



CROZET FUTURE LAND USE PLAN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

September 2019 – October 2020

Prepared by Albemarle County Neighborhood Planning

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary Phase 3 – Draft Recommendations	3
List of Community Engagement Opportunities Held to Date	4
Phase 1: Visioning Detailed Summary	7
Phase 2: Focus Areas & Goals Detailed Summary	9
Phase 3: Draft Recommendations Detailed Summary	10

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | PHASE 3 – DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

During Phase 3 (June 2020 – present) of the Crozet Master Plan, staff developed a draft land use map and recommendations based upon ongoing community engagement (September 2019 – present), the 2017 Community Survey and the 2010 Crozet Master Plan.

Below is a summary of ideas, feedback and questions shared with County staff about the draft land use map and recommendations (detailed notes are included on subsequent pages):

Middle Density Residential:

This land use category was drafted in response to discussion at the July 8, 2020 CCAC meeting where a new land use category was recommended by some CAC members to establish a land use category related to specific housing types that Crozet community members would like to see in the area. Appropriate housing types for Crozet were discussed at community workshops in January and February 2020.

During virtual (live and static forms) engagement in September 2020, some CCAC members objected to applying the Middle Density Residential land use category to areas in Crozet where it would equate to an increase in potential population due to ongoing concerns about infrastructure needs, traffic congestion and school capacity. Other CCAC members and the Planning Commission (at an August 2020 work session) supported creating this new land use category as a balanced approach for providing affordable housing in keeping with the scale of development in Crozet. This Middle Density land use category also has applicability to other Development Areas in Albemarle County.

Downtown Neighborhoods Overlay:

The Downtown Neighborhoods Overlay was drafted in response to ongoing concerns about loss of historic homes and future development pressure for homes located adjacent to Downtown Crozet as well as the desire to preserve existing affordable housing options and create a broader range of “missing middle” housing types.

Staff has received questions about the implications of the Downtown Neighborhoods Overlay, how it would play a role in the development review process, and whether the Pleasant Green site should be included within this Overlay.

There are mixed opinions on whether affordable housing is a priority issue for Crozet. Some CCAC members feel that Crozet has contributed enough affordable housing over the last 20 years, while others feel that developing more affordable and diverse housing options is a top priority for Crozet.

Staff has heard that infill development, located close to Downtown, provides an opportunity to support small business development in a walkable and bikeable area. Community members have also shared concerns about the implications of additional density on infrastructure and school capacity.

Some CCAC members and neighbors in the Downtown Neighborhoods Overlay area shared a desire for staff to do further work to guide or regulate the architectural style of new and infill development in neighborhoods around Downtown Crozet. This is outside the scope of the Master Plan process and can be included as a recommendation for further staff work in the Master Plan.

Specific Land Use Changes:

White Gate Farm

The property owner of White Gate Farm requested staff to revisit the property's future land use designation during the Master Plan process. Conversations with community members began in February 2020 and are ongoing.

Feedback has been inconsistent throughout the process. During July and September CCAC meetings and via static, online engagement, there has been mixed support for staff's recommendation to use a split designation of Neighborhood Density Residential and Urban Density Residential on the property. In response to this feedback, staff's recommendation changed to a split designation of Neighborhood Density Residential and Middle Density Residential. This change was shared at the September CCAC meeting to respond to CCAC members preferences for housing types including bungalow courts, fourplexes and townhouses, rather than large footprint apartment buildings.

Some CCAC members support staff's recommendation and cited the potential for a rezoning to provide road and pedestrian connectivity between Starr Hill/Music Today, future Light Industrial/Research & Development/Flex uses, Western Ridge and Wickham Pond. This recommendation is continuing the type of development seen at Wickham Pond next door.

Other CCAC members thought that a Neighborhood Density Residential future land use designation would be more appropriate (rather than a split designation), identifying the need to address ongoing concerns about infrastructure and connectivity.

Some community members and CCAC members do not support any change that could bring additional density and support no change to the future land use map on this property.

Greenspace Parcels along Route 250

Staff began conversations with community members about updating green space designations to distinguish between buffers, public recreation areas and private property in January 2020.

Most community members engaged throughout this process have shared a desire to preserve existing green space along Route 250 and improve pedestrian connectivity to nearby schools.

Community members have shared a desire to maintain the existing development potential on the subject properties (R1). A Neighborhood Density Residential (Low) future land use category would align the Future Land Use map with existing zoning and development potential, yet there has been mixed to limited support for changing the future land use map.

Old Trail

Old Trail was discussed with community members in January 2020 to determine the appropriate center classification. Community members (in-person and online) felt that classifying Old Trail as a “Village Center” was appropriate.

