a request for a monetary award that would support the Foundation's intended purchase of a riverfront property along the Rivanna. This riverfront parcel (TMP #78-33D) is an approximately 5-acre portion of the larger historic South Lego Farm. Because of its strategic location, it is critically important to the future construction of the County's long-planned Old Mills Trail extension / Rivanna River Greenway.

The Foundation's (draft) grant application articulates and re-affirms their standing commitment to dedicating to Albemarle County a public right-of-way (in the form of a greenway easement) across TMP #78-33D, and also across the adjoining Shadwell parcels to the east (downstream) identified as TMP #78-28B and TMP #79-7A. The Foundation has previously dedicated a greenway easement on the adjoining upstream parcel (Lego Farm / TMP #78-31A). A location map is provided as Attachment B.

In these ways, the Foundation's pending grant proposal and associated acquisition of this riverfront property TMP #78-33D - and their subsequent dedications of greenway easements to Albemarle County - would

complete the County's greenway acquisition efforts along this portion of the Rivanna River. More specifically, these accomplishments would bring the entirety of the County's waterfront along the Rivanna River under County control (via fee simple ownership and/or greenway easement), from Darden-Towe Park in Pantops to the Milton Boat Landing.

The Thomas Jefferson Foundation's (draft) grant proposal provides the following additional details (from the "Project Summary" section):

"The Thomas Jefferson Foundation has an opportunity to acquire the critical missing link parcel in a planned regional trail system that will provide the public access to miles of scenic trail along the Rivanna River. Acquisition of this single parcel, "South Lego (TMP 78-33D0)," and subsequent right of way dedication to Albemarle County will allow for Rivanna River Greenway project to extend east from the urban corridor of Charlottesville/Albemarle extending downriver through Shadwell and Milton. Local, Regional and State plans support this trail and its potential connection to the Fluvanna County's Heritage Trail where future connections to the proposed James River Heritage Trail are possible.

The trail follows historic transportation routes including Three Notch'd road, 19th century-era dams, locks, and canals used in river navigation, as well as an abandoned 19th century C&O Railroad bed. This critical 5-acre parcel is part of Thomas Jefferson's original plantation holdings, and lies between the Lego and Shadwell Quarter Farms. The proposed public trail will travel through these historic sites and pass ruins of Jefferson's Mill ruins, ca. 1807. A trail along this historic route can highlight the stories of enslaved persons and tenants working these plantations, as well as the history of indigenous occupation prior to European settlement. Post emancipation, this corridor continued to be an important route for people and goods along the Rivanna River."

Albemarle County support of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation's grant proposal would support and advance numerous Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, and strategies, as detailed below:

- **Parks and Recreation, Greenways, Blueways, and Green Systems** (Comp Plan S-45), Objective 3: Complete the greenway trail system and provide access to blueways.
- **Transportation** (Comp Plan S-39), Objective 4: Strengthen efforts to complete a local transportation system that includes access to pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- **Historic, Cultural, and Scenic Resources** (Comp Plan S-18), Objective 4: Promote regional cooperation in preservation and conservation efforts, including the promotion of heritage tourism.

The Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan - Greenways Plans is provided as a reference in Attachment C.

BUDGET IMPACT: Providing a letter of support involves no immediate budget impact or financial obligation.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the submission of the attached draft letter of support.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Albemarle County Letter of Support

Attachment B: Project Location Map

Attachment C: Comprehensive Plan - Greenways Plans