The draft future land use map shows Old Trail as “Community Mixed Use” – a new land use category that Albemarle County adopted after the 2010 Crozet Master Plan. Some community members that were involved with previous master planning efforts felt that this area was “previously negotiated” and the future land use designation should not change. County staff plan to bring this forward as a discussion topic at the November 12, 2020 CCAC meeting.

Community members have shared support for sports facility along Rt. 250 given its proximity to Old Trail and schools. However, there is mixed support for a future land use map change to allow institutional uses, such as a sports facility, in this area.

LIST OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES HELD TO DATE

- Imagine Crozet Community Workshop #1 (09/09/19)
- "Coffee Talk" with County staff at Mudhouse (09/19/19)
- Imagine Crozet Community Workshop #2 (10/01/19)
- "Coffee Talk" with County staff at Grit Coffee (10/17/19)
- Crozet Character & Connectivity Tour (10/26/19)
- "Coffee Talk" with County staff at Green House Coffee (11/21/19)
- Character Community Workshop #1 - Land Use (01/13/20)
- Character Community Workshop #2 - Land Use (02/06/20)
- Housing Focused Conversations (2 sessions - 02/21/20)
- Architecture & Preservation Focus Group (Virtual - April 2020)
- CCAC Work Session - Land Use #1 (06/20/20)
- CCAC Work Session - Land Use #2 (07/08/20)
- CCAC Meeting - Planning Commission Work Session Recap (09/09/20)
- Virtual Land Use Workshop (09/18/20 – ongoing)
- CCAC Special Meeting – Land Use #3 (09/23/20)
- Virtual Office Hours with County Staff (10/02/20)
- CCAC Special Meeting – Land Use #4 (11/12/20)

PHASE 1: VISIONING | DETAILED SUMMARY

The notes below document feedback related to land use heard throughout the Crozet Master Plan engagement process, beginning in September 2019. This feedback was used to shape the draft land use map and recommendations alongside data from the 2017 Crozet Community Survey and the 2010 Master Plan.

Community Workshop #1 9/9/19

This workshop introduced long-range planning concepts and asked Crozetians to share their top hopes, concerns and priorities for Crozet.

- Crozetians value their “small town feel” with a close relationship to surrounding rural areas, farms and wineries and breweries
- Providing infrastructure concurrent with growth – especially for schools and traffic conditions is an ongoing concern
- Providing a mix of housing types and prices for Crozet to ensure housing affordability and socioeconomic diversity is a top priority
- Creating local jobs and supporting small businesses remains a priority
- Connecting neighborhoods and making sure all parts of Crozet are walkable and bikeable is an ongoing goal
- Creating protections for historic neighborhoods and limiting development of “fringe areas” were top land use changes participants mentioned

[Read the Community Workshop #1 Feedback Summary.](#)

Community Workshop #2 10/1/19

This workshop asked Crozetians to further unpack and discuss themes from the first workshop.

- Participants identified qualities associated with a “small town feel” including: community (knowing your neighbors); neighborhoods with a variety of building styles and historic buildings; gathering spaces; commercial centers and rural edges
- Participants identified the types of housing they would like to see more of (in response to the previous workshops top concern related to providing a mix of housing types and prices). These included: bungalow courts, live/work units, accessory dwelling units and fourplexes.
- Participants identified the main commercial centers in Crozet and the need for safe pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connections in all the centers.

[Read the Community Workshop #2 Feedback Summary.](#)

Community Workshop #3 11/7/19

Participants provided feedback on draft Guiding Principles and topics that should be discussed when developing the land use section of the Master Plan.

- Draft Character/Land Use Guiding Principle: “Support Crozet’s ‘small town’ character through development that is compatible in scale and design, offers housing choice and respects its history.”
- The majority of participants felt that the above Guiding Principles either accurately reflects their vision or very accurately reflects their vision (68%, 233 participants).

- Appropriate design and scale, rural edges, housing variety and choice, mixed-use activity centers and placemaking, arts and culture were topics that staff presented, and community members ranked. 'Appropriate design and scale' and 'rural edges' were the most popular topics (72% and 47%, respectively; 178 responses).

PHASE 2: FOCUS AREAS & GOALS – DETAILED SUMMARY

Character Workshop #1 1/13/20 – Centers & Edges

This workshop focused on Crozet’s centers of activity and its edges.

- Participants identified an appropriate scale for each commercial center: Downtown, Starr Hill/Music Today, Old Trail, Clover Lawn, and Route 250 West.
- Priorities for each of these areas were identified during this workshop, for more information view the Engagement Summary found on the Albemarle County website (link above).

[Read the Character Workshop #1 Feedback Summary.](#)

Character Workshop #2 2/6/20 – Neighborhood & Housing

This workshop focused on Crozet’s neighborhoods and current housing stock, responding to themes regarding ‘appropriate design and scale’ and ‘housing variety and choice’.

- The majority of participants chose ‘form’ as a higher priority planning concept over density.
- Many participants also acknowledged that density and form are interrelated concepts that impact the character and quality of life in Crozet. Form provides an important link to the appearance of historic development and architecture, while density is an important consideration in planning for critical investments such as schools and infrastructure.
- Specific land use changes were discussed for each neighborhood during this workshop.

Housing-Focused Conversations 2/21/20

Two conversations were held – one with local affordable housing developers and nonprofit organizations and one with community members, focused specifically on needs for developing affordable housing. These conversations helped draft specific land use recommendations and inform the Albemarle County housing policy update.

[Read the Neighborhoods & Housing feedback summary.](#) This document summarizes both the February 6, 2020 Character Workshop and the Housing Conversations held on February 21, 2020.

Architecture & Preservation Focused Conversation – Virtual Engagement 05/20-06/20

Participants shared the most important site design concepts for Downtown Crozet, neighborhoods within the Crozet Historic district, and neighborhoods adjoining the Crozet Historic District. Participants shared their recommended policy approach for each of these neighborhoods for future development and redevelopment.

[Read the Architecture & Preservation feedback summary.](#)

PHASE 3: DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS – DETAILED SUMMARY

Middle Density Residential – New Future Land Use Category

- Request to create a new land use category that would establish density ranges with specific housing types (CCAC 7/8/20 – prior to this land use category being drafted by staff)
- Request to show images with associated density of different housing types (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Some objections to applying Middle Density categories in Crozet where it would equate to an increase in potential population due to concerns about infrastructure and school capacities meetings the pace of housing build-out (Virtual Land Use Workshop 9/2020)
- Request to discuss this category and provide feedback on it at a future special meeting of the CCAC (CCAC 9/23/20)

Downtown Neighborhoods Overlay – New Future Land Use Overlay

- Question: How can downtown neighborhoods be “protected” using the Master Plan? (CCAC 5/13/20)
- Question: Is there any criteria that informs the architectural style of homes in this area? Recommendation to include this type of criteria to prevent very modern styles of homes (CCAC 6/10/20)
- Question: How would the Downtown Neighborhoods Overlay be used in the development review process? (CCAC 6/10/20)
- Request for examples to show scenarios where more than 6 dwelling units per acre would be needed to preserve a historic home or add an additional dwelling unit (CCAC 6/10/20)
- Concern about the ability to add additional density and would like to handle these scenarios on a case-by-case basis (CCAC 6/10/20 – Note: This recommendation includes criteria that would be used on a case-by-case basis during the rezoning or special use permit process).
 - Regulations and process create an opportunities for neighbors to resist new development and can be costly to new development (CCAC 6/10/20)
- The Master Plan is at a much higher level and should not address individual homes’ architecture (CCAC 6/10/20)
- Conflicting opinions on whether affordable housing is an issue that Crozet needs to address: 1) Crozet has contributed enough affordable units over the last 20 years and this places a demand on infrastructure, in contrast with 2) affordable housing is the number one goal for achieving equity in Crozet and Western Albemarle, especially walkable units near Downtown to help with infrastructure and small business development and 3) “Affordable housing is important, but at what cost?” (CCAC 6/10/20)
-
- This overlay provides innovative opportunities for those who own older homes to redevelop them in a different way, to earn additional income and maintain ownership of those homes overtime. This can also provide additional missing middle housing types and affordable housing: an interesting and measured way to address multiple community needs (CCAC 6/10/20).
- Question: How would the Pleasant Green site be handled using the proposed Downtown Neighborhoods Overlay? (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Desire for more clarity on the implications of the Downtown Neighborhoods Overlay in the development review process (CCAC 7/8/20)

- Concern that the creation of the category would create “loopholes” for by-right increases in density (Virtual Land Use Workshop 9/2020)
- Uncertainty / mixed support for including Pleasant Green within the Downtown Neighborhoods Overlay (Virtual Land Use Workshop 9/2020)

Specific Land Use Changes

White Gate Farm

- Support for “Urban Density Residential” designation to allow for improved sidewalks and connectivity between Wickham Pond and Western Ridge, as well as trail access (Character Community Workshop #2 2/06/20)
- Concern about changing current Open Space future land use designation when Albemarle County has limited capacity to provide necessary infrastructure (CCAC 7/8/20)
- The parcel is not owned by Albemarle County as a park, so it is unfair/disingenuous to call it “open space” (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Support for smaller home types and bungalow court-style developments (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Development on this property would provide an opportunity for pedestrian connectivity (walkability, bike-ability) between Western Ridge, Starr Hill, and Flex/R&D/LI parcels (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Development allowed by-right is not consistent with the existing character of Wickham Pond next door (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Concerns/questions if there is a way to dictate the type of housing that is developed on the site, some CAC members would not like to see townhomes or apartments (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Openness for flexible uses on the site given its proximity to employment and healthcare facilities (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Mixed support for staff’s recommendation – some CCAC support for NDR & UDR with road connections, while other CCAC members do not want to see any change (CCAC 9/23/20)
 - By-right development allows “mcmansions” and does not provide for a new road connection (CCAC 9/23/20)
 - A new “trail” connection is not worth allowing additional development on White Gate Farm (CCAC 9/23/20)
 - Support for Neighborhood Density Residential designation because additional infrastructure is needed to support additional density and the property is profitable enough without an Urban Density designation (CCAC 9/23/20)
- Some participants do not support any change in zoning that brings additional residential density (Virtual Land Use Workshop 9/2020)
- Suggestion to develop a public greenway trail along the stream buffer to make this proposal “easier to support” (Virtual Land Use Workshop 9/2020)
- Suggestion for traffic calming measures along Park Ridge Drive to support the “safety risks that come along with additional residential (and construction) traffic” (Virtual Land Use Workshop 9/2020)

Greenspace Parcels along Route 250

- Preserve existing green space and limit adding traffic between Old Trail Drive and Sparrow Hill (Character Community Workshop #1 1/13/20)

- Limit development to current zoning and improve pedestrian connectivity to nearby schools (Character Community Workshop #1 1/13/20)
- Low support for changing the Green Space designation to Neighborhood Density Residential (Low) to align with existing conditions and zoning in the area (Character Community Workshop #2 2/06/20)
- Suggestions to limit outdoor lighting and visibility of development from the road with buffers along Route 250 (Character Community Workshop #2 2/06/20)
- Support for maintaining the existing development potential on the property (R1 or Neighborhood Density Residential – Low), while also using revised land use categories to be clear about environmental features (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Desire to keep development off of Route 250; mixed support for a buffer (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Mixed support for staff’s recommendation to designate parcels Neighborhood Density (Low) with a buffer along Rt. 250 and environmental features excluded from development (CCAC 9/23/20)
- Important to distinguish between public and private green space to be able to understand areas that may be developed in the future (Virtual Land Use Workshop 9/2020)
- Support for distinction between buffers and public recreation areas, encouraging staff to be more ambitious about desired future public greenway trails along stream buffers (Virtual Land Use Workshop 9/2020)

Old Trail

- No change to the future land use categories that were “already negotiated with the previous master plan” (CCAC 9/23/20)
- Support for sports facility along Rt. 250 given its proximity to Old Trail and schools; consider allowing institutional uses (CCAC 9/23/20)

General Feedback

- Incorporate connectivity into goals and recommendations for land use (CCAC 5/13/20)
- Importance of ensuring that affordable housing is kept affordable long term if it is used to incentivize new development (CCAC 5/13/20)
- Concern about amount of participation due to COVID-19 pandemic and summer travel (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Concern about Albemarle County’s ability to deliver infrastructure (roads, sidewalks and schools) concurrent with new development (CCAC 7/8/20; CCAC 9/23/20; Virtual Land Use Workshop 9/2020)
- Concern about affordability and consistency with Albemarle County growth management policy (CCAC 9/23/20)
- Reference to previous “ideal maximum population” numbers provided during previous master plan processes and questions regarding maximum potential build-out and future population of Crozet (CCAC 7/8/20)
- Desire to slow down the process and have another meeting to discuss land use changes with the CCAC (CCAC 9/23/20)
- Request for clarity on affordable housing levels being discussed with different land use categories (CCAC 9/23/20)
- Questions about trail near Chesterfield Landing (CCAC 9/23/20)

- Concern about clear cutting trees and lack of tree preservation in new development (CCAC 9/23/20)
- Request to have draft proposals printed in the Crozet Gazette (CCAC 9/23/20)
- Interest in exploring different funding options for implementation projects (CCAC 5/13/20)
- Some Chesterfield Landing residents oppose creating a trail behind Chesterfield Landing because it "should remain private HOA property so the HOA can regulate how and when it is accessed by the public" (Virtual Land Use Workshop 9/2020)